Central Methodist University

English 306 Syllabus—Spring 2021

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Stephen Carr

Office Location: CU425

Telephone Number:

Email Address: [scarr@centralmethodist.edu](mailto:scarr@centralmethodist.edu) (best contact method)

Office Hours: by appointment, or Th 12:15 to 1:00

**Course Information**

Course Name*:* Technical Writing: English 306C

1:00 to 2:15 pm, Th, 3 Credit Hours, Classic 200

Web Site: myCMU

**Course Description**

EN306 Technical Writing. 3 hours. This advanced course is designed to relate to the specific needs of upper-level students in technical fields with an emphasis on work-related forms. Technical writing is a mode of information management designed either to prompt action (persuasive documents such as proposals) or to enable action (instructions and informative reports). EN306 introduces students to different forms of technical writing (and not necessarily business writing) and to critical thinking and communication skills. Students will write memos and business letters as well as lengthy, detailed, and researched documents, proposals and reports. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to analyze the purpose for, and audience for, documents produced in technical fields and will be able to manage information in order to produce clear, effective technical documents. Either EN305 or EN306 is required of all students. Prerequisites: EN120 (or EN110/111) and junior standing. Fall and Spring.

**Course Objectives**

* Students will find existing sources of information on a topic using print and electronic resources.
* Students will evaluate the accuracy and validity of information presented in a wide variety of media.
* Students will cite sources in a standardized format and in accordance with CMU's Academic Honesty Policy.
* Students will write a logically developed, organized documents or presentation using standard grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling.
* Both orally and in writing students will articulate ideas clearly and logically for varied audiences and purposes.

**Required Reading/Texts:**

Handouts, Videos, and Readings as assigned by the instructor. No textbook required

**Assignments and Grading**

Discussion Posts, Reflections,

In-Class Writing 300 (15 x 15)

Writing Center 50 (2 x 25)

Brochure 50

Claim Letter 50

Tip Sheet 50

Resume/Cover Letter

Draft 25

Final 75

Final Research Project

Project Proposal 25

Draft 25

Peer Review 25

Class Presentation 25

Final Report 100

Final Exam 100

**Total 900 Total**

**Letter Grades:**

A 90-100% B 80-89% C 70-79% D 60-69% F Below 60%

**Technical Writing—Grading Rubric:** Theeight measures of excellence in technical communication: honesty, clarity, accuracy, comprehensiveness, accessibility, conciseness, professional appearance, and correctness.

**An A document** is unquestionably effective and actively helps solve problems and facilitates action. This document is clearly tailored to a specific, well-defined audience and shows a clear understanding of its purpose. These types of documents will transmit all the proper information completely, honestly, and accurately, and the information itself will be well-conceived and thoughtful. This document anticipates and accounts for all reader needs. Not only is it free of spelling and grammar errors, but the writing is also clear, concise, and efficient. Its design doesn’t just fit all appropriate conventions, but also contributes to its purpose by organizing information in a way that makes the information easy to read and find. The visual layout of an A paper is clean, compelling, un-intimidating, and professional; it actively contributes to the management of the document’s information. Likewise, when necessary and appropriate, an A paper will clearly, accurately, and honestly cite all outside sources. In short, an A document goes above and beyond.

**A B-range document** is one that is likely to get the job done but is less effective or makes the reader work harder than does an A document. A B document does nothing to get in the way of user action but doesn’t work very hard to actively aid that action, either. A B-range document transmits all the most pertinent information, but is less clear, efficient, complete, or accurate, while doing so. The information transmitted in the document will be reasonably thoughtful and well-conceived. The organization and design of a B document is useable and approachable, but is not immediately compelling, intuitive, or efficient. The style of a B document is mostly clear but might be marred by small grammar and proofreading errors or less clean and efficient sentences. When necessary and appropriate, a B paper will clearly, accurately, and honestly cite all outside sources. A B range document is one that could be used by most readers, but would likely be rejected by skeptical, fastidious or needy readers.

**A C-range document** is useable one a basic level, but it is not nearly as effective as it could be and makes readers work hard to understand and use the document and its information. C range documents meet the most basic assignment guidelines, and only basic (not advanced and nuanced) reader needs. C documents will provide most of the most essential information, but little else. The information transmitted in C documents might not be well thought out or as well conceived as possible, but still feature fundamentally workable ideas. These documents will not facilitate easy retrieval or use of this information and may even work to hinder use and retrieval. C documents suffer from grammar and proofreading errors and are formatted poorly or inefficiently. C work may or may not possess properly formatted citations of outside sources. A C document might be used by an eager or particularly forgiving reader but would not be readily embraced by neutral or uninterested readers.

**A D-range document** is an ineffective document. Usually documents falling in the D range show limited understanding of the assignment and/or the conventions of technical writing, suffer from glaring omissions, and have little to no sense of the document’s purpose or audience. The content of D documents will be under-thought and poorly conceived. D work has several grammar and proofreading errors, has key pieces of information missing, and is inefficiently organized. D documents are formatted incorrectly, and improperly documented sources are also a hallmark of a D document.

**A document that receives an F** is aggressively ineffective. Such documents are usually unrelated (or only tangentially related) to the assignment and make no effort at thinking through purpose and audience. Sloppily documented sources indicate an F.

**A plagiarized document** (see course syllabus, and the CMU handbook pg. 38-39) will receive a zero and will not be revisable. This is in addition to any penalties that might be imposed by CMU administration.

Note: Keep in mind that each document is different and has its own strengths and weaknesses, as so grades are based on a preponderance of qualities that fall within each grade level. Individual strengths and weaknesses that fall outside the core description of your work are accounted for by adjusting the base grade up or down. Thus, minuses and plusses are possible.

**Policies**

**Attendance:**

* I'm not going to pretend that we could/should all be present all the time in the classroom space, even if we feel healthy. There are many variables. Here are a few:
  + **If you are feeling healthy, good, have kept yourself generally safe, and you’re able to be present in the classroom, please join me and your classmates in the classroom.  I really want you to be here if you are able.**
    - **If you are feeling ill:**please keep us all safe and attend via Zoom, if you feel well enough to do so.  Also, be sure to get tested & let me know how you're doing.
    - **If your roommate(s) feel ill:**please keep us all safe and attend via Zoom. Also, suggest they get tested & let me know how you all are doing.
    - **If your roommate(s) was recently diagnosed with COVID and asked to quarantine:**please make sure you are symptomless and test negative before you join the classroom space.
    - **If you choose to be irresponsible and attend a** [**super-spreader event**](https://www.pennmedicine.org/updates/blogs/health-and-wellness/2020/december/covid-super-spreader)**:** please do not attend my class until you test negative.
  + **If you are unable to be present in the classroom for any of the above reasons, please attend via the class Zoom ID: 660 248 6881**
    - In Zoom, consider your attendance on Zoom as a representation of your in-class effort & attention.  This means that I would prefer you to have your camera on and be in a position to engage with the classroom discussion and activities.
      * Please be clothed.
      * If you're uncomfortable with your immediate surroundings, please download a [virtual background](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/210707503-Virtual-Background) or use one provided by Zoom (there is a reason I'm always on Tatooine when I Zoom from home).
      * Please do not smoke or drink alcohol while on Zoom.
      * Please keep yourself muted if you're in a place that includes distractions or ambient noise.  You're welcome to engage the conversation by unmuting yourself at any point.
        + Consider using headphones for your own ability to attend to the class discussions & activities.
      * Do not drive and Zoom.
        + If you're a passenger in a vehicle, please follow the above guidelines about being muted.
      * If you will struggle, or feel uncomfortable, with any of the above suggestions, please let me know and let's work toward solutions.
  + **Please don't schedule work, athletic meetings, or other appointments during class time.**
    - I understand it can be hard to navigate schedules occasionally, but you are responsible for attending to your classroom experience throughout the semester.
  + **Lastly, I've been a student and I understand that, occasionally, we all need a break.**  There will be times when I'll need to cancel class due to life circumstances--such cancellations happen at least one or two times every semester.  Regularly, though, I commit to being here and attending to my teaching.  I ask that you to commit to being here and attending to your learning.
    - If a lack of attention and/or attendance becomes a continued obstacle for your learning, we'll discuss possibilities for dropping the course and retaking it when you can dedicate time to attend and commit to your education.

**Accountability:**

* Extreme circumstances aside, you are accountable for your presence and labor during the 16-week semester.  That is, regardless of whether you choose to attend class in-person, if you choose to attend class via Zoom, or if you choose to be absent, you are still accountable for completing course labor in a timely manner as it is assigned.
* At the 5-week, 8-week, and 12-week marks, I will be gauging attendance and accountability patterns and, if there is reason for concern, I may recommend that you drop the course.  Please make the semester beneficial to all of us by holding yourself accountable for your regular presence, your attention, and your timely labor.

**Mask Policy:**

* Masks should [cover your mouth and nose](https://bloximages.chicago2.vip.townnews.com/journalinquirer.com/content/tncms/assets/v3/editorial/a/4d/a4df6a62-80ba-11ea-a6b9-c7c2ce178309/5e99c25680766.image.jpg?resize=1200%2C527) at all times.  No dangling masks below your nose.  Do not pull your mask down to talk.
* Do not eat in class.  Please eat before class or after class in a space where you can safely remove your mask.

**Other Policies:**

**Peer Review:**  Peer review will be an important part of this class because feedback and revision are necessary in learning to improve one’s writing. This likely will be a fun part of the class, and I think it will help all students.

**Late Work**: Work turned in late is reduced 5% for each late day. Work that is more than seven days late is not accepted unless the student has spoken with and made arrangements with the instructor.

**ADA Accommodation:** Any student who feels that he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At that time, we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs, and explore possible accommodations.

**Academic Conduct/Plagiarism at CMU:** Plagiarized work will result in a grade of zero being given for the assignment containing the plagiarized work, and the student’s name being submitted to the CMU administration for further penalties. Please consult the “Academic Conduct” policy in the CMU Catalog

**Harassment:** Central Methodist University expects all members of its community to treat one another with respect and dignity. CMU prohibits harassment on its campus, based on an individual’s race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other proscribed category set forth in federal or state regulations.

**Technology Policy:** Please do not use messaging, phone calls, video, etc. during class time, which is focused time. Yes, emergencies may arise and that is understandable and can be accommodated. Still, the default mode in class is phones on silent.

**Course Complaint Protocol:** If you have complaints or concerns about me or about this class, please follow accepted protocol in seeking solutions and redress: discuss your concerns first and foremost with me. Then, if you feel I have inadequately addressed your concerns, direct your complaints to Dr. Travis Johnson, Division Chair, Cupples 426.

**Central Methodist University Mission Statement**

Central Methodist University prepares students to make a difference in the world by emphasizing academic and professional excellence, ethical leadership, and social responsibility.

**Central Methodist University Mission Creed**

The Central Methodist University community, consistent with its United Methodist heritage, strives for academic excellence, individual achievement, and social responsibility. As members of that community we believe in:

• seeking knowledge, truth, and wisdom;

• valuing freedom, honesty, civility, and

diversity;

• living lives of service and leadership; and

• taking responsibility for ourselves and the

communities in which we live.

**English 306—Schedule**

Available soon.