Communication in Technical English

1. Descriptive data of the subject

Studies: Bachelor's degree in Computer Science, Bachelor's degree in Telematics Engineering and Bachelor's degree in Audiovisual Systems Engineering
Course: third
Timetable: first
ECTS credits: 4 credits
Dedication: 100 hours
Language: english
Teachers: Ralph Andrzejak i Narcís Parés

2. Presentation of the subject

The course on communication in technical English is a fundamental course in the degrees of 'Enginyeria en Informàtica', 'Enginyeria en Sistemes Audiovisuals', and 'Enginyeria en Telemàtica'. It will be held in the first trimester of the third academic year. This course does not require pre-knowledge from other courses of the degrees. This course is important for all those courses in the above degrees for which the study of English text books is required. Furthermore, the course is essential to attend classes in the degrees that are presented in English, during which the students have to express themselves in English, and for which homework has to be delivered in English.

The course will instruct the students to comprehend written English text, comprehend spoken English text, and extract information from various English sources on a number of topics. The students will learn how to prepare a written English summary and an oral English presentation on those topics. The importance of English in the context of university studies, science, and the job market will be stressed. Valuable sources of academic and scientific information in English will be indicated to the students. Guidelines for effective verbal and written communication in English will be provided.

3. Competences to be obtained in the subject

General competences	Specific competences
Instrumental Capacity to communicate orally and in writing in English in academic and professional contexts, both before expert and non-expert audiences. Ability to search and manage information. Capacity to analyze, synthesise and organize information. Capacity to apply knowledge to the analysis of situations and problem resolution. *Interpersonal* Capacity to work in international and interdisciplinary contexts. *Systemic* Capacity to recognise and understand diversity and multiculturalism.	• Appreciation of the importance of English for university studies, science, and the engineering job market. • Comprehension of written English text. • Comprehension of spoken English text. • Extraction and distilling of information from various English sources. • Preparation and Presentation of English Seminars. • Proficiency in written and oral communication in English

4. Contents

1) Introduction:
Review of the importance of English in the context of university studies, scientific work, and the modern job market for engineers. Presentation on the language policy of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra.

2) Comprehension of written English text:
Rules for comprehension of written text. Step by step analysis of text about current topics on Engineering - Review of efficient online language tools.

3) Comprehension of spoken English text:
Rules for comprehension of spoken text. Step by step analysis of exemplary information videos about current topics on Engineering.

4) Preparation and presentation of short oral English seminars:
Rules to extract and merge information from various sources. Seminar preparation guidelines. Preparation and presentation of 10 min seminars by students. Questions prepared by another student on the topic just presented. Joint group discussions on the seminars involving the professors and further students. Review of exemplary videos of seminars from actual engineering conferences.

5) Interaction:
Guidelines for effective verbal and written communication.

6) Review of sources of academic and scientific information in English:
Useful sources of news, academic, and scientific information. Sources of academic online lectures.

5. Evaluation of competences achievement

The percentages given in the continued evaluation below correspond to the weights used to determine the grade of the students. Grades will be given on a scale between 1 and 10. A grade of 5 in the continued evaluation is necessary to pass the course. Those students that do not reach a grade of 5 in the continued evaluation must pass an oral/written exam in September in order to pass the course.

Continued evaluation - homework:
Three homework assignments will be carried out.
CH1: Prepare a written summary of an extended written text on a current topic in engineering. Specified at the end of the first seminar session.
20%

CH2: Prepare a written summary of an information video on a current topic in engineering. Specified at the end of the second seminar session.
20%

CH3: A pool of topics will be specified. For each individual topic different sources of information (various texts and information videos) will be specified during the third seminar session. Each individual student has to deliver a written summary on one topic.

20%

All three homework assignments will have to be delivered within one week after their announcement. The evaluation results will be communicated to the students within two weeks after the homework announcement, that is within one week after the delivery.

Continued evaluation - In class:
CC1: In the first seminar session each student has to prepare and present a short oral summary (approximately 2 min) of a short written text.

5 %

CC2: In the second seminar session each student has to prepare and present a short oral summary (approximately 2 min) of a short audio text.

5 %

CC3: Each student has to present a ten minutes seminar based one of the topics specified in CH3. (This topic will not be the same topic as the one for which the individual student prepared the homework CH3. In other words, each student will work with two topics: One for CH3 and one for CC3.) These seminars will be presented in the fourth seminar block and in the fifth practise block. Feedback for the seminar presentation will be given by the professors directly after the presentation. The quantitative evaluation results will be published within one week after the seminar presentation.

20%

CC4: Suppose that in CC3 a student is presenting a seminar on his/her topic. All those students that wrote their homework CH3 on this same topic will have to carry out a joint discussion on that topic after the seminar presentation. Feedback for the seminar discussion will be given by the professors directly after the discussion. The quantitative evaluation results will be published within one week after the seminar presentation.

10%

6. Bibliography and teaching resources

* Technical writing and professional communication: for nonnative speakers of English. Huckin, Thomas N. New York (N.Y.) : McGraw-Hill, 1991 2nd ed.

* Writing for engineers. Van Emden, Joan New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2005 3rd ed.

* The Craft of scientific presentations: critical steps to succeed and critical errors to avoid. Alley, Michael New York [etc.]: Springer, 2003

A variety of didactic online resources will specified during the classes.
A number of valuable of sources of academic and scientific information in English will be specified during the classes.
Documents linking to all the resources will be provided at the Aula-Global Moodle system.

7. Learning methodology

The course corresponds to 4 ECTS corresponding to 100 hours or workload for the students. Each student will attend 18 hours of theory classes, 10 hours of practice sessions, and 8 hours of seminar sessions. Accordingly, 36 hours are spent in classes. A total of 3*6 =18 hours are assigned to the completion of homework CH1, CH2, and CH3. A total of 8 hours are assigned to the preparation of the seminar CC3. The remaining 38 hours should be spent for the study of text books and didactic resources. Different didactic resources will specified during the course.

In the theory classes, the professors will present rules and guidelines for the comprehension of written text, the comprehension of spoken text, and the extraction of information from various sources of information on a certain topic for the preparation of a written summary and an oral presentation on that topic. In the practice sessions, the professors will illustrate the application of these guidelines on concrete examples. In the seminar sessions students will apply these guidelines to further concrete examples. During these seminar sessions the students will receive supervision to carry out these tasks. These steps will allow the students to apply these concepts also for their homework assignments. Feedback for the homework assignments will be given during the classes. Importantly, throughout the theory, practice and seminar sessions the students will constantly be encouraged to participate actively. They will be motivated to ask questions and answer questions posed by the professors. In the theory classes, the professors will furthermore stress the importance of English in the context of university studies, science, and the job market. The students will be familiarized with valuable of sources of academic and scientific information in English. Guidelines for effective verbal and written expression in English will be provided in the theory classes.

Schedule first branch group

Schedule

T: Theory session,
groups T1, T2

P: Practica session
Groups P11 (attending T1)
P12 (attending T1)
P21 (attending T2)
P22 (attending T2)

S: Seminar session
Groups S111 (attending T1, P11)
S112 (attending T1, P11)
S121 (attending T1, P12)
S122 (attending T1, P12)
S211 (attending T2, P21)
S212 (attending T2, P21)
S221 (attending T2, P22)
S222 (attending T2, P22)