Unit Four

The Technical description

For this module, we are “switching gears” from our study of informal and formal reports to focus on technical descriptions. These technical documents make extensive uses of diagrams or photos and product component details and answer questions like “What does it look like?” and “What are its parts?”

According to John Lannon, one of the authors of our textbook, “Businesses and public institutions rely heavily on technical descriptions and specifications. Consumers rely on them heavily as well when comparison shopping or making carefully considered purchases, like a new car, or looking at two digital cameras that are closely matched in features” (from “Chapter Overview” at <http://wps.ablongman.com/long_lannon_techcomm_9/6/1619/414683.cw/index.html>)

You’ll find our detailed class schedule below for Unit Four. Please note:

* All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. on the date noted in the schedule.
* Submit all assignments in the Unit Four folder under Course Material unless otherwise notified. Scroll to the bottom of the page in Unit Four and click on the folder that says “Assignment Submissions.”
* All assignments must be submitted in Word (.doc or .docx) or RTF format.

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| **Sun, May 29** | **Read** Chapter 12: “Descriptions”  After reading this chapter, you will be able to:   * Recognize the importance of descriptions in workplace communication * Maintain objectivity in descriptions * Differentiate between product descriptions and process descriptions * Write a long product or process description * Differentiate product or process descriptions from specifications * Compose a set of specifications   Complete the **quiz** that you will find on the companion website for our book: <http://www.pearsonhighered.com/gurak>. Copy and paste your results via Assignment Submissions, Unit Four.  I highly recommend that you also **read** the short chapter on technical descriptions at <http://www.io.com/~hcexres/textbook/desc.html>. There are several wonderful examples of descriptions and easy-to-read instructions for planning a description—definitely a great resource. Consider using this chapter to help you draft your description.  Finally, there are also some interesting models and templates on the companion website for our textbook (the same place you take the multiple choice quizzes). There are mostly specs here rather than descriptions, and they’re very detailed. |
| **Mon, May 30** | In Unit Four on Blackboard, **read the assignment sheet for Exercise D: Technical Description of a Hammer**, and start thinking about your description. **You will complete Exercise D in groups in class on Tuesday**. |
| **Tues, May 31** | **Class meets! Complete Exercise D: Technical Description of a Hammer in class.** You will write this description in class in a group of three or four students. This exercise is worth 100 points. |
| **Weds, June 1** | In Unit Four on Blackboard, **read the assignment sheet for Assignment Four: Technical Descripton** and start drafting your description. |
| **Thurs, June 2** | **Class Meets!** Your **rough draft** of **Assignment Four: Technical Description** is **due in class for peer critique.** |
| **Sun, June 5** | **Final draft** of Assignment Four: Technical Description **due**. Submit to me via Assignment Submissions in Unit Four. **Reminder**: your file size should be no more than 1 mb. |