

# SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO



Sault College

## COURSE OUTLINE

**COURSE TITLE:** Technical Communication  
**CODE NO. :** CMM210-3 **SEMESTER:** Fall/Winter  
**PROGRAM:** Engineering Technology and Science and Natural Resources  
**AUTHOR:** Language and Communication Department  
**DATE:** Jan. 2006 **PREVIOUS OUTLINE DATED:** Jan. 2005  
**APPROVED:**

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**DEAN**

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**DATE**

**TOTAL CREDITS:** 3  
**PREREQUISITE(S):** CMM110/CMM115  
**HOURS/WEEK:** 3

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*For additional information, please contact the Dean,  
School of Health and Human Services  
(705) 759-2554, Ext. 2603*

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course provides training in technical communication. Emphasis is given to memos, letters, forms, and reports. Oral reporting and its importance on the job are also included. The effective use of computers to research and generate technical documents is an essential component of this course. The principles of writing are taught through the writing process.

**II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:****A. Learning Outcomes:**

1. Recognize the needs and expectations of various audience levels.
2. Produce accurate, well-organized, technical documents that are college-level quality and address an identified audience and purpose.
3. Employ computers accurately and efficiently to research and produce documents.
4. Research and document materials from various sources using specific formats.
5. Produce an employment package.
6. Deliver a well-organized oral presentation that involves effective visuals.

**B. Learning Outcomes and Elements of the Performance:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Recognize the needs and expectations of various audience levels.

**Potential elements of the performance:**

- Explain the principles of organization
- Identify barriers to effective communication
- Assess the audience's needs and characteristics
- Determine their goal in the communication
- Identify the most effective form of communication
- Anticipate audience response

**II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE:  
(continued)**

2. Produce accurate, well-organized, technical documents that are college-level quality and address an identified audience and purpose.

**Potential elements of the performance:**

- Identify the audience and purpose for the document
- Identify the uses and types of technical documents
- Determine the most suitable format for presenting technical information
- Create accurate and specific reports using various formats
- Produce accurate, coherent abstracts/executive summaries
- Formulate effective introductory/problem statements
- Use active and passive voice and other emphatic techniques
- Identify the use, format, and content of all components of the formal report
- Incorporate effective graphics into documents
- Draw accurate, supported, logical conclusions and recommendations
- Use research and documentation as support in documents
- Use appropriate technical language and style
- Proofread and edit all work

3. Employ computers accurately and efficiently to produce reports.

**Potential elements of the performance:**

- Adjust and proofread for content
- Incorporate appropriate graphics
- Design clear, easily-read technical documents for specific audiences and purposes
- Proofread and edit work for correctness using spell-check, thesaurus, grammar check, and peer editing

4. Research and document materials from various sources using specific formats.

**Potential elements of the performance:**

- Identify the nature of the information to be researched
- Investigate various sources
- Distinguish primary and secondary sources
- Evaluate bias
- Use appropriate sources to support the document's purpose
- Employ a consistent documentation format

5. Produce an employment package.

**Potential elements of the performance:**

- Summarize skills, knowledge, and experience
- Choose a format and create a resume that best presents abilities
- Write a concise, accurate, organized, effective cover letter

**II. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PERFORMANCE  
(Continued):**

6. Deliver a well-organized oral presentation that involves effective visuals.

**Potential elements of the Performance:**

- Analyze the audience and the purpose of the presentation
- Gather and organize relevant material
- Determine how to present the material in the most effective manner
- Anticipate and recognize typical audience responses
- Produce effective visual aids
- Rehearse and adapt the presentation
- Deliver a well-organized oral presentation individually or collaboratively
- Field questions effectively

**III. TOPICS:**

**Note:** These topics sometimes overlap several areas of skill development and are not necessarily intended to be explored in isolated learning units or in the order below.

1. Principles of Organization and Communication
2. Language and Style in Technical Documents
3. Objectivity in Technical Communication
4. Letters, Memos, and Emails
5. Informal Reports
6. Employment Package
7. Oral Presentation
8. Graphics and Document Design
9. The Formal Report
10. Research and Documentation

**IV. REQUIRED RESOURCES / TEXTS / MATERIALS:**

1. *Workplace Writing*, Marilyn E. Holt
2. Language and Communication Guidelines (provided)
3. Two 3.5 computer disks (dedicated to English)
4. *Cites & Sources-A Documentation Guide* (optional – at professor's discretion)

**V. EVALUATION PROCESS / GRADING SYSTEM:****MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTING:**

(Refer also to the Language and Communication Guidelines)

The professor will announce which of the following will be completed in class under test conditions (minimum of 20%):

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Students will write a minimum of five short assignments using technical document formats, such as: |             |
| a. Abstract   |             |
| b. Proposal/feasibility report  |             |
| c. Accident/incident/occurrence report  |             |
| d. Technical Instruction or description   |             |
| e. Field/trip report  | <b>50%</b>  |
| f. Investigation/evaluation report  |             |
| g. Progress/periodic report   |             |
| h. Lab report   |             |
| i. Problem analysis/recommendation report   |             |
| j. Email messages   |             |
| 2. Oral presentation  | <b>15%</b>  |
| 3. Job package  | <b>10%</b>  |
| 4. Students must write and submit <b>one</b> of the following:  |             |
| a) A Formal Report  | <b>25%</b>  |
| or  |             |
| b) an exam (if required by the program area)  |             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>100%</b> |

**Notes:**

- Professors reserve the right to adjust the course delivery as they deem necessary to meet the needs of students.
- Professors will deduct marks for any grammar and fundamental errors in final submissions.**
- Marking schemes for assignments will vary from professor to professor and from assignment to assignment. This flexibility recognizes that professors need to vary their approaches as they assist students with differing levels of competence to meet the learning outcomes of the course and to respond to program areas.

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT (GRADING METHOD):**

Students will be assessed on the basis of their short technical assignments, oral presentation, job application package, and formal report and/or report exam.

**V. EVALUATION PROCESS / GRADING SYSTEM (continued):**

The following letter grades will be assigned in accordance with college policy and the Language and Communication Department Guidelines:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Grade Point Equivalent</u>
A+	90 – 100%	4.00
A	80 – 89%	3.00
B	70 - 79%	2.00
C	60 - 69%	1.00
D	50 – 59%	0.00
F (Fail)	49% and below	
CR (Credit)	Credit for diploma requirements has been awarded.	
S	Satisfactory achievement in field /clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
U	Unsatisfactory achievement in field/clinical placement or non-graded subject area.	
X	A temporary grade limited to situations with extenuating circumstances giving a student additional time to complete the requirements for a course.	
NR	Grade not reported to Registrar's office.	
W	Student has withdrawn from the course without academic penalty.	

**Note:** For such reasons as program certification or program articulation, certain courses require minimums of greater than 50% and/or have mandatory components to achieve a passing grade.

It is also important to note, that the minimum overall GPA required in order to graduate from a Sault College program remains 2.0.

**NOTE:** Students may be assigned a mid-term grade of “F” for unsatisfactory performance.

**TIME FRAME**

Technical Reporting CMM210 involves three periods per week for the semester. At least one of these class hours will be scheduled in a computer lab. Students are expected to attend class and to participate in class activities.

**V. EVALUATION PROCESS / GRADING SYSTEM (continued):****Mid-Term Grades**

At **mid-term** one of the following grades will be assigned:

- S Satisfactory performance to the time of mid-term grade assignment (does not indicate successful completion of the course)
- U Unsatisfactory performance to the time of mid-term grade assignment (does not indicate unsuccessful completion of the course)
- F The course must be repeated; minimal performance has resulted in the course outcomes not being met

**VI. SPECIAL NOTES:****Special Needs:**

If you are a student with special needs (e.g. physical limitations, visual impairments, hearing impairments, or learning disabilities), you are encouraged to discuss required accommodations with your professor and/or the Special Needs office. Visit E1101 or call extension 2703 so that support services can be arranged for you.

**Retention of Course Outlines:**

It is the responsibility of the student to retain all course outlines for possible future use in acquiring advanced standing at other post-secondary institutions.

**Plagiarism:**

Students should refer to the definition of “academic dishonesty” in the *Student Code of Conduct*. Students who engage in “academic dishonesty” will receive an automatic failure for that submission and/or such other penalty, up to and including expulsion from the course/program, as may be decided by the professor/dean. In order to protect students from inadvertent plagiarism, to protect the copyright of the material referenced, and to credit the author of the material, it is the policy of the department to employ a documentation format for referencing source material.

**Course Outline Amendments:**

The professor reserves the right to change the information contained in this course outline depending on the needs of the learner and the availability of resources.

Substitute course information is available in the Registrar's office.

**VII. PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT:**

Students who wish to apply for advanced credit in the course should contact Student Services in E1101. Credit for prior learning will be given upon successful completion of a challenge exam or portfolio.

**VIII. DIRECT CREDIT TRANSFERS:**

Students who wish to apply for direct credit transfer (advanced standing) should contact the Language and Communication Department Co-ordinator. Students will be required to provide a transcript and course outline related to the course.