University of Arkansas – Fort Smith
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General Syllabus

RHET 4603 Scientific and Technical Writing

Credit Hours: 3 Lecture Hours: 3 Laboratory Hours: 0

Prerequisite: RHET 3503 Writing Arguments or RHET 3603 Writing for the Workplace or consent of instructor

Effective Catalog: 2019-2020

I. Course Information

A. Catalog Description

Advanced study and practice of technical communication with computer applications. Emphasis on scientific and informative discourse and on writing audience-based prose. Focus is on writing in science, engineering, and technical fields.

B. Additional Information

None.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

A. Subject Matter

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Analyze a variety of scientific and technical documents to identify the rhetorical situation and the characteristics of effective technical communication in each.
2. Analyze the rhetorical situation and provide effective scientific and technical documents in response to a variety of audiences, specific purposes, and contexts.
3. Design scientific and technical documents using principles of effective visual rhetoric, *i.e.* document and page design and lay-out, use of graphics and other illustrations, etc.
4. Demonstrate effective and appropriate linguistic, rhetorical, and stylistic choices in technical documents.
5. Produce focused, well-organized and developed, well-edited technical documents.
6. Demonstrate interpersonal skills in collaborative learning using peer critique, group papers, and/or group discussion.

B. University Learning Outcomes

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

Analytical Skills
Critical Thinking Skills
Students will identify problems/issues and develop solutions/analysis. Students will analyze a variety of texts for their rhetorical and/or literary features, as well as analyze the rhetorical situation to which the texts they produce respond.

Communication Skills (written and oral)
Students will communicate proficiently. Students will practice communication skills through discussions, presentations, and a variety of required written assignments.

Ethical Decision Making
Students will model ethical decision-making processes. Students will practice critical response to the writing of others, responsible use of research materials and intellectual property, and the ethical use of persuasion.

Global & Cultural Perspectives
Students will reflect upon cultural differences and their implications for interacting with people from cultures other than their own. Students will analyze the rhetorical situation, produce texts for a variety of audiences, and avoid the use of biased language

III. Major Course Topics

A. Rhetorical analysis of discourse occasions and existing scientific and technical documents (author/purpose, audience/effect, text/context)
B. Characteristics of effective technical communication
C. Researching and preparing scientific and technical documents displaying the findings
D. Use of elements of layout and page design and visuals in technical documents
E. Conventional scientific and technical style for written documents with proofreading to eliminate usage weaknesses and to develop coherence