

WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Virtual Campus

School of Languages and Literature

Wayland Baptist University Mission Statement

Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused, and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

Course Name

ENGL 3320.VC01 – Foundations of Technical Communication

Term and Year

Spring VC 2018

Full Name of Instructor

Professor Ashley Hardage Edlin

Office Phone

(806) 291-1113

Email

edlina@wbu.edu

Office Hours, Building, and Location

Online, various times and by appointment.

Class Meeting Time and Location

WBU's Virtual Campus: <http://wbu.blackboard.com>

Catalog Description

Study and practice of developing formal and informal technical and business documents, such as reports, proposals, resumes, instructions, and professional correspondence; emphasis on technical and/or professional environment.

Prerequisite

Advanced Standing

Required Textbook and Resources

- **MindTap access and an electronic copy of the textbook are both included in the cost of your tuition for this class. More information and opt out instructions forthcoming.**
Anderson, Paul. (2017). *Technical Communication: A Reader-Centered Approach*. 9th Edition. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Access to Blackboard and WBU email; access to computer with internet

Course Outcome Competencies

Upon the conclusion of this course, students actively engaged in learning will be able to:

1. Analyze the audience, purpose, and context of any technical writing situation.
2. Communicate ethically, recognizing the challenges posed and the ramifications of neglecting to do so.
3. Use current technology and software to research, design, develop, and/or present information.
4. Compose and design effective and usable technical documents in various genres and edit documents for correctness, clarity, and audience appropriateness.

The more the student puts into the course, the higher his or her outcome competencies will be.

Attendance Requirements

As stated in the Wayland Catalog, students enrolled at one of the University's external campuses should make every effort to attend all class meetings. All absences must be explained to the instructor, who will then determine whether the omitted work may be made up. When a student reaches that number of absences considered by the instructor to be excessive, the instructor will so advise the student and file an unsatisfactory progress report with the campus executive director. Any student who misses 25 percent or more of the regularly scheduled class meetings may receive a grade of F in the course. Additional attendance policies for each course, as defined by the instructor in the course syllabus, are considered a part of the University's attendance policy.

****Because this is an online course and because we will not meet synchronously, your attendance for the course is largely dependent on your contribution to the discussion board's topics and other participation grades. In keeping with the on-site attendance policy, failure to provide a full response for at least 75% of the discussion topics will result in an F for the course.****

Disability Statement

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291-3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

Academic Honesty

You are expected to submit original work in this class. This means the work you submit for this class cannot be from another course. Further, plagiarism in this course will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is constituted as stealing words or ideas from another source and passing them as your own. Since this class specifically focuses on research, you should be especially conscious of attributing your sources. Students who plagiarize or recycle work in this class will receive a zero for the assignment and will be subject to university policies regarding plagiarism. (See Languages and Literature Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty in Blackboard.)

Due Dates and Late Penalties

Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. (Central Time Zone) on the date posted. Be sure that your clock matches the clock in WBU's Blackboard. All assignments must be submitted to the Blackboard site to receive a grade. These deadlines, like most deadlines in life, are not

negotiable. *Any late assignment will receive a 20-point deduction per day late. Late assignments are not accepted after 5 days of the assignment's due date.*

Expectations, Communication, & Other Information

While the nature of an online course allows students to work at their own pace, you are expected to keep up with the course materials weekly. *Please note, this is not a self-paced course.* This means that you should keep up with the readings and assignments posted each week, and you are responsible for turning in any assignments by the posted due date. Students who get behind in the weekly requirements will likely not do well in the course. Remember, also, that your attendance for the course is measured by your participation in the discussion board. Announcements and important information will be posted on the Blackboard site. Be sure to check the site often. Additional information may be sent to your WBU emails, so make sure you've set up a WBU email and are checking it often. Always feel free to email me if you are concerned about the course or your progress. I am available to help you, provide resources, and give direction—but I cannot help you if I do not know you're struggling.

In an effort to accommodate the schedules and preferences of online students, all major assignments are due on Sundays. However, although the HW assignments and major assignments are due on Sunday, this does not mean you should wait until the end of the week to think about them, particularly if you need help from me. I am happy to answer questions about assignments and will even give you feedback on assignments if you submit them early. However, please note that while I typically answer email within 24 hours M-F, I am not always as tied to a computer on the weekends. This means if you need help with an assignment, you'll need to get in touch with me by Thursday or Friday. I also strongly recommend you use the Multidisciplinary Writing Center (MWC). There's a link available in our Blackboard course. Be aware, too, that using the MWC resources likewise requires that you plan ahead for your assignments and your assignment questions. A successful student likely does not wait until Sunday night to begin the week's work.

If ever you have a major life event that will affect your participation in the course, it's imperative that you communicate with me as soon as possible. I try to work with students as best I can, but I can be more flexible and gracious if you tell me in advance rather than after the fact. In an online course, communication is *key*. As I mention above, I cannot help you if I do not know you're struggling. That said, like most of my students, I realize you probably work full time, have a family, and juggle other courses and commitments. However, this is a 3000-level course, which means it ought to challenge you more than your previous courses. ENGL3320 is also a writing-intensive course, so be prepared to write weekly. If life's current restraints mean you cannot fully concentrate on the course's requirements, then you might consider taking the course at another point in your studies

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

More specific descriptions of the course requirements are available in course modules on the WBU Blackboard site: <http://wbu.blackboard.com>. However, the assignments and weights are posted below.

- **Discussion Board Posts and Responses (10%).** Students will complete discussion posts and responses throughout the term.
- **Quizzes (10%).** Students will complete reading quizzes throughout the term.
- **MindTap Exercises/Homework Assignments (10%).** Students will complete weekly activities/exercise in MindTap and/or via other means as homework.

- **Major Assignments (60%).** Students will design and create technical documents in a variety of genres over the course of the semester. All documents must be submitted electronically to Blackboard. See Blackboard for additional assignment information.
 - **Unit 1: Professional Correspondence.** Students will write a letter to a company of their choice and will write a memo to the professor describing the company culture of the selected organization.
 - **Unit 2: Communicating with Employers.** Students will conduct research on their professional industry and write a brief memo describing the results of their research, specifically as it relates to creating professional profiles. Next, students will create/update/revise a resume and establish one additional professional profile item (LinkedIn profile, cover letter, personal statement, teaching philosophy, etc.).
 - **Unit 3: Documenting Instructions or Procedures.** Students will create a set of instructions or procedures on a chosen topic. In addition, students will conduct a simple usability test on their instructions/procedures and will submit the results of their usability test to the professor as a memo.
 - **Unit 4: Proposals.** Students will conduct research and write a formal proposal to decision makers from either their job, local, state, or federal government, or WBU administration. Before the proposal is submitted, students will write a progress report memo to the professor.

- **Final Exam (10%).** The final exam will include material from the entire semester.

Policy 9.4.1: “Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.”

Tentative Schedule

The schedule below is a tentative outline for the semester. As such, it is subject to change, with notification of course.

Weekly Topic	Reading	Discussion Topic	Assignment(s)
Week 1: Introduction to Technical Communication	Chs. 1 & 3	February 26: Introductions	<u>March 4</u> - DB1: Introductions - MindTap/Homework - Quiz #1
Week 2: Professional Correspondence	Ch. 6, 7, & 21	March 5: Company and Goal	<u>March 11</u> - DB2: Company Culture - MindTap/Homework - Quiz #2

No Topic	No Readings	March 12-18: Spring Break	March 12-18: Spring Break
Week 3: Clarity and Concision	Chs. 10 & 15	March 19: Style	March 25 - DB3: Peer Review - MindTap/Homework - Quiz #3 - Unit 1 documents
Week 4: Communicating with Employers	Chs. 2, 20, & 22	March 26: Position for Application	March 29* - DB4: Job Prospects - MindTap/Homework - Quiz #4
No Topic	No Readings	March 30-April 2: Easter Break	March 30-April 2: Easter Break
Week 5: Document Design	Chs. 12, 13, & 14	April 3: Document Design	April 8 - DB5: Peer Review - MindTap/Homework - Quiz #5 - Unit 2 documents
Week 6: Instructions and Procedures	Ch. 27	April 9: Topic for Instructions/Proc.	April 15 - DB6: Topic for Instruction - MindTap/Homework
Week 7: Research and Usability Testing	Chs. 4, 5, & 16	April 16: Usability	April 22 - DB7: Peer Review - MindTap/Homework - Quiz #6 - Unit 3 documents
Week 8: Formal Proposals	Chs. 19 & 23	April 23: Proposal Topic	April 29 - DB8: Proposal Topic - MindTap/Homework - Quiz #7
Week 9: Formal Proposals	Ch. 26 & Appendix A	April 30: Proposal Progress	May 6 - MindTap/Homework - Progress Report
Week 10: Formal Proposals	Chs. 8, 9, & 11	May 7: Proposal Preparation	May 13 - DB9: Peer Review - MindTap/Homework - Quiz #8 - Unit 4 documents
Week 11: Final Exam	Appendix B	May 14: Course Reflection	May 19 - DB10: Course Reflection - Final Exam

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO BLACKBOARD TO RECEIVE CREDIT.