NOTE to prospective students: This syllabus is intended to provide students who are considering taking this course an idea of what they will be learning. A more detailed syllabus will be available on the course site for enrolled students and may be more current than this sample syllabus.

WR 327 – Technical Writing (Ecampus)

Syllabus – Course Information

Instructor: John Larison  
Office: 306 Moreland Hall  
E-mail: larisojo@onid.orst.edu  
Office Hours: by appt.

Textbook: No textbook is assigned in this section.  
NOTE: For textbook accuracy, please always check the textbook list at the OSU Bookstore website. Sample syllabi may not have the most up-to-date information.

Course Catalog Description:

WR 327. TECHNICAL WRITING (3).  
Continued practice in writing with an emphasis on the rhetorical and critical thinking demands of writers in scientific and technological fields. (Bacc Core Course) PREREQS: WR 121 [C-] or Placement Test WWRI(1)

Baccalaureate Core Course Attributes:
Core, Skills, WR II

Course Description:

Technical Writing (WR 327) will prepare you to produce instructive, informative, and persuasive documents aimed at well-defined and achievable outcomes. Technical documents are precise, concise, logically organized, and factually based. The purpose and target audience of each document determine the style that an author chooses, which includes document layout, vocabulary, sentence and paragraph structure, and visuals. Hence, this course will teach processes for analyzing “writing contexts” and producing effective, clean, and reader-centered documents efficiently. You can expect to gather, read, and present the technical content of your field to various audiences in attractive, error-free copy, as well as to learn strategies for presenting that content orally.

By the way, according to Fortune, those professionals who’ve mastered technical writing earn, on average, three times higher salaries than those who haven’t.

This course combines approximately 90 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 3 credits

Course Outcomes:

1 Annie Fisher, “Ask Annie,” Fortune, March 1, 1999, 244.
Baccalaureate Outcomes for Writing II Courses:
- Apply multiple theories, concepts, and techniques for creating and evaluating written communication.
- Write effectively for diverse audiences within a specific area or discipline using appropriate standards and conventions.
- Apply critical thinking to writing and writing process, including revision.

Additional WR 327 Outcomes:
- Rhetorical Knowledge: Awareness of the importance of audience and purpose to the production of effective documents, as demonstrated by reading, analyzing, and composing written and visual texts.
- Conventions: Understanding technical and workplace conventions, as demonstrated through the clean and clear design, style, and layout of written and oral materials.
- Information Literacy: Ability to gather and apply researched information that is appropriate to your field, as demonstrated by using technological tools to find information, reading and analyzing documents, and citing sources correctly.
- Prose Control: Ability to control the design of sentences and paragraphs to convey complex information clearly and compellingly.

Assignments:

Informal Assignments (20%): These are graded on a 0%, 50%, or 100% system; each is submitted via the link in the weekly module.

- Week 1 (5%): In 500-600 words, introduce the instructor to your major. Your goal is to appear confident, determined, and professional; to achieve these goals, you'll need to approach the assignment strategically. Specifically, design a process for yourself that is likely to create an impressive document. Secondly, work to incorporate the “professional writing guidelines” into your prose. Most importantly, be sure to select your document’s content—and the organization of that content—to convey the impression you’re trying to generate. Submit via the course blog tool; click “tools,” then “blogs,” then “Week 1.”

- Week 2 (5%): In 500-600 words, introduce yourself and your background to a prospective employer. Your goal is to appear confident, determined, professional, and smart. To achieve these goals, you'll need to approach the assignment strategically. Specifically, design a process for yourself that is likely to create an impressive document. Secondly, work to incorporate the ideas presented so far in the lectures into your prose. Most importantly, be sure to select your document’s content—and organize that content in such a way—to convey the impression you’re trying to generate. Submit via the course blog tool; click “tools,” then “blogs,” then “Week 2.”

- Week 3 (5%): In 300-400 words, re-write one of the documents you’ve written so far from scratch; no sentences or phrases may be copied from the original document; all writing must be new. Your goal and the audience will remain the same in this version as they did in the original. Only this time, you'll re-approach your strategy and design a new strategy that is more likely to be effective. Notice the shorter word count; achieve that word count via tighter writing—not by including less information. The intention of this assignment is to reveal the power of a substantial revision step, one that truly “re-
sees" the document from scratch. Submit via the course blog tool; click “tools,” then “blogs,” then “Week 3.”

- **Personal Appeal (5%)**: Record a spoken appeal to a mainstream audience on the same issue as your Popular Appeal Assignment. To earn full credit, your Personal Appeal should compel the audience, persuade the audience to act, and refrain from confusing the audience. (Fancy production or editing techniques are not necessary with this assignment.) Record yourself, upload your film to Vimeo or Youtube, then provide the link to your interview within “comments” section of the submission page as you submit your Popular Appeal Assignment.

**Formal Assignments (80%)**: These documents are graded on a conventional A-F system. Each is submitted via the link in the weekly module.

- **Teaching Document (30%)**: The Teaching Document intends to provide the Instructor with a thorough understanding of a process from your major, its logic, and its significance. (Please take note: Your intention is not to teach the Instructor to complete that process). This document should include between 500 and 750 words. The Teaching Document must include at least one visual aid and effective caption. To earn full credit, the Teaching Document should compel the audience, refrain from confusing the audience, adhere to the Guidelines of Professional Writing, utilize the principles of tight and bright language, and show definitive evidence of a thorough writing process. Your grade will be lowered one mark (from an A to an A-, for instance) for every two punctuation or grammar errors. (Guidance on punctuation and grammar can be found on the Course Documents page). Your grade will be lowered one mark for each faulty paragraph, disruption to the stream of curiosity, and instance of reader confusion.

- **Persuasive Document (15%)**: With three teammates (for a team total of 4 people), craft a single document of between 800-1200 words that will persuade our class to do something. (We must be persuaded to act; this is an important part of the assignment). This document can be in any form or style, though the form and style should be selected strategically. The document must be written by all four group members, but it should read as if constructed by a single author. To earn full credit, the Persuasive Document should compel the audience, persuade the audience to act, refrain from confusing the audience, adhere to the Guidelines of Professional Writing, utilize the principles of tight and bright language, and show definitive evidence of a thorough writing process. Your grade will be lowered one mark (from an A to an A-, for instance) for every two punctuation or grammar errors. Your grade will be lowered one mark for each faulty paragraph, disruption to the stream of curiosity, and instance of reader confusion. Only one person from the group must submit the assignment; be sure to include all group member names.

- **Popular Appeal (35%)**: Select one pressing issue you’ve learned about in your major or from a college class; you should feel strongly about this issue and wish that the mainstream public was better informed about it. Design a document that will teach the audience about this issue and persuade them to act differently. This document can be written in any style or format and can be of any length, so long as the style/format and length are effective given the audience. To earn full credit, the Popular Appeal should compel the audience, persuade the audience to act, refrain from confusing the audience, adhere to the Guidelines of Professional Writing, utilize the principles of tight and bright language, and show definitive evidence of a thorough writing process. Your
grade will be lowered one mark for each faulty paragraph, disruption to the stream of curiosity, and instance of reader confusion. Your grade will be lowered one mark (from an A to an A-, for instance) for every two punctuation or grammar errors.

Extra Credit:
Be the first person in the class to identify and define a punctuation or grammar error within a document (including emails) written by the Instructor, and you will earn one point toward your next assignment. Maximum extra credit allowed is three percent of your final grade.

Class Policies:
Students are responsible for the materials, syllabus changes, and information presented during class. Assignments are due by 11:59 PM on the day specified on the Course Schedule, unless otherwise stated. Extra Credit: Late assignments will be docked one letter for every 24 hour period—except the Popular Appeal, which will not be accepted if it is late. Late assignments will receive no instructor comments. (Exceptions may be granted due to illness, etc, at the instructor’s discretion.)

Of course, cheating, in any form, is not tolerated at Oregon State University. Any plagiarism – intentional or accidental – may result in an F in the class and a written report filed with the Dean’s office for further disciplinary action.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities:
Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:
If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, assistance logging into the course, or if you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact the OSU Help Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-3474, email osuhelpdesk@oregonstate.edu or visit the OSU Computer Helpdesk online.

• COURSE DEMO
• GETTING STARTED

COURSE SITE LOGIN INFORMATION
Information on how to login to your course site can be found HERE.

REFUND POLICY INFORMATION
Please see the Ecampus website for policy information on refunds and late fees.