



A: Division: INSTRUCTIONAL

Date: NOVEMBER, 1997

B: Faculty: LANGUAGE, LITERATURE & PERFORMING ARTS New Course

Revision of Course JANUARY, 1991
Information Form: X

U 310

D: WRITING TECHNICAL
MANUALS

E:

3

C:

PRF

Title: Semester Credit:

Subject and Course Number:

Description:

...with an understanding of how technical manuals (product, computer and service manuals) and training manuals are planned, written and produced. Beginning with an analysis of a technical manual and examines standard writing and formatting conventions.

F: Calendar Description: This course provides students with an understanding of how technical manuals (product, computer and service manuals) and training manuals are planned, written and produced. Beginning with an analysis of a technical manual and examines standard writing and formatting conventions.

ACCEPTANCE TO PROGRAM OR PERMISSION OF COORDINATOR

Laboratory:	3 hrs
Seminar:	hrs
Clinical Experience:	hrs
Field Experience:	hrs
Practicum:	hrs
Shop:	hrs
Studio:	hrs

I: Course Corequisites
NONE

J: Course for which this Course is a Prerequisite
NONE

Student Directed Learning:	hrs
Other (specify):	hrs
Total:	4 hrs

K: Maximum Class Size:
30

M: Transfer Credit Requested:

College Credit Non-Transfer:
Non-Credit

Specify Course Equivalents or Unassigned Credit as appropriate:

U: Vic:
Other: SEE B.C. TRANSFER GUIDE

Vice President:

Course Designer:

N: Textbooks and materials to be Purchased by Students

Texts may include:

Barnum, C. & Carliner, S. *Techniques for Technical Communicators*

MacMillan, 1993

O. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will learn the methods of writing technical documents and understand and know when and how to use the special writing and formatting conventions of technical manuals.

P. COURSE CONTENT

CONTENT

Introduction to Writing Technical Manuals

1. Introduction

The student will:

- a) become familiar with the various types of technical materials produced by technical writers in the local marketplace
- b) become familiar with the various companies employing technical writers

2. Planning and Organizing Manuals

The student will:

- a) understand the differences between content-based and reader-based manuals
- b) analyse the range of manuals required to support a product, such as a software program
- c) understand the reader's information needs
- d) review and understand the common structures of technical manuals (linear, tree, matrix)

P. COURSE CONTENT - cont'd

How page-replacement manuals (modular manuals) are structured and

h) evaluate how formatted

Process

3. Technical Writing P

The student will:

Technical writer in the product development

a) understand the role of the tech lifecycle

Subject-matter expert to obtain the information necessary to

b) interview a s

prepare a simple technical instruction

c) understand the role of outlines

d) evaluate and prepare an outline for a project style guide

e) examine the means of ensuring the technical accuracy of manuals, including review and approval cycles

f) examine the need for manual testing and the relationship with product testing

al Writing Style

4. Manu

The student will:

P. COURSE CONTENT - cont'd

5. Page Design and Production

The student will:

- a) understand the role of page design in communicating technical information
- b) review the page designs used in professionally prepared technical manuals
- c) review the features and functions of word processing and desktop publishing

a) understand the role of page design

programs which have special relevance to the preparation of manuals and their uses and applications for users.

d) review the different methods of binding

6. Writing On-line Documents

The student will:

documentation (information on computer screen), such as help screens;

- a) review the different types and uses of on-line text databases, and hypertext systems
- b) understand the limitations imposed by the differences from paper manuals

computer screen and the resulting differences from paper manuals

base or reference source

c) evaluate and report back on the data

7. Project Management

The student will:

cost and

- a) understand the elements of project management (quality, scope, schedule)
- b) estimate the time

required to prepare a defined manual

c) prepare a detailed schedule of activities to produce a technical manual

such as

- d) become familiar with the professional aspects of technical writing

write proposals and the standard terms and conditions of contracts

O. METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

and projects. The emphasis will be on

analysis of samples, and in-class and home exercises

learning by and the students with hands-on practice

Evaluation will be based on this general outline:

In-class projects	10%
In-class participation	10%
Evaluation of writing samples	20%
Final examination	30%
Manual project	30%

100%

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