

EL DORADO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Educational Services

Course of Study Information Page

Course Title: Technical Communication (#485)	
Rationale: A continuum of courses, including advanced classes in computer technology is needed. At Union Mine, the 4x4 schedule creates an immediate need for additional elective options. This course provides the opportunity for students to increase their technical skills through a year-long (one term) course. In addition, this course offers students the opportunity to explore technical communications as a possible career option.	
Course Description: This course provides an introduction to the field of technical communication. Students will learn how to communicate effectively based on the purpose, subject, audience and approach required by their employer. They will learn how to communicate as an independent communicator or as part of a team using a wide range of electronic tools. Students will be creating technical directions, instruction manuals, reports and proposals, advertising, and other promotion materials, such as news releases and fliers for specific areas of business, including scientific, engineering, computer, etc. related business. Students will be required to create a portfolio of their work for prospective employers.	
How Does This Course Align With or Meet State and District Content Standards? The currently adopted District Technology Standards support this course. (See El Dorado County Technology Competencies: Grades 9-12). In addition, the Language Arts Standards and the National Technology Standards from ISTE also support this type of course. Further, the District's Strategic Plan supports the integration of School-to-Career components within courses of study (See Focus Group - School-to-Career). Finally, this course introduces students to a relatively new field of employment with incredible opportunities for employment.	
Length of Course:	One term @ UMHS; One Semester @ all other sites
Grade Level:	10-12
Credit: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Number of units <u>10 @ UMHS; 5 per Semester @ all other sites</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets graduation requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Request for UC "a-f" requirements <input type="checkbox"/> College Prep <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elective <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational	
Prerequisites:	Computer Technology 473 (UMHS) or two semesters of Computer Technology (EDHS, PHS, ORHS, IHS) and recommendation from the most recent English teacher
Department(s):	Business/Technology
District Sites:	All
Board of Trustees Adoption Date:	January 23, 2001
Textbook(s)/Instructional Materials	June Dostal and Deborah St. Vincent, <i>Technical Communication, A Guided Approach</i> , West Publishing Company, 1997
Date Adopted by the Board of Trustees:	May 8, 2001

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UNIT #1: Communication for Career Success

GOAL: Students will be introduced to the concept of communication on the job; the role of teamwork in the workplace; and explore job search techniques

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Understand the definition of communication	Read a short description of a real person who uses technical communication on the job
Understand how communication on the job differs from communication at school	Self-evaluation communication skills survey
Understand the meaning of technical communication	Do an Internet search using "technical communication" or "technical writing" as the key words
Understand key terms	Create a database on the computer with key terms and definitions
Understand the characteristics of a successful working team	Read about the experiences of a real team in the work place
Understand the advantages of working in teams	Brainstorm types of teams and the roles of the individual team members and rank their success
Use brainstorming techniques to solve problems	Simulation activity with a current school problem
Use buzz groups to solve problems	Use a real problem to explore the benefits of small vs. large group problem-solving
Follow team guidelines	Review a list of typical team guidelines
Work cooperatively as a team	Use the Triad Review technique to review the contents of this chapter as a team
Know the sources for finding a job	Explore a variety of types of job listings, including newspapers, internet, professional organizations, employment agencies, networking, etc.
Complete a job application form	Complete an application form
Format a letter of application and resume	Create a letter and resume
Understand proper behavior during an interview	Class interview simulations using typical questions
Format a follow-up letter	Create a follow-up letter
Know what is required to maintain a job	Review the SCANS competencies

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Compose and format employment documents	Create personal stationary and documents
Create a portfolio	Complete a Summary Portfolio Sheet for each activity
Find a Business Coach	Locate, with your instructor's help, a Business Coach to advise you during this class Schedule regular meetings to review your portfolio

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UNIT #2: Gathering Information

GOAL: Students will be introduced to the concept of interviews with subject-matter experts and the role and purpose of surveys, as well as how to analyze the resulting data

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Understand what a subject-matter expert is	Read real-life example
Understand how to prepare for an interview with a subject-matter expert	Review the process and develop appropriate questions using instruction manuals from various occupations
Understand how to conduct an interview with a subject-matter expert	Simulate interviews in the classroom
Understand how to record the results of an interview with a subject-matter expert	Using prepared notes, have students evaluate the effectiveness of word-for-record recording vs. key concept recording, audio/video recording, etc.
Understand key terms	Record, define and update key terms in your computer database
Conduct a real interview with a subject-matter expert and record the results	Complete the interview process with a selected subject-matter expert and create a report for the student portfolio
Understand the purpose of a survey	Review sample surveys from a variety of sources
Understand the elements of good questionnaire design	Read the guidelines for a good survey
Design a questionnaire	Create a questionnaire using either-or, multiple choice, graded scale, short answer, rank-order, etc. for a specific purpose
Conduct a survey	Administer the survey to a group
Understand how to tally the results of a survey	Using a spreadsheet program tabulate and analyze the questionnaire data
Reach a conclusion based on the findings of a survey and report the results	Prepare a report of the results of the survey using a word processing program and charts and graphs and present it to the class
Add to your portfolio	Complete a Summary Portfolio Sheet for each activity
Meet with your Business Coach	Schedule regular meetings with your Business Coach to review your portfolio

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UNIT #3: Writing Technical Documents

GOAL: Students will be introduced to the basics of technical writing, including the process, how to determine the audience, how to present ideas in an organized fashion, how to define key terms, keep sentences readable and how to select words carefully; how to select and incorporate the appropriate visuals and graphics; how to write process and mechanism descriptions; how to create a set of instructions; and how to create a training manual

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Understand the three stages of writing	Read the section on the three stages: planning, writing and editing/revising a document
Follow an organized process of writing	List the steps a person would follow to create a course syllabus for this course
Understand key terms	Record, define and update key terms in your computer database
Understand the importance of audience analysis before writing	Given a topic, determine what different types of audiences might want to know about the topic
Understand how to go about analyzing an audience	Read the section on audience analysis
Use an audience-analysis checklist	Create an audience analysis checklist that includes a description of the primary audience, secondary audience, reader's purpose in reading, reader's experience level, educational level, attitude and the best format for a specific topic
Write an outline covering main points	Arrange a given set of information into a formal and informal outline
Understand different types of outlines	Read section on the types of outlines
Understand and use different methods of organization	Read section on the types of organization such as chronological, spatial, comparison and contrast, most important to least important and cause and effect
Follow guidelines for writing clear paragraphs	Read section on writing clear paragraphs and re-write sample paragraphs so they meet the requirements
Understand the importance of defining terms	Review examples and determine needed revisions
Know the difference between informal and formal definitions	Read the section on informal and formal definitions and define terms using both types of definitions

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Use expanded definitions for supporting information	Using definitions already generated expend them by using examples, applications and illustrations
Write sentences of an acceptable length for a technical audience	Review a group of sentences and analyze the number of subordinate clauses. Determine the best length (12-25 words). Also incorporate variety into your revisions.
Avoid choppy sentences	Examine choppy sentences for common problems and revise them
Write at a reading level that can be understood by all prospective readers	Using the Fog Index, determine the readability of several documents
Use simple words that are readily understood	Revise a document based on "simple" word choice
Avoid using redundant words and phrases	Analyze a document for redundant word
Avoid gender-biased language	Analyze a document for gender-biased language
Use active voice Avoid the use of "There is" and "It is" at the beginning of sentences	Revise sample documents so that the voice is active rather than passive
Understand what types of visuals may be used with oral and written presentations	Read section to determine the types of visuals used in presentations
Understand and apply guidelines for different kinds of visuals used in oral and written presentations	Review the guidelines for visuals, and make a list of suggested visuals for a written report and an oral presentation based on teacher provided samples
Understand the need for process and mechanism descriptions	Write a description of an object in the classroom without naming it. Exchange papers and see if a classmate can determine what it is
Understand the basic parts of process and mechanism descriptions	Read and discuss the section in the book
Understand the basic parts of a set of instructions and what types of information are found in each part	List the parts of a set of instructions
Compose and format instructions	Choose a common task and create a set of instructions that is appropriate for the target audience
Understand what a training manual is	Examine several manuals for common tools
Understand how to plan a training manual	List common features of training manuals
Understand the parts of a training manual	Read the section in the book detailing the parts of a training manual
Compose a training manual	Choose a common object and create a training manual for a novice audience

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Add to your portfolio	Complete a Summary Portfolio Sheet for each activity
Meet with your Business Coach	Schedule regular meetings with your Business Coach to review your portfolio

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UNIT #4: Writing Business Correspondence

GOAL: Students will be introduced to the basics of business correspondence writing, including memos, email, and types of business letters

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Understand what a memo is and when it is used	Read the section in the textbook
Understand the parts of a memo	Review several samples and list the common parts of a memo
Understand what constitutes good memo layout	Read the section in the textbook
Understand the uses of email	Review the section in the textbook and several samples of email
Review creating bullets, boldface and other styles	Using a word processor, review the various style options available for word documents
Understand key terms	Record, define and update key terms in your computer database
Understand the parts of a business letter	Review the section in the textbook
Understand the different formats for a business letter	Review samples of the various styles for business letters and create an illustration for each type
Understand the different functions of a business letter	Read the section in the textbook and review sample letters to determine the functions for each one
Create envelopes for business letters	Use a computer to create the proper format for envelopes
Understand how to properly fold letters for insertion into different types of envelopes	Review the section in the textbook and fold several letters using different styles of envelopes
Add to your portfolio	Complete a Summary Portfolio Sheet for each activity
Meet with your Business Coach	Schedule regular meetings with your Business Coach to review your portfolio

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UNIT #5: Writing Reports

GOAL: Students will be introduced to the different types of reports including informational reports, scientific reports and specialized reports

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Understand what an informational report is	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand the basic parts of an informational report	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand the format of an informational report	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Compose and format a variety of informational reports, field trip, progress, inspection and incident	Using teacher created materials, create a report for each format
Understand key terms	Record, define and update key terms in your computer database
Understand what an analytical or scientific report is	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understanding the value of outlining	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how to construct a decimal outline	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand the parts of an analytical report	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand the format of an analytical report	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Compose and format an analytical report	Using teacher created materials, create an analytical report
Understand the contents of informational reports with special formats: policy statements, proposals, minutes of a meeting, etc.	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Format and compose a policy statement	Using teacher created materials, create policy statement
Format and compose a proposal	Using teacher created materials, create a proposal

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Formal and compose minutes of a meeting	Using teacher created materials, create the minutes of a meeting
Add to your portfolio	Complete a Summary Portfolio Sheet for each activity
Meet with your Business Coach	Schedule regular meetings with your Business Coach to review your portfolio

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UNIT #6: Writing for Publication

GOAL: Students will be introduced to the different types of reports including informational reports, scientific reports and specialized reports

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Understand the purpose of a news release	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand the elements of a news release	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Format a news release	Using teacher created materials, format a news release
Compose a news release	Using teacher created materials, create a news release
Understand key terms	Record, define and update key terms in your computer database
Understand the purpose of a newsletter	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Format a newsletter	Using teacher created materials, form at a newsletter
Compose a newsletter	Using teacher created materials, create a newsletter
Understand the emotional appeals used in writing advertising copy for magazines, newspapers and packages	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand the three P's of writing advertising copy	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand the elements of advertising copy	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how ad copy is tested before and after it is written	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Write advertising copy for a magazine, newspaper and packages	Using teacher created materials, write an advertising copy for a magazine, newspaper and a package
Add to your portfolio	Complete a Summary Portfolio Sheet for each activity

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will: Meet with your Business Coach	Schedule regular meetings with your Business Coach to review your portfolio

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UNIT #7: Learning More Communication Skills

GOAL: Students will be introduced to techniques to help them read, listen and speak on the job

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Understand how to read for information	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how to develop a useful technical vocabulary	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how to read to summarize	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how to read to understand and accomplish a task	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand key terms	Record, define and update key terms in your computer database
Understand the listening process	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand good and bad listening habits	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how to listen actively	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Practice good listening skills	While the teacher reads a short piece, you take notes and prepare to summarize what has been said
Understand how to communicate through messages	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how to give a technical briefing	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how to present a technical paper	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand the different roles people assume during meetings	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how to make an effective sales demonstration	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Practice effective public speaking techniques	Choose a topic and prepare a presentation

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Add to your portfolio	Complete a Summary Portfolio Sheet for each activity
Meet with your Business Coach	Schedule regular meetings with your Business Coach to review your portfolio

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UNIT #8: Looking at Technology

GOAL: Students will look at the impact of technology on the world of work in the present and in the future

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Understand how technology has changed	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Become familiar with current technologies	Conduct an Internet search for current technology used in the workplace
Understand how to use the Internet at work	Conduct an Internet search for current practices regarding the Internet in the workplace
Understand how technological changes predicted for the future may affect technical communication	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand how the world of work may change in the future	Read the section in the textbook and review the examples given
Understand key terms	Record, define and update key terms in your computer database
Add to your portfolio	Complete a Summary Portfolio Sheet for each activity
Meet with your Business Coach	Schedule regular meetings with your Business Coach to review your portfolio

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UNIT #9: Simulation Activity

GOAL: Students will apply all the skills and expertise they have gained throughout this course and participate in a real-life simulation

OBJECTIVES	SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES
The student will:	
Understand how all the previous activities can be used in a real work simulation	Students participate in a simulation activity
Add to your portfolio	Complete a Summary Portfolio Sheet for each activity
Meet with your Business Coach	Schedule regular meetings with your Business Coach to review your portfolio