

ETC 324: Electronic and Online Communication
MWSU Division of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Department of English, Foreign Languages, & Journalism
TTh 11:00-12:20 Murphy Hall 119

Instructor: Dr. Cynthia Jenéy

Office: Eder Hall, 222K

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Email: jeney@missouriwestern.edu

Office Hours: TBA

WebBoard: <http://miranda.cailab.missouriwestern.edu:8080/~ETC324>

Required Textbooks:

1. Siegel, Kevin. *Essentials of Macromedia RoboHelp HTML X5*.
2. Selected readings: Handouts, Library, Web
3. Selected readings online: http://wac.colostate.edu/books/selves_societies

Required Materials

- A *working* MWSU email account to which you know the exact address.
- 3.5" PC-formatted floppy disks labeled with your name and ETC 324; store *only* your assignments for *this class* on them (not miscellaneous files).
- Zip disk. Zips will be returned, but store *only* your assignments for *this class* on them (not miscellaneous files).

Recommended:

- A good style/grammar handbook (MLA, APA, AP)

Course Objectives:

Study of communication assignments likely to be encountered by entry-level professionals in various technological settings. Students will practice communication requiring careful on-the-job analysis, planning, preparation, writing and editing. Cases will be used to demonstrate the crucial interaction of elements such as writer's professional role, the audience, the technical and managerial problem, the available information, and the communication assignments. Prerequisites: ENG 108 or 112 and ETC 200. LAS Writing; Computer Literacy.

About the course: This course will be conducted as a writing, writing theory, coding, and pre-professional workshop. We will do some writing for nearly every class period, using both local software and electronic forum. You should print and/or save on disk *all* of your posts to the electronic forum. The overall plan is to spend the first half of the semester on theorizing and practical application of writing in various electronic environments such as electronic mail, the worldwide web, and real-time chat conferencing. The second half of the semester will be devoted to developing skills and abilities with RoboHelp HTML, the industry-wide standard application used for creating help files in computer/online environments. Throughout the semester, we will be reading and commenting on each other's writing both as a class, and in small groups.

Class meetings: Class meetings of upper division courses are conducted under the assumption that students are well-versed in the conventions of college classrooms and academic environments. Come to class prepared, and plan to participate and remain engaged with the materials for the entire class period. In the unlikely and unfortunate event that you find yourself unprepared, come anyway, but I expect you to arrive doubly-prepared the next time. Should the situation become chronic, you may wish to re-examine your priorities for the semester, as this is a writing- and participation-intensive course. In short: develop good academic habits now, or pay later.

This Syllabus: Read this syllabus very carefully, and refer to it often. All information presented here is regarded as part of your own knowledge. All answers to your questions about the class will be based on an assumption that you understand the syllabus and seek further clarification. The teacher reserves the right to alter this syllabus and to make announced changes as need arises during the course of the semester.

Due Dates: Dates for handing in all required assignments are listed in the course schedule. There is no room in the semester calendar for late papers or projects. I do not plan to be accepting late papers, due to the content and pace of the nature class

and its assignments. Make a note of all due dates early, and plan accordingly.

Attendance: A student with more than 4 (M-W) absences will automatically be given a failing grade for the course. It is your responsibility to keep track of your own attendance in the class. Do not bring doctor's excuses or obituaries. If you miss class it is your responsibility to contact a classmate (and of course refer to the class schedule) regarding announcements, assignments, changes, class notes, and additional readings or writing.

Students who consult with me at least 48 hours in advance of known conflicts will be given the option of pre-arranged make-up work on a case-by-case basis. DO contact me in the event of unforeseen hardships and illnesses. Serious efforts to complete the work for this class will be given fair consideration, especially in cases of earnest dedication and hard work. Note: Weddings and trips to Baja do *not* constitute "hardships" or "emergencies."

Contacting the Instructor: Email is a wonderful thing. It does not, however, replace class attendance. Emails asking "What did I miss?" are inappropriate in the college setting. (The answer, by the way, is "You missed class.") Email or telephone your instructor when:

- you don't understand the assignment, or want to clarify some point from class reading or discussion;
- you want to make an appointment to meet out of class;
- you have drafted something that you aren't sure about, and would like some feedback early in the process;
- your Mom has been kidnapped by rogue KGB spies, and you must leave the country to rescue her.

Electronic Forum: Each student will be required to post various written assignments to the class electronic forum. Posts to the forum will be full-length drafts, peer critiques, summaries, analytical questions, and commentaries, based upon the reading and writing assignments in the class. All members of the class will have posting and reading access to the forum on the web.

You must have a *stable* college email account established in order to satisfy this writing requirement for the course. Do not shift around with Yahoo and Hotmail account subscriptions when logging into the WebBoard, as this will confuse the moderator, and possibly cause her to delete your membership accidentally. Expect the usual glitches and snafu's when first getting subscribed to the electronic discussion group. I tend to use different technologies as time goes by, and as internet services evolve. I will try to make it as painless and easy as possible for you, but there is a certain amount of meticulous attention required at the outset, in order to get the forum up and running efficiently for us all.

Assignments: The assignments scheduled for this class are weighted by percentage toward the final grade. They are minimum requirements for passing the course. Failure to complete one or more of the assignments listed in the grading plan will result in a failing grade.

Legal stuff: A note about the writing in this course: although we will all encourage each other to be open and to explore ideas, experiences, thoughts, emotions, and beliefs, assignment drafts and electronic WebBoard posts shall be considered *public* texts. Therefore I have a strict policy against writing about any un-prosecuted crime or suspected illegal activity which you have witnessed, or in which you have been involved. When in doubt, I will always err on the side of safety.

Grading: I expect project assignments to reflect principles and concepts learned in class and in the reading. During the course of the semester you should integrate the stylistic features we have been practicing. I also reward experimentation, for those who have demonstrated competence in the primary skills and theories we are learning. If you want to try an unconventional approach to your paper or project, please see me with a draft and explain what you are attempting, so I will be able to help you succeed with the assignment.

Academic honesty: "Electronic and Online Communication" is NOT about cutting and pasting other people's web sites or electronic posts to UseNet or listservs and handing them in as our own! "Since honesty in the classroom is required, cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the college constitutes a violation." Policy Guide II, B, C. In short, the work you turn in must be your own.

Disabilities: Any student in this course who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should contact the MWSC Special Needs Office as soon as possible so that we can discuss alternative ways to satisfy class requirements:

Location: Eder Hall

Office Hours: 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

Phone: (816) 271-4330

Grading Plan:

20%	Report #1: Rhetoric of Email (analysis)
20%	Report #2: GUI Usability Analysis
20%	WebBoard Postings/Assignments and RoboHelp Modules
30%	RoboHelp Project
10%	<u>In-Class IDR's/CDR's and discussion</u>
100%	Total

ETC 324 Electronic and Online Communication
TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE
SPRING 2006

JANUARY		
T	17	Introduction; syllabus; handouts
Th	19	Intro ETC 324 WebBoard.
T	24	Baron: From Pencils to Pixels. Assign email analysis.
Th	26	Hawisher & Moran: The Rhetorics and Languages of Electronic Mail
T	31	Sims: Electronic Mail in Two Corporate Workplaces; Issues in electronic communication.
FEBRUARY		
Th	2	Smart: A Central Bank's "Communications Strategy": The Interplay of Activity, Discourse Genres, and Technology in a Time of Organizational Change http://wac.colostate.edu/books/selves_societies/smart/
T	7	Email Analysis Workshop.
Th	9	Report #1 Due Rhetoric of Email. Intro Usability and Graphical User Interfaces. Jakob Nielsen.
T	14	Usability Analysis Workshop. (Dautermann article, if time allows)
Th	16	Usability (cont.) Geisler: When Management Becomes Personal: An Activity-Theoretic Analysis of Palm™ Technologies http://wac.colostate.edu/books/selves_societies/geisler/
T	21	Allucquere Rosanne Stone Cyberdammerung at Wellspring Systems.
Th	23	Preparing for Audiences / "Help File Style" (Jen�y)
T	28	Usability Analysis Workshop.
MARCH		
Th	2	Report #2 Due Usability Analysis of Graphical User Interface. Intro RoboHelp.
T	7	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules
Th	9	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules
T	14	SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS MEETING
Th	16	SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS MEETING
T	21	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules
Th	23	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules
T	28	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules
Th	30	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules; Assign Proposal
APRIL		
T	4	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules
Th	6	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules
T	11	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules; Help File Proposals Due
Th	13	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules; RoboHelp Project Workshop; Practice Helpfile Exercise
T	18	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules; RoboHelp Project Workshop
Th	20	RoboHelp HTML X5 Modules; RoboHelp Project Workshop
T	25	RoboHelp Project Workshop
Th	27	CDR's RoboHelp Project Workshop
MAY		

T	2	STUDY DAY—NO CLASS MEETING
T	9	11:30 a.m. - 1:20 p.m FINAL EXAM—CDR's and FINAL ROBOHELP PROJECT DUE