

## PWR 393: TECHNICAL WRITING

Semester: Spring 2006 Meeting Time: MWF 10:20-11:10 Location: Old Main G-17 Credit Hours: 3	Prof. Alex Reid Office: Old Main 115A Office Hours: MF 12:30-1:30 Contact: <a href="mailto:reida@cortland.edu">reida@cortland.edu</a>   753-2069
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### Required Materials

*Adobe InDesign CS2 Classroom in a Book* by Adobe Creative Team, Adobe Press 2005  
ISBN: 0321321855

*The Non-Designer's Design Book*, Second Edition by Robin Williams, Peachpit Press 2003  
ISBN: 0321193857

*Professional Writing Online*, Version 2.0, 2/E by James Porter, Patricia Sullivan, & Johndan Johnson-Eilola Longman 2004  
ISBN: 0-321-16015-0

USB Flash Drive (can be purchased for less than \$20)

### Course Description

Strategies for effective technical communication. Prerequisite: CPN101 or CPN103. (3 cr. hr.)

### Writing Intensive Course

This course fulfills your Writing Intensive (WI) requirement. We will write substantially more than fifteen pages with opportunity for you to revise your work.

### Additional Course Description

The continuing development of technology has had a substantial impact on the necessary skills and knowledge of those entering technical and professional writing careers. Professional writers must have the ability to handle multiple streams of information flowing from sources as varied as personal interviews to databases; they must also work with multiple media—text, image, sound, and video—and prepare communication in a range of forms—print, online, dvd, etc.

That said, the fundamental responsibility of technical writers remains the same: to communicate complex, technical information to a non-technical audience. This task might occur in any number of industries, so while we may typically associate technical writing with computers and engineering, it also takes place in industries dealing with medicine, insurance, finance, legal, media, and many others.

This class approaches the genre of technical writing with broad strokes. While the most typical task of a technical writer might be the production of lengthy, instructional documentation (for example, the textbook on *InDesign* for this course), we will deal more broadly with a range of corporate and public sector communicational challenges including brochures, newsletters, web copy, and proposal writing.

## Grading

Résumé & Letter	05%
Service Learning Project	25%
<i>NeoVox</i> Style Guide	15%
Design Project	15%
Research Project	20%
Participation	20%

### Résumé & Letter

Your first assignment will ask you to produce a résumé and letter that detail your writing and technical experience and describe your goals regarding the course.

### Service Learning Project

Working in groups, you will assist a local nonprofit agency in completing a professional writing project. For this project it will be crucial that your work be produced on time and to the satisfaction of the agency with which you are working. Projects will range from instructional materials to brochures and newsletters.

### *NeoVox* Style Guide

A style guide is a document that assists writers and designers in understanding accepted practices for certain stylistic and documentation practices. MLA style, which you likely learned in CPN, is one example of a style guide (for writing academic papers). This style guide will aid writers, designers, and editors for the online magazine *NeoVox*. For this project, you will work with Lorraine Berry, *NeoVox* director, and other members of the magazine's staff. This will be a class project.

### Design Project

This project will require you to produce a multi-page brochure that will demonstrate your understanding of *InDesign*. For this project you will have the option of working individually or in small groups.

### Research Project

For this project you will produce either an instructional document or a proposal. The projects will be completed in small groups. For instructional documents the topic will be some subject with which you have some experience (e.g. "Idiot's Guide to Surviving Freshman Year"). However, you should expect to do a variety of research (e.g. interviews, online, and traditional, library research).

### Participation

Regular participation in class and on the course blog are required elements of the class. You will be expected to make brief, informal presentations, give feedback during workshops, and keep the class informed as the progress of your various projects.

## Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and on the course blog.

1:23	First Day	3:20	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 9
1:25		3:22	Design Project Meeting
1:27	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 1	3:24	Service Learning Meeting 3
1:30	<b>Résumé and Letter Due</b>	3:27	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 10
2:1	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 2	3:29	Design Project Workshop
2:3	Service Learning Meeting 1	3:31	Service Learning Meeting 4
2:6	<i>Non-Designer's</i> Chapters 1-3	4:3	Research Project Proposals
2:8	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 3	4:5	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 11
2:10	<i>Non-Designer's</i> Chapters 4 & 5	4:7	<b>Design Project Due</b>
2:13	<i>NeoVox</i> Project Meeting 1	4:10	Research Project Meeting
2:15	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 4	4:12	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 12
2:17	Service Learning Meeting 2	4:14	TBA
2:20	<i>Non-Designer's</i> Chapters 6 & 7	4:17	Research Project Meeting 2
2:22	<i>NeoVox</i> Project Meeting 2	4:19	SCHOLAR'S DAY
2:24	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 5	4:21	TBA
2:27	<i>NeoVox</i> Project Meeting 3	4:24	Research Project Workshop
3:1	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 6	4:26	TBA
3:3	<b>NeoVox Style Guide Due</b>	4:28	<b>Research Project Due</b>
3:6	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 7	5:1	Project Presentations
3:8	Design Project Proposals	5:3	Project Presentations
3:10	<i>Adobe InDesign</i> Chapter 8	5:5	Project Presentations
3:13-3:17	SPRING BREAK	5:8	<b>Project Revisions Due</b>