



Course Outline

A POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION

School of Computing and Academic Studies

Program: Pre-Entry Communication

Option: International Program

COMM 0004
Technical Communication Skills for Second
Language Students

Start Date:	May 12, 2003	End Date:	August 15, 2003
Total Hours:	120	Total Weeks:	14
		Term/Level:	Pre-Entry
		Course Credits:	0
Hours/Week:	09	Lecture:	08
		Lab:	01
		Shop:	
		Seminar:	
		Other:	
Prerequisites:	COMM 0003 or the COMM 0009 Placement Test		
	COMM 0004 is a Prerequisite for:		
	COMM 0005 You will need to obtain a minimum grade of 65% in COMM 0004 to enter COMM 0005.		

■ **Course Description**

Prepares students whose English language skills need upgrading to enrol in COMM 0005. Focuses on paragraph writing for technical communication. Students prepare and interpret graphics; write classification, cause and effect, and comparison paragraphs; and make oral presentations. Articulated at Level III of English for Academic Purposes.

■ **Detailed Course Description**

This COMM 0004 consists of 40 three-hour classes. This course is designed to prepare students whose first language is not English, yet who have good writing and speaking skills for study at BCIT. The course focuses on developing reading, writing, speaking, and study skills required for technical and business communication, with heavy emphasis on writing skills.

■ **Evaluation**

Writing Assignments	45%	This term there will be 12 weekly writing assignments. Your final mark for the assignments will be based on 10 assignments (your highest assignment mark and your lowest assignment mark will not be counted).
Midterm Examination	15%	
Oral Presentation	10%	
Professional Participation	5%	
Final Examination	25%	
TOTAL	100%	

■ Course Learning Outcomes/Competencies

When you have successfully completed this course, you should be able to:

WRITING SKILLS

- 1) Organize, draft, revise, and edit a variety of texts
- 2) Identify and correct major grammatical, structural and lexical errors; demonstrate control over sentence structure errors in own reading
- 3) Use a wide range of sentence patterns appropriately in written tasks
- 4) Recognize and demonstrate an understanding of audience (e.g. needs, background knowledge) and purpose
- 5) Use appropriate vocabulary to express message clearly
- 6) Choose and apply appropriate paragraph organization when writing on a familiar, relevant or previously researched subject

READING SKILLS

- 1) Read and understand a wide variety of written materials of moderate length
- 2) Read and analyze a wide range of texts to analyze sentence structures
- 3) Comprehend less familiar and/or technical terms using a range of decoding strategies and context clues
- 4) Adjust reading techniques according to the level of the material and the purpose for reading

SPEAKING SKILLS

- 1) Ask questions to clarify instructions; respond to questions appropriately
- 2) Demonstrate the use of appropriate of verbal and non-verbal communication skills (e.g., turn-taking, eye contact, body language)
- 3) Provide appropriate peer feedback
- 4) Participate effectively in a variety of classroom activities

LISTENING SKILLS

- 1) Understand discussions, instructions, and lectures at a normal rate of speech
- 2) Understand a variety of natural speech with a varied rate of delivery with some dependence on repetition

PRE-WRITING STRATEGIES

- 1) Use brainstorming and outlining as a way to prepare for writing tasks.
- 2) Express ideas by creating and using graphics. These may include: classification trees, tables, flowcharts, and pie charts.

■ Verification

I verify that the content of this course outline is current.

Authoring Instructor

Date

I verify that this course outline has been reviewed.

Program Head/Chief Instructor

Date

I verify that this course outline complies with BCIT policy.

Dean/Associate Dean

Date

Note: Should changes be required to the content of this course outline, students will be given reasonable notice.

■ Instructor

Daniel Adleman

Office Location: SW 1
Office Hrs.: By Appointment

Contact Phone: (604) 618-7172
E-mail Address: danadleman@shaw.ca,
dadleman@my.bcit.ca

■ Learning Resources

The purchase of textbooks **will not be required this term**. All in-class study materials will be photocopied and provided by the instructor.

For your hand-written assignments, you'll need

- 3-hole lined 8-1/2 by 11" notepaper
- a pen (black or blue ink only) or HB pencil
- liquid paper or other means of making corrections neatly
- 2 write – on overhead transparencies
- 2 different colored water-soluble (washable) overhead transparency pens

Recommended: You'll want to have a good **English-to-English dictionary**. I strongly recommend you bring your English dictionary to each class if you want to improve your spelling, vocabulary, and comprehension.

■ Information for Students

Assignments: Late assignments, lab reports or projects will **not** be accepted for marking. Assignments must be done on an individual basis unless otherwise specified by the instructor.

Makeup Tests, Exams or Quizzes: There will be **no** makeup tests, exams or quizzes. If you miss a test, exam or quiz, you will receive zero marks. Exceptions may be made for **documented** medical reasons or extenuating circumstances. In such a case, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor **immediately**.

Ethics: BCIT assumes that all students attending the Institute will follow a high standard of ethics. Incidents of cheating or plagiarism may, therefore, result in a grade of zero for the assignment, quiz, test, exam, or project for all parties involved and/or expulsion from the course.

Attendance: The attendance policy as outlined in the current BCIT Calendar will be enforced. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each session. Students not present at that time will be recorded as absent. Students who are absent for any reason, other than substantial illness, for more than 10% of the time prescribed for the course (4 classes), may not be allowed to complete the course with a passing mark.

Illness: A doctor's note is required for any illness causing you to miss assignments, quizzes, tests, projects, or exam. At the discretion of the instructor, you may complete the work missed or have the work prorated.

Attempts: Students must successfully complete a course within a maximum of three attempts at the course. Students with two attempts in a single course will be allowed to repeat the course only upon special written permission from the Associate Dean. Students who have not successfully completed a course within three attempts will not be eligible to graduate from the appropriate program.

Course Outline Changes: The material or schedule specified in this course outline may be changed by the instructor. If changes are required, they will be announced in class.

■ Assignment Details

You are required to complete all **twelve weekly assignments** for this course as well as write the midterm and the final exam. In-class assignments must be completed and handed in during the class in which they are given. Any take-home assignments must be submitted at the beginning of the next class. Your final mark for assignments [45% of total course mark] will be based on 10 assignments [your highest assignment mark and your lowest assignment mark will not be counted].

If you miss an in-class assignment, it is your responsibility to arrange with the instructor to write it in another class or at another time under the instructor's supervision. If you fail to do so, you will receive a grade of zero for the assignment. Assignments received after other students' marked assignments have been returned will receive comments but no grade.

All writing assignments must meet the following requirements:

- 1) **Acceptable Paper:** Use lined 8 1/2" X 11" notepaper. Please start writing on the side of the page with the holes to the left.
- 2) **Functional Margins:** Leave 1" margins on all sides of the assignment to allow for marking.
- 3) **Proper Identification:** Write your name and course number on the top of each page.

Classroom Methods Used for Communication Courses: We will be using teaching methods which have proven most effective for teaching students at BCIT:

- 1) **Teamwork:** Just as in all courses at BCIT, you will be working in small groups. This will allow you to develop the interpersonal skills you need to succeed at BCIT and in the workplace. You will also learn more in groups as you teach and support each other.
- 2) **Peer-Editing:** We will spend parts of each class editing student writing. As well, you'll work with one or two partners to locate and correct errors in each other's work.
- 3) **Explaining in Your Own Words:** You'll be reading from textbooks, case studies, and handouts and then putting ideas into your own words. You will know you have gained knowledge and language skills when you are able to explain the ideas clearly for your team members and to your instructors.

Schedule

This is a weekly schedule of assignments and test dates. Moreover, students are requested to use the calendar function of <http://my.bcit.ca> as an additional resource.

Week of/ Number	Outcome/Material Covered	Writing Assignment	Reference/Reading
1 & 2			
May 12, 14, 16	Introduction to the Course. Getting to Know Each Other. What's in a Resume? Begin Module One.	HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #1 WRITING A PERSONAL DESCRIPTION	<i>Types of Sentences, Eliminating Errors, Types of Fragments, Main Idea Sentences, Order in Paragraphs</i>
May 21, 23 19 – Victoria Day – College Closed	Intro to the Purposes of Classification. Start the Classification Module.	ASSIGNMENT #2 CREATING A CLASSIFICATION TREE: SURPRISING THINGS	<i>Brainstorming Ideas. Using Prepositions, Subject/Verb Agreement.</i>
3 & 4			
May 26, 28, 30	Classifying Programs at BCIT. Practice using the Language of Classification.	ASSIGNMENT #3	<i>Outlining Paragraphs, Using the Language of Classification effectively.</i>
June 2, 4, 6	Begin Module on Comparison & Contrast. Comparing Typical BCIT Students. Making Effective Comparisons.	HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #4 COMPARING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES	<i>Side-by-Side Comparison format. Using Appropriate Pre-Writing Strategies for Comparisons.</i>
5 & 6			
June 9, 11, 13	Learning How to Write Descriptions of a Technical Nature.	ASSIGNMENT #5 DESCRIBING AND COMPARING TWO LOCATIONS	<i>Sequence and Use of Adjectives in Technical Writing.</i>
June 16, 18, 20	Creating an Outline, Writing, and Evaluation Comparison Paragraphs	ASSIGNMENT #6 COMPARING WORK-RELATED ITEMS USING POINT-BY-POINT FORM	<i>Overview of Advanced Comparative Structures.</i>
7 & 8			

June 23, 25, 27	Complete Module. Prepare for Test. Mid-Term Exam on Tuesday.	NO WRITING ASSIGNMENT	<i>Mastery of Structures of Classification and Comparison. Checking for the Elimination of Errors.</i>
June 30, July 2, 4	Begin Process Description. Giving Step-By-Step Instructions on Paper.	HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #7 WRITING A PROCESS DESCRIPTION FROM INSTRUCTIONS	<i>Using Time & Reason Clauses. Language of Sequencing. Passive / Active Voice.</i>

9 & 10			
July 7, 9, 11	Writing About What Others Have Suggested. Begin Module on Cause & Effect.	HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #8 FOCUSING ON CAUSES WHEN WRITING PERSONAL DETAILS	<i>Direct / Reported Questions and Statements. Writing Cause & Effect Structures.</i>
July 14, 16, 18	How Cause and Effect Language is used in Technical Writing.	ASSIGNMENT #9 WRITING PARAGRAPHS THAT FOCUS ON EFFECTS	<i>Practicing and Expanding Cause and Effect Language.</i>

11 & 12			
July 21, 23, 25	Begin the module entitled Interpreting Visual Data. The Choice of Appropriate Graphic Depends on the Info.	ASSIGNMENT #10 WRITING FLUENTLY FROM AN EXAMPLE GRAPHIC	<i>Expressing Broader Information and Justifying.</i>
July 28, 30 August 1	Paying Particular Attention to the Details of Charts and Graphs.	HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #11 CREATING AN APPROPRIATE GRAPHIC FOR A BUSINESS MEMO	<i>Expressing Broader Information. Thinking Critically About the Readers' Requirements</i>

13 & 14			
August 6, 8 4 – British Columbia Day – College Closed	Beginning of Intensive Course Overview. Individual Oral Presentations.	HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT #12 TBA	<i>Getting Ready for COMM 0005. Overview of Technical Writing.</i>
August 11, 13, 15	Summary of Course Goals. Revision for Exam. Final Exam on Friday	NO WRITING ASSIGNMENT	<i>Review of Structures for Test Preparation</i>