NEW RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DUBLIN, VIRGINIA

COURSE PLAN

Course Number and Title: ENG 115 - Technical Writing

Prepared by: English Faculty (Instructor) Fall, 2010 (Date)

Approved by: (Dean) Fall, 2010 (Date)

I. Course Description

Develops ability in technical writing through extensive practice in composing technical reports and other documents. Guides students in achieving voice, tone, style and content in formatting, editing and graphics. Introduces students to technical discourse through selected reading. Lecture 3 hours.

II. Introduction

English 115 is designed to teach students to write technical material that is clear, concise, accurate, and well-organized. While the course will help students improve general writing skills, it emphasizes the planning and organization that is the basis of good technical writing.

English Department strongly recommends that students take a word processing course.

III. Course Content

A. Discussions and assignments for English 115 will be based on the following topics:
   1. Definition of technical writing
   2. Importance of technical writing
   3. Technical writing in the NRCC service region
   4. Elements of a good report
   5. Problems in technical writing
   6. Technical writing style
   7. Clear writing through clear thinking
   8. Graphics as a part of technical writing
   9. Elements of a technical report
  10. Plagiarism
  11. Documentation of resource material
12. Improving effectiveness and readability of technical writing by
   a. using standard English
   b. using short sentences with active verbs
   c. eliminating unnecessary words
   d. writing conversationally
   e. eliminating mechanical errors
   f. correctly using numbers, capitalization, symbols, and abbreviations

13. Types of technical writing
   a. memos
   b. business letters
   c. resumes
   d. procedures
   e. descriptions
   f. instructions
   g. proposals
   h. informal reports
   i. formal reports
   j. abstracts and summaries
   k. bibliographies

B. Basic concepts to be taught:
   1. Nature and special requirements of technical writing
   2. Elements of style appropriate for technical writing
   3. Relationship of the writer of technical communications to the special
      requirements of this relationship
   4. Importance of standard English usage in technical writing
   5. Fundamentals of good technical composition
      a. sentence structure
      b. paragraph development
      c. unity
      d. logic
      e. clarity
      f. balance
      g. conciseness
      h. precision
      i. accuracy of data
      j. grammatical and mechanical accuracy
      k. spelling
      l. vocabulary

IV. Textbook

Technical Writing, 11th edition, by John M. Lannon

Additional resource materials for some New River Community College classes can be
found on the NRCC Web-based learning site at nr.edu/learninglinks.

If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in
this course, please register with the Disability Services Office located in the Counseling
Center in Rooker Hall for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs.

The NRCC community values the pluralistic nature of our society. We recognize diversity including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, social class, age, gender, sexual orientation and physical or mental capability. We respect the variety of ideas, experiences and practices that such diversity entails. It is our commitment to ensure equal opportunity and to sustain a climate of civility for all who work or study at NRCC or who otherwise participate in the life of the college.

V. Attendance

Regular attendance in class is required.

VI. Evaluation

A. Tests and major writing assignments - 60%
B. Daily assignments - 10%
C. Formal report - 10%
D. Daily assignments may not be made up; however, the lowest daily grade will be dropped.
E. A major writing assignment may be made up within one week of the date the assignment is due. The grade on any late writing assignment will be lowered one letter grade for each day it is late.
F. Tests may not be made up.
G. Exam - 20%

(In order to pass ENG 115, by the end of the semester, the student must have demonstrated in writing assignments an understanding of the concepts of technical writing, using Standard English with few major mechanical errors.)

Grading Scale:

90 - 100 = A
80 - 89 = B
70 - 79 = C
60 - 69 = D
59 & Below = F

VII. Withdrawal Policy

Student Initiated Withdrawal Policy

A student may drop or withdraw from a class without academic penalty during the first 60 percent of a session. For purposes of enrollment reporting, the following procedures apply:

a. If a student withdraws from a class prior to the termination of the add/drop period for the session, the student will be removed from the class roll and no grade will be awarded.
b. After the add/drop period, but prior to completion of 60 percent of a session, a student who withdraws from a class will be assigned a grade of “W.” A grade of “W” implies that the student was making satisfactory progress in the class at the time of withdrawal, that the withdrawal was officially made before the deadline published in the college calendar, or that the student was administratively transferred to a different program.

c. After that time, if a student withdraws from a class, a grade of “F” or “U” will be assigned. Exceptions to this policy may be made under documented mitigating circumstances if the student was passing the course at the last date of attendance.

A retroactive grade of “W” may be awarded only if the student would have been eligible under the previously stated policy to receive a “W” on the last date of class attendance. The last date of attendance for a distance education course will be the last date that work was submitted.

Late withdrawal appeals will be reviewed and a decision made by the Director of Student Services.

**No-Show Policy**

A student must either attend face-to-face courses or demonstrate participation in distance learning courses by the last date to drop for a refund. A student who does not meet this deadline will be reported to the Admissions and Records Office and will be withdrawn as a no-show student. No refund will be applicable, and the student will not be allowed to attend/participate in the class or submit assignments. Failure to attend or participate in a course will adversely impact a student’s financial aid award.

**Instructor Initiated Withdrawal**

A student who adds a class or registers after the first day of class is counted absent from all class meetings missed. Each instructor is responsible for keeping a record of student attendance (face-to-face classes) or performance/participation (DE classes) in each class throughout the semester.

When a student’s absences equal twice the number of weekly meetings of a class (equivalent amount of time for summer session), the student may be dropped for unsatisfactory attendance in the class by the instructor.

Since attendance is not a valid measurement for Distance Education (DE) courses, a student may be withdrawn due to non-performance. A student should refer to his/her DE course plan for the instructor’s policy.

In accordance with the No-Show Policy, a student who has not attended class or requested/accessed distance learning materials by the last day to drop the class and receive a refund must be withdrawn by the instructor during the following week. No refund will be applicable.

When an instructor withdraws a student for unsatisfactory attendance (face-to-face class) or non-performance (DE class), the last date of attendance/participation will be documented. Withdrawal must be completed within five days of a student’s meeting the
withdrawal criteria. A grade of “W” will be recorded during the first sixty percent (60%) period of a course. A student withdrawn after the sixty percent (60%) period will receive a grade of “F” or “U” except under documented mitigating circumstances when a letter of appeal has been submitted by the student. A copy of this documentation must be placed in the student’s academic file.

The student will be notified of the withdrawal by the Admissions and Records Office. An appeal of reinstatement into the class may be approved only by the instructor.

VIII. **Cheating Policy**

Any student found to be cheating on an assignment will receive a grade of zero for that assignment with no opportunity to make it up. Cheating includes:

1. giving or receiving information pertaining to tests and
2. plagiarizing, which is defined as taking and using as one's own the writings or ideas of another. (Definition adapted from the American Heritage Dictionary.)

IX. **Emergency Exits**

Students should be aware of the emergency exit routes map posted near the classroom door.