

Technograph

Combined Educational Edition

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Monthly Meetings

Our regular monthly meetings are held Sept.-June. To hear about other Los Angeles STC Chapter activities, please call 213.896.2982.

Visit our Web Site: <http://stc.org/region8/lac/www/lahome.htm>



USC's 1997 Technical and Fundamental Writing graduating class. (See story on page 6) Back Row, Left to Right: Rebecca Russell, Regina Dixon, Leslie Kaplan, Patti Lewis, Jennifer Mundy, Shirley Thomas, Renu Samudrala. Front Row: Yael Warshel and Andy Fesler. All except two—Lewis and Warshel, who are moving out of the area—are new members of STC.

It's Always Time for School

Christine Stevens, Asst. Editor

The kids head back to school next month—why not you too?

To effectively compete in today's job market, you need to keep your skills up to date. Taking classes several times a year is a good way to do this—you can perfect skills you use every day on the job or develop new skills that might pay off in a future position.

There is no lack of venues for technical communicators looking to continue their professional education. Opportunities abound at local UC and CSU extensions.

UCLA Extension: Going Online

Too busy? Can't possibly spare three hours a week for an evening course? Try going online.

Online courses at UCLA Extension operate off a software platform called *Convene*. Students sign up for courses as they would normally and UCLA mails them necessary software and text (no more trips to the bookstore).

Students online interact with the instructor and each other through a mailbox, where they post assignments and comments.

See *School* on page 7

Your Competitive Edge: Continuing Education

Kent S. Pearson, Senior STC Member

Employment of technical communicators is highly competitive, for both independents and full-time employees.

If you're an independent contractor, you compete by creating products (1) on time, (2) within estimates, and (3) using various hardware platforms and software media.

If you're a full-time employee who's managed to (1) survive downsizing and (2) avoid outsourcing, you've recognized that you could be (3) unemployed and competing for a limited number of jobs.

So with this dismal scenario as your tunnel, what could possibly represent the light at the end? I suggest continuing education as your competitive edge in our ever-changing profession.

Once you know its benefits, you can become a participant in continuing education to get the ideas and skills you need to compete for well-paid jobs or to stay current with changes in your present job.

Let's Look at Continuing Education

Often, after taking a quick-fix course suggested by a colleague or a mandatory seminar offered through your corporate training office, you drift back into old, ineffective habits.

See *Continuing* on page 7

Senior Members Announced

David Wollenberger, Vice President of Membership

Eight members of the Los Angeles chapter of the Society for Technical Communication have earned the status of Senior Member.

According to the national STC bylaws, senior member grade is acquired after five years as a regular STC member.

New Los Angeles senior members are:

- Lydia D. Brock
- Bread R. Currier
- Mike K. Lawler
- Paula R.B. Mackay
- Thomas C. Magnus
- Rigoberto Ramos
- Lonie J. Robertson
- Kristina Steeg

In addition, the following people have joined our chapter in the past two months:

Lelia C. Vrinat is marketing and sales manager (since January) for ISI, a translation/localization agency. Previously she was a project manager there for three years.

Lelia's team localizes manuals and software into any language. She has a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Pepperdine University.

Lelia was raised in France and has been living in Los Angeles for the past 10 years. She would like to network to learn more about technical writing, and to meet potential clients. Hobbies are eating sushi and sunbathing.

Leslie Oliver Wolf has been at Epson America, Inc. as a senior technical illustrator for three years.

She has been a professional illustrator, designer, and painter for seven years. Leslie has a B.F.A. in illustration with an emphasis in graphic design from California State University of Fullerton.

In her spare time, she enjoys traveling and painting. Leslie joined LASTC after winning an STC Distinguished Award for an information brochure, *Print It in Epson Color*. She was very impressed with how professional the organization was and felt LASTC would be very beneficial to her job.

Stan Gibilisco is a freelance technical writer and editor. He has authored or co-authored more than 24 books and dozens of magazine articles about hobby electronics and personal computing.

Stan earned his Bachelor of Mathematics degree from the University of Minnesota in 1976. From 1977 to 1979, Stan served on the technical staff at American Radio Relay League (ARRL) headquarters in Newington, Connecticut.

Stan was vice president of engineering for International Electronic Systems in Miami for three years and became a full-time writer 16 years ago. He plans to keep writing about electronics and computers and to expand into general science writing.

Cont'd next column

President's Message

Karen Bergen, President

It's my first column as your new president, and an introduction is in order. For the past two years, I've been LASTC's Mentor Program Manager; before that I was Programs Vice President Membership Vice President before that, and an active council member for years and years.

Volunteer City

Over the years I've:

Written dozens of articles, attended countless meetings, traveled to conferences near and far, presented papers, taken pictures, created flyers, stuffed envelopes, and licked stamps.

And what did I get out of all this participation? My income is now more than three times what it was when I first joined, I found my current job through STC, I've won local and international publications awards, and I've had the pleasure of working with some great people.

So that's why the theme of my presidency is *participation*. It's good for STC and good for you. Get the most out of STC by being an active member.

You can start by coming to our first ever volunteer recruitment party. Enjoy the Italian appetizers and find out how you can get involved. It's free! It's July 24, 6:30 to 7:30, at San Gennaro Café, 9543 Culver Blvd., Culver City. Call 213.896.2982 for more information.

Other new members are:

- Nancy A. Cox
- Joseph S. Harris
- Brian T. McGovney
- Salomie Ware
- Bernett, Linda G.
- Buscaino, Stephen A.
- Graham, Janice M.
- Morris, Rachel
- Mundy, Jennifer
- Page, Thomas W.
- Stewart, James A.
- Uytana, Victoria
- Walker, Erin W.
- Willaimas, Carol R.
- Jones, Hillary L.
- Murphy, Robert H.
- Movia, Kathleen
- Dixon, Regina L.
- Fesler, Andy H.
- Gover, Alda C.
- Johnson, Major L.
- Kaplan, Leslie C.
- Paboovian, Aliene
- Rondan, Jana L.
- Russell, Rebecca A.

Why Practitioners Teach

Sara M. Stohl, Programs Committee

That technical communications practitioners also teach should not surprise anyone. After all, we spend much of our working day instructing, persuading, and arguing with our coworkers and clients, just to help them realize better ways to meet their audiences' needs.

All of us have lost count of the times we've had to cite references, show proofs, and deconstruct and reconstruct every conceivable component of a document to convince others we knew whereof we spoke.

And then there are the ranks of newbies and wannabes, all claiming technical communications competence. Their resumes give them away: "No technical background, but gifted, natural writer," or "Twenty years in highly technical work, contributing to specifications and manuals." It's enough to make stoics wince.

So what's a poor, beleaguered technical communicator to do? Launch a preemptive strike, of course. Catch them while they're young, or at least new to the business. Teach them that writing is an orderly, structured process that starts, as quaint as it may seem, with planning. Typically, when given a writing assignment, the uninitiated dash something off before they have a clue as to what to write, or for whom, then publish their first drafts as final product. Initiate them.

Next, teach them that technical communication is not just writing. Research, organization, design, layout, illustration, structure, and presentation are the foundation upon which a purposeful technical document is built. Then there are the myriad output media to choose from, all of which affect these building blocks.

A Rewarding Experience

I don't want to give the impression that frustration is a primary—or even a good—motivator for impelling professional tech writers to teach. In fact, the rewards that come from sharing experience and imparting expertise are much better reasons. They are carrots, whereas frustration is a stick.

Take, for example, the satisfaction of working with adult learners; people eager for practical solutions to their very real problems. There comes a point in every technical communicator's career when he or she begins to view each new assignment through a "been-there, done-that" lens. Teaching reinvigorates the cliché: "Been there, did it right?"

Then there's professional growth. Exploring new ways to present familiar concepts often leads to new approaches, and university level teaching adds unique cachet to a resume.

My all-time favorite reward, though, is that moment when I see a student assimilating an idea; that leap from the theoretical to the useful, the applicable. It's the feeling we all get when we've achieved genuine success: "Ah!" And you—the instructor—helped make that happen.

Equally gratifying is the knowledge that your students get better jobs, promotions, and professional recognition with that coveted technical communication certificate. You know their struggle: long days at work and then often long drives to a campus, intense, three-hour sessions filled with

See *Practitioners* on page 6

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André Sharp, Employment Manager, *SharpShooter Communications*, P.O. Box 335, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254, 310.379.5179.

For the most current job listings, please send your requests to the above address. Requests must include a stamped, self-addressed 9 x 12 envelope. If you are ordering only one of the job categories, two stamps will suffice; if you want both contract and permanent job lists, they require three stamps.

Want to be on the Contractor's List?

I also maintain the LASTC independent contractor's database. To be included in it, send for the contractor's database form at the above address.

The Employment Resource Handbook

To obtain the new, updated, and very much expanded Employment Resource Handbook, please send a check for \$10. (\$18 for non-members), issued to the LASTC, to the above address, and be sure to include your PRINTED name and address. This will be used as your mailing label.

Jobs listed in earlier issues may still be open, so don't be shy about calling. Even if the position is filled, the employer or recruiter may have another position available.

Here are samples of job listings; they are also available from the LASTC listserv:

Contract Jobs

Encino, Copywriter/designer, 5/29 Job # 982.
Create a 15–20 page software user's manual for a CD-ROM lecture series. Applicant should have previous user's manual experience and be able to write and layout the copy in Quark with appropriate graphics/diagrams and captions. Applicant should provide writing sample and salary requirements. David Slater, DeVry Multimedia Products, Inc., 15760 Ventura Blvd. Suite 1101, Encino, CA 91436. 818.981.3233.

Irvine, Tech Writer/Trainer, 5/30 Job # 983.
Reference: LA 6058. Responsible for creating new desktop training documentation such as user guide/reference manual for an automated system. Also, creating operating procedures for daily operations changes as a result of new automated work environment. Need someone with Word 70 and other related software; Good verbal and written communication skills; assist training personnel, answer questions about the system; work directly to gain an understanding of the present operations. Pay rate: Negotiable. Attach your resume to our Web Page at <http://www.tecstandards.com> Patti Booher, Technical Standards, 1720 Seely Ctl, San Marcos, CA 92069. 629471.1819. Jobline 888.529.3363.

Automatic version via e-mail

Advertise an Available Job or Get Ads for Jobs Available

Tom Magnus, Web Master

Advertise a Job

Send a job notice by signing up with the LASTCJOBS-L mailing list at lastcjobs-L@stc.org:

- Insert the following command as the first (and only) line of the message: **info lastcjobs-L**
- Do NOT enter a subject.
- Delete any other text (such as your signature file) from the body text.
- For guidelines on formatting job ads, send e-mail to: majordomo@stc.org.

Receive Ads for Available Jobs

- Subscribe to the LASTCJOBS-L mailing list.
- Join the lastcjobs-L listserv and start receiving Southern California job listings.
- You must be a current member of STC (any chapter) to take advantage of the LASTC Job Bank.

To subscribe:

- Send a message to: majordomo@stc.org
- Insert the following command as the first and only line of the message: **subscribe lastcjobs-L name@email.com** (where *name@email.com* is your e-mail address.
- Do NOT enter a subject.
- Delete any other text (e.g. your signature file) from the body text.

Permanent Jobs:

Near UC Irvine, Tech Writer, (Temp-to-hire or Permanent) Job # 1276. 5/30/97. Reference: LA 6007. Candidate will be responsible for the development and maintenance of online help, reference manuals, electronic media, release notices, training tutorials and training supplements. Knowledge of RoboHelp and Word 6.0; strong team player. Rate: negotiable. Attach your resume to our Web page: <http://www.tecstandards.com>. Patti Booher, Technical Standards, 1720 Seely Ctl, San Marcos, CA 92069. 629471.1819. Jobline 888.529.3363.

Calabasas, Tech Writer, (Temp-to-hire or Permanent) 5/30 Job # 1277. Job Reference: LA 6327. Create hardware and software end-user instructional manuals for technical network administrators. Senior level writer; networking experience; writing hardware and software manuals; FrameMaker on Macintosh. Pay rate: 50K–60K with stock options. Attach your resume to our Web page: <http://www.tecstandards.com>. Publications Production Coordinator. Patti Booher, Technical Standards, 1720 Seely Ctl, San Marcos, CA 92069. 629471.1819. Jobline 888.529.3363.

The SEC's New Language: Plain English

Sara M. Stohl, LASTC

This January, the Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) did a remarkable thing.

Finding its own publications and those of its members impenetrable, it declared war on obscurantism and obfuscation, and published a draft language usage manual called *A Plain English Handbook*.

The preface, written by stock market gazillionaire Warren Buffett, states: "For more than forty years, I've studied the documents that public companies file. Too often, I've been unable to decipher just what is being said, or worse yet, had to conclude that nothing was being said."

Sound familiar?

Mr. Buffett goes on to advise: "Write with a specific person in mind." The compilers of the handbook have followed his advice, for lo! chapter 3 is titled "Know Your Audience," and reinforces that point with a quote from Aristotle: "One must consider also the audience . . . the reader is the judge."

“The
reader is
the
judge”

The handbook's chapters cover these topics: What is a "Plain English" Document? This Handbook's Purpose; Getting Started; Know Your Audience; Know the Information You Need to Disclose; Reorganize the Content Logically; The Principles of Plain English; Document Design; Time Saving Tips; Readability Formulas and Style Checkers; Evaluating the Document; and a Reading List.

Less than plain-language word

Many chapters in the handbook contain handy before-and-after tips. For example, the chapter on the principles of plain English admonishes readers to "Find Nominalizations." (Well, it's so hard to avoid big, high-falutin' words all the time.)

It then presents a before: "We will provide appropriate information to shareholders concerning . . ." and an after: "We will inform shareholders about . . ." As Calvin so wisely said to Hobbes: "Verbing weirds the language." So does nouning.

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University
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here

What's the Score? STC 6, USC 0!

Shirley Thomas, LASTC

Each semester of my Master's degree class, Technical and Fundamental Writing at USC, I emphasize from session one that there exists a remarkable group called the Society for Technical Communication (STC).

I tell the students that when they attend a meeting, they will receive a warm reception and find this to be a group where everybody tries to help everybody else.

I tell them that people at these meetings offer and seek jobs. At about this point in my story, my students' eyes glaze over; my story is too good for them to believe.

Then I take them to an LASTC meeting—they're quite incredulous. All I told them is true. In this group, people *do* help people. To members, we offer job listings and mentoring. We are receptive to people who want to learn.

I encourage my students to join STC (at the bargain student rate), and most semesters, one or two do join.

But this last semester made history: *Every* student who will remain in the L.A. area joined STC!

Thanks, LASTCers, you have evinced encouragement that can influence the direction of students' careers. #

SEC from page 5

Consistent—and refreshing—throughout the handbook is the use of relevant pull quotes. One particularly apt quotation, in a section adjuring writers to edit long sentences, is by William Zinsser, author of *On Writing Well*: “There's not much to be said about the period except that most writers don't reach it soon enough.”

I found the reading list a little barren of the kinds of source books technical communicators rely on.

Aside from Zinsser and the ubiquitous, universally applicable *Elements of Style* by Strunk and White, most of the sources are written either by or for lawyers. Which may be appropriate, but also may be a little narrow in focus.

The last chapter, titled “We Want to Hear from You,” asks reviewers for comments, suggestions improvements, and additional before and after examples.

“Verbing weirds the language”

This request opens the door for the technical communications community: to offer comments, provide examples, suggest improvements and additional resources, and make our profession known to the SEC and its member companies.

If you are interested in reviewing this 45-page handbook, contact Sara Stohl at 310.821.6926.

Or contact SEC Director of the Office of Investor Assistance at: <http://www.sec.gov/consumer/plaine.htm>

The least we can do is applaud the SEC's efforts and let those folks know there's a whole profession out there dedicated to clear communication around the world. #

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occasionally unriveting lectures, frantic note-taking, homework, etc. Their success becomes important to you; their achievement stems from a shared journey toward a goal.

Notice that I didn't mention money as a reward. It isn't! Some universities pay better than others, but you won't get rich. Again, look for satisfaction in professional growth.

So, how does a technical communicator become a certificate program instructor? If it's through a university extension (the most common case), propose a course to the program director. Ask a colleague who to contact at each school. Proposals should include a syllabus, a statement of course objectives, a description of who should take the course, and the textbook, if there is one. Although it can take months for a new course to be approved, few are rejected. If your course is topical and timely, you'll be teaching in no time.

LASTC members who have branched out into teaching include Marlana Coe, John Mignot, Larry Palkovic, Kent Pearson, Loraine Schacher, and André Sharp.

But university technical communication programs always need more instructors and new courses. Too often a course must be cut or delayed because no instructor is available. Or a course is offered only once each year, leaving students few choices or long waits until schedules mesh. Or students must take courses at two or more campuses because one program won't fulfill their needs.

If you want something new and different for your portfolio, instruct in a technical communication certificate program. You'll help weed out the unfit, and those who follow in your footsteps will make you very proud. #

Cal State
University
Northridge

Ad is here

School from page 1

Because there's no fixed class period, students can expect more frequent, timely feedback—say, several times in the course of a week.

“If they send an instructor an assignment, they may get feedback on it that day or the next,” says Patricia Hunt, PhD, continuing education specialist in the Department of Business and Management at UCLA Extension.

Hunt says enrollment in technical writing courses has been declining for a number of years, due largely to layoffs in the aerospace industry.

“That was the bulk of our market,” she says. “I think because of the recession and downsizing that took place, everyone is operating under increased pressure. It's really difficult for people to take classes. It's a lot of commitment.”

To address this problem, educators at UCLA took their courses online, to make them more accessible.

“The first year we offered these classes, we had a lot of problems,” Hunt admits, explaining that one instructor's modem died and the software had caused several disk drives to crash.

“We're beyond that now. We've improved the software platform considerably in the past year so it's more workable,” she says.

With these problems behind them, Hunt and her staff are in the process of developing an online certificate program in technical writing.

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Continuing from page 1

Because you undertake continuing education voluntarily, you're likely to change your behavior (learn) as a result. People do continuing education because they feel needs and they imagine benefits.

Well, those benefits are not imaginary; they're real! And they fall into two main categories: interchanging ideas and developing skills. You keep up-to-date with the emerging areas for employment by interchanging ideas with other practitioners, and you find practical techniques to apply at work by developing skills in continuing education settings.

In seminars offered by STC chapters, in programs given by software makers, and in community college courses and university extensions, you realize the benefits of continuing education that keep you competitive. In fact, because of its benefits, continuing education fulfills your needs at all points of employment and experience. To demonstrate the truth of this assertion, we'll cover these two aspects:

- Needs of the Novices: How continuing education fulfills your intellectual and social needs in the early years of your career as a technical communicator
- Needs of the Not-So-New: How continuing education fulfills your intellectual and social needs during the rest of your career as a technical communicator

Needs of the Novices

By interchanging ideas, the inexperienced technical communicator realizes the intellectual benefits of continuing education.

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OpAmp Bookstore Ad is here

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Important Events

Sat., July 7

OCSTC seminar, *Beyond RoboHelp*, Sharon Burton, Mission Viejo, \$60. 714.863.7666.

Sat., July 19

OCSTC seminar, *Designing Books with FrameMaker 5*, Sharon Burton, Mission Viejo, \$60. 714.863.7666.

Thurs., July 24

Volunteer Party—It's free! Get involved in LASTC, 6:30 pm–7:30, San Gennaro Cafe, 9543 Culver Blvd, Culver City, food & drink. RSVP: 213.896.2982.

Sun., August 17

Deadline for articles for the September *Technograph*.

Thurs., September 25

LASTC monthly meeting; reserve by Tues., Sept. 23 by calling 213.896. 2982.

Fri.–Sat., Nov. 21–22

STC Region 8 Conference, Red Lion Hotel, Santa Barbara.

On Parade

- Laurie Edelman is the new manager of learning design and development at NCR, El Segundo. She will manage 12 associates who design customer support and professional services learning materials. Laurie says she's creating alternative delivery media, such as CBTs, Web-based training, and audio-video conferencing.

- Raymond Urgo was the guest speaker at the June meeting of the Orange County ISO 9000 Users' Group. He presented a questionnaire and matrix to assess organizations' policies and procedures programs maturity. Representatives from more than 30 companies attended.

- Christine Stevens secured a position as technical editor at Hughes Aircraft Co, El Segundo. She manages and edits Space and Communications proposals and marketing communications, and heads a project designing and distributing materials via electronic media.

- Linda Jassim, a new LASTC member, has been named the chapter's Education Manager.

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Continuing from page 7

Interchanging ideas builds structure for your continued intellectual growth. With continuing education, you regain academic “structure” to complement your new routine of the workaday world of technical communication.

Now that you’re engaged in “application” of concepts at work, you need the balance of “theory” you get in education. In discussions and reviews of exams, whether for individual courses or a Technical Communication Certificate program, your intellectual growth continues as you interchange ideas with instructors and peers.

Interchanging ideas builds your intellectual connections. Because of smaller class size and greater accessibility of classmates and instructors in continuing education, you can ask more pointed questions and get more practical answers. Along with opportunities to trade ideas with peers comes your responsibility to connect theory to practice.

When you make that connection, you realize one of the greatest benefits of continuing education—improvement in your everyday performance because of the ideas you’ve gained.

By developing skills, the inexperienced technical communicator realizes the social benefits of continuing education.

Developing skills helps you meet people and manage yourself in social groups. In continuing education, you encounter people from different educational, technical, and cultural backgrounds. Also, because much undergraduate education is one-to-many (that is, instructor to students), a participatory class conducted by someone from industry can seem “foreign.” Instructors (and class participants) who

are real-world technical communicators are familiar with interviewing experts, attending project meetings, and working in teams. How to deal with unfamiliar faces and interact in groups is one of the skills you gain from continuing education.

Developing skills helps you gain social confidence and esteem. Because continuing education classes are not as homogenous as undergraduate groups, you necessarily relate to others who are quite different from you and from each other. Your success with changes in relationships creates self-confidence that you carry over to your workplace. Moreover, your ability to share your skills with others provides self-esteem you may not have gotten earlier in school.

Needs of the Not-So-News

By interchanging ideas, the experienced technical communicator also realizes the intellectual benefits of continuing education. Interchanging ideas builds your intellectual strength through clear thinking.

With continuing education, you behave “more like a mirror than a sponge,” that is, you reflect the thinking of your classmates and instructors rather than merely absorb facts and figures.

In short, you learn to listen and think more clearly than ever before, you act for yourself, and you apply ideas directly to your job—many times on the day after class. That application of ideas is one of the “just-in-time” benefits of continuing education!

See Continuing on page 10

UCLA Extension Dept. of Business & Management Ad is here

"We hope to roll out a certificated program by next spring or summer," she says, adding that a definite structure has not yet been established. "We have to figure out a lot about who our audience is." Fall quarter begins Sept. 20. For registration information, call 310.825.9971.

CSU Northridge: Getting Graphic

Has downsizing turned you into a technical writer-turned-graphic artist? Cal State Northridge offers a number of graphics classes leading to a certificate in Graphics Communication. Their program offers instruction in computer design, digital imaging, and desktop publishing. The program requires the successful completion of seven required courses and three elective courses, and helps you compile a professional portfolio that demonstrates your acquired skills.

Required courses include five courses in computer graphics, advertising copywriting, and portfolio presentation. Elected courses cover such topics as airbrush illustration, working with printers, logo design, QuarkXpress, Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop, and designing for the Web. The Graphics Communication program is holding an open house and free evening lecture on Wednesday, Dec. 3, 7–8:30 pm.

USC: Master the Art of Writing

Fall quarter starts mid–Sept. For information, call 818.677.3421. USC offers a Master's degree in Professional Writing, one course of which focuses on technical writing. For the past 17 years, Shirley Thomas has been teaching this course, called Technical and Fundamental Writing. It is a three-unit course, and it earns academic credit.

Scholarship opportunities are many, and program applicants are automatically considered for them. Those not enrolled in USC's Master's of Professional Writing Program may take the course. Thomas reports she has had physicians, attorneys, computer scientists, and writers of every type in her classes over the years. For information, call 213.740.3250.

CSU Long Beach: Degrees of Communication

Cal State Long Beach Extension offers a certificate program in technical and professional writing that is intended to be an adjunct to a bachelor's degree. A bachelor's degree must have been completed or near completion (at Cal State Long Beach) in order to enroll in the program.

The certificate comprises 24 units in the technical and professional writing program, a 90-hour internship that can be completed with the student's current employer, and a faculty-approved portfolio.

According to David Samuelson, PhD, professor of technical writing programs at Cal State Long Beach, this is the only degree-oriented technical writing program in the LA area. He says the value of the program lies in the portfolio and internship. "Those who complete a portfolio stand in better stead" when competing for jobs, he says. While the program does not offer formal placement services for those looking to complete their internship, Samuelson often hears of opportunities at companies such as American Honda, Loral, TRW, and Sony, and of course, passes word onto his students. Internships may or may not be paid, but Samuelson urges his students to accept only paid internships. For more information, call 310.985.4245.

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Interchanging ideas challenges your intellect to manage time and stress. Continuing education helps you organize your time so that you relieve stress associated with the extra workload of returning to school.

As your career and your personal life progress, you gain more obligations and demands on your time that inevitably create more stress.

Although it may seem contradictory, experience has proven to many participants in continuing education that the addition of requirements to attend classes and do assignments actually helps them to "get it together" in other aspects of their lives.

By developing skills, the experienced technical communicator also realizes the social benefits of continuing education.

Developing skills refines your social connections and growth. New skills that you gain through continuing education help you grow socially and professionally.

One form of growth could be refining your connections to pursue a position as a supervisor or a manager. Another type of growth could involve refining your social connections at work to raise the "peak" in your "peak earning years."

And *not-so-new* supervisors could maximize their income by encouraging their employees to be as productive as possible while the *not-so-new* employees could earn more by getting high performance reviews and bonuses.

Developing skills helps you form social networks for career advancement.

New skills not only help you work more efficiently but also build your effectiveness in networking to advance in your career. As a continuing education instructor, I've witnessed class participants getting both contract work and full-time jobs at the companies of other members through networking.

Of course, I've personally entered many networks, and frequently class participants have gotten jobs based partly or largely on my recommendation as one of their references.

Let's Go Do Continuing Education

For both inexperienced and experienced technical communicators, continuing education offers clear benefits for a competitive edge.

Whichever category you consider yourself to be in, when you put forth the effort needed for continuing education, you realize these two benefits:

- *Interchanging ideas*, both old and new, with other lifelong learners like you; and
- *Developing skills* that help you find a new job or be successful in your present one. #

Kent Pearson is a lifelong learner and instructor who facilitates Effective Business Writing workshops at American Honda, where he is Quality Control Editor of Service Communications.

Kent has taught Technical Writing I at UCLA Extension for 10 years and Writing Technical Instructions at CSU Dominguez Hills for 2 years.

LASTC Launches Software Classes

Karen Bergen, President

Our chapter is proud to be launching its first series of educational classes.

The Education Committee, chaired by our new Education Manager, Linda Jassim, is presenting its first of many software classes.

FrameMaker: The Basics will be taught Wed., Aug. 13, 6:30-9:30 pm by LASTC vice president David Wollenberger.

FrameMaker: Intermediate Techniques will be taught Wed., Aug. 20, 6:30-9:30 pm.

Classes will be held at the NOVA Institute, third floor PC Lab, 3000 S. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles (just north of the 10 freeway).

Each class costs \$40. for STC members, and \$50. for non-members. You must make a reservation, but you may pay at the door.

To reserve a spot, e-mail Linda Jassim at JassimL@aol.com, or call 213.896.2982.

Seats are filling up on a first come, first served basis. So sign up now.

E-mail or call with your name, e-mail address, and phone number. Let us know what other software is of interest for upcoming classes. Volunteer teachers are welcome, we offer an honorarium. #

School from page 7

Contemporary Technical Writing

Cal State Dominguez Hills offers a certificate program in technical writing, one course of which—Advanced Technical Writing Topics—is taught by our very own Sara Stohl.

The program comprises five courses: three core courses and two electives. Two choices offered as electives—Graphics for Technical Communication and Online Documentation—make this program especially up-to-date.

Tia Jerger-Kuhl, director of extension programs at Cal State Dominguez Hills, says, “Many people are shifting into positions and they’re being asked to wear other hats that involve writing memos and proposals. They’re finding they just don’t have the structure or the grammar to do that. This particular program offers those skills.”

Dominguez Hills’ Extension also offers a certificate program in Professional Supervision.

The program teaches skills in team building, communication and listening skills, productivity/motivation, and dealing with difficult people (but we don’t know any of these people, do we?).

Their graphics program offers courses in Illustrator, QuarkXPress, and Photoshop. They also have a unique course called The Awesome Threesome, which teaches students how to create graphics using Illustrator, Quark, and Photoshop—all in one class! For more information, call 310.516.3741. #

Technograph

Purpose

To inform members of chapter and society activities and be a vehicle for members to exchange information

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Submissions

Your articles and information are encouraged. Please send them to tomwilson@linkonline.net

Send your submission on a disk; it is subject to editorial review and change due to the space available.

Reprints

Other STC chapters may reprint *Technograph* material if credit is given and the Editor is sent a copy.

Subscriptions

Nonmembers and other chapter members: \$12. per calendar year.

Advertising

Contact the Editor for a rate card.

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RoboNEWS

The goddess shares her knowledge!

RoboNEWS, the unofficial RoboHELP newsletter, is designed for the busy professional creating and writing help systems using Blue Sky's RoboHELP or WinHELP Office.

Each quarterly issue includes examples, how-tos, tips, hints, workarounds, and other information. A disk is included in each issue with at least one Help shareware or freeware tool and a detailed explanation showing you how use it right now to enhance your help system.

Annual subscription: \$100 for individuals and \$250 for corporation. Contact the goddess for international rates.

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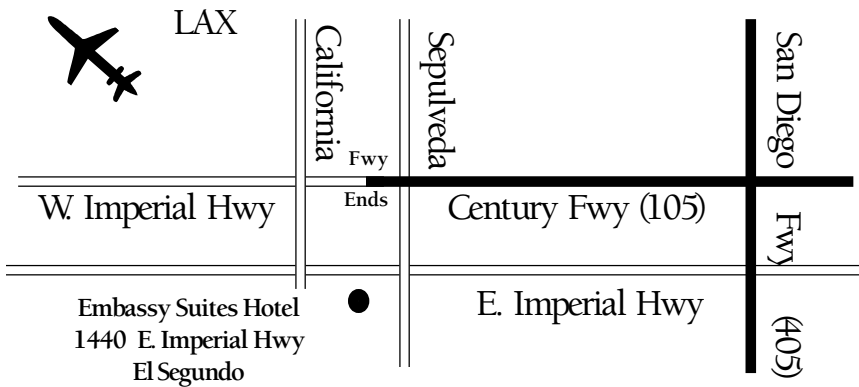
Dinner Meetings

are held the fourth Thursday evening of each month Sept. through June. Next *Technograph* (Sept) will provide details about September's meeting.

Costs & Reservations

- Members with Reservations... 21.
 - Without Reservation..... 30.
 - Nonmembers 30.
 - Program only 10.
 - Full-time students 5.
- No shows, late reservations and late cancellations..... 30.

For the latest information, call 213.896.2982



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