

English 259 Faculty Information Sheet

Understanding the Course

Course Rationale

Who takes ENG 259, and how do students learn to write in this course? ENG 259 improves and expands the foundation of reading, writing, and critical thinking skills students have acquired in ENG 101. Faculty teach specialized writing genres relevant to engineering, mathematics, and science majors. Students produce a range of technical writing documents that may include descriptions, instructions, memos, letters, reports, charts, proposals, or presentation slides. Faculty encourage students to pay close attention to the rhetorical context of these documents. Students develop a heightened awareness of the target reading audiences' need for information, implement writing strategies to meet this need, and, ultimately, address the writing purpose.

What makes for successful technical writing? Faculty will emphasize key characteristics of successful technical writing, which include clarity, concision, correctness, and coherence. Building on the understanding of the writing process gained in English 101, faculty should support students' revising and editing practices to enable students to produce stronger technical writing. Faculty will help students identify and implement effective visual design features (i.e. subheadings, variations of typeface, bullets, and graphics) into their technical documents so readers can easily read, comprehend, and retain the message.

Faculty are also encouraged to learn about the linguistic diversity of the students in their classrooms and incorporate students' language abilities into their classroom practices or activities. Such efforts will not only allow students to feel more comfortable with producing technical writing, but they also help prepare them to better understand and accommodate the linguistic diversity of their prospective target reading audiences.

What will students produce by the end of ENG 259? By the end of a semester, students will produce a 1200-1500-word technical report. This high-stakes assignment, designed specifically for implementation in ENG 259, aligns with LaGuardia's General Education Core Competencies and Abilities in global learning and writing. The technical report asks students to investigate a global problem and research its potential solutions. Instructors may choose a common theme (i.e. global water scarcity) for shared readings and discussion, or students may choose individualized topics, possibly guided by global problems they identify within their respective disciplines of engineering, mathematics, or science.

Course Description

This course will focus on the role of writing in engineering, mathematics, and computer science. Topics will include practical formats within technical writing, expository writing on scientific and technological subjects, and other compositional and rhetorical strategies that develop and improve students' abilities in effective written communication. Students will produce a range of documents meant to demonstrate effective verbal and visual technical writing characteristics.

Instructional Objectives for the Course

1. Reinforce the practice of writing as a process that involves pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, proofreading, critiquing, and reflection.
2. Reinforce students' skill in writing clearly, coherently, and concisely in general academic formats (summaries, response papers, and research-oriented reports) and technical writing genres (memos, letters, infographics, and professional reports) with an emphasis on writing as a critical thinking process. Written documents will vary in length between 200 and 1500 words, using standard written English (SWE).
3. Familiarize students with written communication practices within engineering, technical, and scientific-oriented professions.
4. Enable students to determine and adhere to the purpose for writing, allowing them to formulate and clearly articulate a stance.
5. Enable students to become attentive to the target reading audience so they can effectively determine and utilize appropriate formats and rhetorical strategies to accommodate audience expectations for genre conventions as well as need for information.
6. Foster students' attentiveness to their own linguistic differences and practices and those of their target audiences to practice clear and culturally responsible communication.
7. Reinforce students' information literacy skills by reiterating and providing opportunities to conduct effective research practices involving library databases and online sources.
8. Reinforce students' ability to evaluate and synthesize research sources and integrate them effectively into written documents while employing the conventions of ethical attribution and citation and avoiding plagiarism.
9. Foster students' global learning by allowing them opportunities to advance their knowledge about global issues and consider opportunities for ethical engagement as global citizens and future professionals within engineering, technical, and scientific fields.

Grading Standards

The final course grade must consider the following in addition to other relevant assignments:

- ❖ Four Staged Technical Writing documents (i.e. memos, letters, proposals)
- ❖ Five Informal Writing Assignments
- ❖ Final Draft of the Global Learning Technical Report

The following are basic guidelines for the above grading standards:

- ❖ The number of staged technical writing documents is a guideline, which faculty should feel free to adjust at their discretion. However, it's important that students have opportunities to practice key research and writing skills and receive feedback on their work prior to drafting the final technical report assignment.

- ❖ The course can be organized around the final technical report assignment. For example, instructors may assign low and mid stakes research and writing tasks from the beginning of the semester that will allow students to produce a mini-technical report (1-2 pages) toward the middle of the semester. Students may continue building on this report to produce the final technical report assignment.
- ❖ Students' final technical report will also include their reflections on how performing the assignment has affected their understanding of themselves as global citizens as well as future professionals in the 21-st century world.

Language for the Syllabus

As usual, please also include the following on your syllabus:

- Your own information, including office location, e-mail, and office hours.
- **Mode of instruction (online-synchronous, online-asynchronous, online-mix, hybrid, or in person).** See LaGuardia's student-facing guidelines for online learning [here](#).
- If your section has a theme, discuss and explain that in the syllabus.
- **The performance objectives (found on the Student Intro sheet) and catalog description (found on this faculty sheet).**
- **The Pathways SLOs for English Composition** (found [here](#) and on SharePoint)
- Required materials (textbooks and other) and how to obtain them.
- Clear grading policies, including how each assignment factors into the overall course grade.
- Assignment submission guidelines and late submission policies.
- Revision policies (including deadlines and how revisions are graded).
- **UPDATED! The English Department's updated policy on attendance and engagement is available [here](#). Optional sample statements on attendance and participation for your syllabus are available [here](#).**
- Other requirements you find necessary (i.e. always have readings available, come prepared for class, etc.).
- Weekly calendar of readings and assignments (ideally for the whole semester; at a minimum for the first weeks leading up to the first major technical writing document).
- Policies on plagiarism. Include the following section ad verbatim:

Academic Dishonesty

This class will be conducted in compliance with LaGuardia Community College's Academic Dishonesty policy. All students are responsible for preparing and presenting original work. In accordance with the college's policy, the penalty for plagiarized work ranges "from a grade of "F" on a given test, research paper or assignment, to an "F" in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the College." Please refer to the [college catalog for a more complete discussion of academic dishonesty](#).

English Department Attendance Policy (Updated January 2024)

In all English department courses, students can be absent without penalty for no more than **two weeks' worth** of class time during **session I**, and **one week's worth** of class time during **session II**. Absences begin to be counted on the first day of class, regardless of when you registered.

This means you can miss:

- 6 hours in a 3-hour per week course
- 8 hours in a 4-hour per week course
- For ENA 101, which meets for 7 hours a week, students are limited to:
 - 8 hours of absence in the ENG 101 course and 6 hours of absence in the ENA 101 course.

Students missing less than two weeks' worth of class time will not be penalized for those absences. However, student engagement, which is part of the overall course grade, relies on in-class activities such as low-stakes writing assignments, peer review, and in-class high stakes essays. Some of these cannot be made up outside of class and may affect the engagement grade.

Students who exceed the two-week limit may receive a lower course grade. After four weeks of absence, students can no longer pass the course.

This policy applies equally across in-person, online-synchronous, hybrid and online-asynchronous courses. For hybrid courses, which meet once a week in-person and have a weekly asynchronous activity, missing the weekly asynchronous activity counts as an absence. For online-asynchronous courses, your instructor's syllabus will explain how attendance will be counted.

Please note: Web Attendance is no longer in operation at the college, but faculty should still take attendance using any convenient method (e.g. sign-in sheet, paper checklist, Excel spreadsheet) and keep those records for submission at the end of the semester.

- For online class sessions, attendance can be indicated by showing up to a Zoom class session, logging into Blackboard, or engaging with a class assignment.
- If a student is nearing or exceeding the number of allowed absences, this should be used as an opportunity for intervention. The faculty member can reach out to the student to discuss the importance of attendance to their success in the course and/or submit an advising intervention request on C2C (see guidelines for doing so on SharePoint).
- If a student is at the absence limit but is consistently submitting course work and wants to engage, please continue to work with that student. On the other hand, if a student disappears for many weeks in a row, they may have missed too much work to pass. Faculty should communicate that passing the course is based on timely and satisfactory work.
- Please do not tell students to drop your course even if they are over the absence limit. Only an advisor can suggest the best course of action for a student.

Reminder

While there are certain areas (revision, engagement) where instructors have latitude in deciding policies for individual sections (how many revisions per paper they accept, etc.) individual syllabi should not contradict the established policies of the college or department. For example, you cannot assign fewer than the required number of technical documents overall.

Guidelines for Submitting Textbook Information, Teaching Materials, and Student Work

Before the semester begins:

Whatever text you choose to use in English 259 (see suggested texts below), you are also required to submit that information via CUNY First before the semester begins, and ideally around the same time you submit your textbook orders to the bookstore as well. Please submit your syllabi to Lara V. Kattekola (lkatttekola@lagcc.cuny.edu), Technical Writing Course

Coordinator, at the beginning of the semester according to the syllabi review deadlines on the faculty guidelines.

During the last week of the semester:

Student work should be submitted anonymously for benchmark assessments for the Global Learning competency, via deposit on e-Portfolio. Instructions for submitting to e-Portfolio will be sent to your LaGuardia email account closer to the end of the semester.

Resources

Composition Program Vision Statement

The Writing Program fosters a journey of transformation for all student levels. Writing is a foundation for students' intellectual engagement in the humanities and their participation in a democratic society. To strengthen this foundation, faculty employ inclusive pedagogies that address the diversity of our student population. Our writing courses focus on the integration of reading and writing, using culturally diverse texts to connect critical close reading practices with interpretive claims. Students gain a deeper understanding of the writing process by exploring the relationship between rhetoric and genre, in addition to interrogating digital/multimodal writing practices and contexts. Courses pay significant attention to revision and collaborative student learning.

Writing Program Administrators

If you have any additional questions or need further support, please contact the Writing Program Administrators (Dr. J. Elizabeth Clark, Dr. Tara Coleman, and Dr. Dominique Zino) at wpa.lagcc@gmail.com.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is open for one–on–one tutoring sessions in person (in B-200) and via Zoom. Look out for emails from the Writing Center in the beginning of the semester for more information which you can share with your students.

Important Links

- Teaching Writing at LaGuardia: <https://lagccwriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu>
- College Catalog: <https://www.laguardia.edu/academics/college-catalog/>
- The Lit: <http://thelitmag.com>
- The Bridge: <http://lagccbridge.com>
- The ePortfolio Program at LaGuardia: <https://eportfolio.laguardia.edu/>
- Declaration of Pluralism:
https://www.laguardia.edu/uploadedfiles/main_site/content/academics/departments/mec/doc/student_resources/declaration_of_pluralism.pdf
- Outcomes Assessment: <https://www.laguardia.edu/assessment/>
- Global Learning Core Competency Rubric:
https://www.laguardia.edu/uploadedFiles/Main_Site/Content/Divisions/AA/Assessment/Docs/Inquiry-Problem-Solving.pdf (Scroll to pages 4-5)
- Written Ability Rubric:
https://www.laguardia.edu/uploadedFiles/Main_Site/Content/Divisions/AA/Assessment/Docs/Written-Oral-Digital.pdf
- Center for Teaching and Learning Assignment Library:

<http://shortlib.org/s/assignmentlibrary>

- On Multilingual Pedagogy: <https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/>

Suggested Teaching Resources:

- *Technical Communication* (11th ed.) by Mike Markel -- \$25-\$50 for used copies available through online booksellers (see directtextbook.com); other editions of Markel's text are also fine, but prices will vary.

Free Resources:

- *Mindful Technical Writing* Dawn Atkinson & Stacey Corbitt
<https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/824>
- *Open Technical Communication*
Tiffani Reardon, Tamara Powell, Johnathan Arnett, Monique Logan, & Cassie Race
<https://alg.manifoldapp.org/projects/open-tc>
- *Online Technical Writing: Free Online Textbook for Technical Writing* ,
David McMurray <https://www.prismnet.com/~hcexres/textbook/#design>
- *Technical Writing Essentials* by Suzan Last; contributors, Candice Neveu & Monika Smith <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/technicalwriting/>
- *Technical Writing* Allison Gross, Annemarie Hamlin, Billy Merck, Chris Rubio, Jodi Naas, Megan Savage, and Michele DeSilva
<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/technicalwriting/>