

**COURSE NUMBER:** CM1401

**COURSE TITLE:** Technical Report Writing II

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed to help students formulate criteria for structuring informal and semi-formal reports. Various report formats will be examined with emphasis on statistical data analysis, documentation and illustration methods. Oral reporting techniques will be enhanced through problem-solving reports and the technical sales presentation.

**PREREQUISITES:** CM1400 – Technical Report Writing I or equivalent

**CO-REQUISITES:** None

**CREDIT VALUE:** Three (3)

**COURSE HOURS PER WEEK:** Three (3)

**LAB HOURS PER WEEK:** Zero (0)

**SUGGESTED TEXT:**

Lannon, J. M., & Klepp, D. (2012). *Technical communication with MyCanadian TechCommLab, Canadian edition* (5th ed.). Toronto: Pearson Education Canada. ISBN-13: 978-0321735225

or

MacLennan, J. (2011). *Effective communications for the technical professional* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Toronto: Oxford University Press Canada. ISBN: 9780195425475

Pringle, M., & Gonzales, J. (2010). *The APA style of documentation (A pocket guide)*. Prentice Hall. ISBN-13: 9780136049708 (This is a package prepared by Pearson)

**LEARNING RESOURCES:** To be determined by instructor

**MAJOR TOPICS:**

- 1.0 The Strategy of Technical Reporting
- 2.0 Informal Reporting
- 3.0 Semi-Formal Reporting
- 4.0 Reporting Technical Information Orally
- 5.0 Keeping Accurate Work Records/Field Books

## 6.0 Job Search

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

#### **1.0 The Strategy of Technical Reporting**

- 1.1 Identifying the Primary Reader
  - 1.1.1 Discuss how Audience Analysis is fundamental for organization of a report
  - 1.1.2 Compare and contrast an article written for one kind of audience with another for a different audience
- 1.2 Identifying the Main Message
  - 1.2.1 Differentiate between writing to inform and writing to persuade
  - 1.2.2 Explain three C's for structuring the main message
- 1.3 Organizing Data-The Pyramid Method
  - 1.3.1 Detail the Pyramid method for short and long reports with illustrations to support the theory
  - 1.3.2 Explain why the Pyramid technique is appropriate for scientific documents

#### **2.0 Informal Reporting**

- 2.1 Writing Memoranda
  - 2.1.1 Discuss the situations where a memorandum report is appropriate
  - 2.1.2 Write a memorandum report responding to a given incident
- 2.2 Writing Letter Reports
  - 2.2.1 Compare and contrast the letter report with the memorandum
  - 2.2.2 Write a two-page letter report on a given topic

#### **3.0 Semi-Formal Reporting**

- 3.1 Report Formats
  - 3.1.1 Differentiate between industrial reports and school reports
  - 3.1.2 Identify the special features of semi-formal reports
  - 3.1.3 Discuss chronological development, subject development, and concept development as effective methods for organizing the content sections of a semi-formal report
  - 3.1.4 Discuss the importance of the intended audience when focusing the purpose of a semi-formal report
  - 3.1.5 Distinguish between progress/periodic reports and give examples of situations where they can be used
  - 3.1.6 Examine samples of investigation, feasibility and evaluation reports and discuss the distinguishing qualities of each
  - 3.1.7 Explain the function of an appendix section

- 3.1.8 Discuss the various reference sections of the library for obtaining technical details for the semi-formal report
- 3.1.9 Explain how the following are necessary in devising a technical report: observations, testing, interviewing, and printed material
- 3.1.10 Select a topic to develop for one of the following: progress report, investigation report, feasibility study, or an evaluation report
- 3.2 Writing Transmittal Letters
  - 3.2.1 Identify areas where letters of transmittal are appropriate
  - 3.2.2 Distinguish a transmittal letter from a cover letter
  - 3.2.3 Construct a transmittal letter for a given company responding to an assigned topic
- 3.3 Gathering and Organizing Data
  - 3.3.1 List and give examples of areas where current material can be assessed
  - 3.3.2 Explain how a computer search must be organized for maximum benefit
  - 3.3.3 Develop a tentative list of possible books, articles and other reference material as vertical files, government documents, etc., for a selected topic
  - 3.3.4 Skim the material and record on note cards the more relevant material beginning with complete bibliographical information
  - 3.3.5 Construct a tentative outline based on recorded observations, interviews and other source material
  - 3.3.6 Record specific quotes and analyses from each source on separate sheets
  - 3.3.7 Expand the outline and begin writing sections
  - 3.3.8 Review the principles and techniques of the American Psychological Association (APA) style of documentation
  - 3.3.9 Check guide for specifics relevant to source material used and insert APA style of documentation
  - 3.3.10 Write and edit first draft of semi-formal report
- 3.4 Illustrating Technical Reports
  - 3.4.1 Explain how effective implementation of illustrations helps enhance technical information
  - 3.4.2 State the guidelines for organizing and labelling illustrations for easy reference in a report
  - 3.4.3 Discuss the criteria for positioning illustrations in the text and/or in the appendix section
  - 3.4.4 Examine photographs, diagrams, tables and graphs in sample semi-formal reports and discuss their application
  - 3.4.5 Devise appropriate illustrations and insert in the final copy of the semi-formal report

## **4.0 Reporting Technical Information Orally**

- 4.1 Problem-Solving Report
  - 4.1.1 Explain how brainstorming can help make problem-solving more effective

- 4.1.2 Identify potential professional situations for problem-solving reports
- 4.1.3 Discuss effective delivery techniques
- 4.1.4 Select a topic for a problem-solving report and plan an outline
- 4.1.5 Develop the outline and prepare notes on cards for presentation
- 4.1.6 Prepare *three* different audio-visual aids
- 4.1.7 Present a ten-minute problem-solving report with appropriate visual materials
- 4.2 Technical Sales Presentation
  - 4.2.1 Explain the role of effective persuasion in a technical sales presentation
  - 4.2.2 Contrast emotional appeal with scientific argument
  - 4.2.3 Compare differences between oral and written sales reports
  - 4.2.4 Define the roles of the speaker and audience in a technical sales presentation
  - 4.2.5 Organize a technical sales presentation for a ten-minute talk
  - 4.2.6 Prepare appropriate audio-visual materials to enhance the presentation
  - 4.2.7 Present a technical sales report to the class

## **5.0 Keeping Accurate Work Records/Field Books**

- 5.1 Work Records/Field Books
  - 5.1.1 Explain the importance of maintaining accurate work records/field books with respect to: quality control and improvement, task tracking and scheduling, and capturing and maintaining institutional knowledge
  - 5.1.2 Create work/field records to document job-critical information according to industry specifications

## **6.0 Job Search**

- 6.1 Letter of Application/Resumé
  - 6.1.1 Discuss tone and style for effective business writing
  - 6.1.2 Explain the benefits of researching data on companies
  - 6.1.3 Compare and contrast the organizational structures in sample application letters and resumé
  - 6.1.4 Discuss the importance of completing a self-analysis before conducting the application process
  - 6.1.5 State the criteria for an effective cover letter
  - 6.1.6 Discuss the various formats for organizing resumé
  - 6.1.7 Prepare a cover letter and resumé in response to a given job advertisement
- 6.2 Job Interviews
  - 6.2.1 List the steps to a successful interview
  - 6.2.2 Describe the qualities of a successful interviewee
  - 6.2.3 List areas whereby companies can be researched
  - 6.2.4 Discuss the different types of interviews
  - 6.2.5 Select and discuss ten questions from a given list that are most frequently

- asked by an interviewer
- 6.2.6 Prepare an interview for a selected position
- 6.2.7 Discuss the importance of the interview
- 6.3 Follow-up Letter
  - 6.3.1 Explain the criteria for writing a follow-up letter
  - 6.3.2 Discuss the structure and content of a follow-up letter
  - 6.3.3 Write a follow-up letter after an interview

## **EVALUATION:**

Informal Report:	15%
Semi-Formal Report:	25%
Problem-Solving Report Presentation:	10%
Technical Sales Presentation:	10%
Job Search:	15%
Class Participation:	10%
Quizzes:	15%

**DATE DEVELOPED:** June 15, 1994

**DATE REVIEWED:**

**REVISION NUMBER:** 5

**DATE REVISED:** March 2014

*Note to instructor: Check PIRS to ensure this outline is the most current version.*