Carol Barnum's Reflective Statement

When I was hired to teach English and Technical Writing, Southern Polytechnic was called Southern Technical Institute and was a part of Georgia Tech. All of the students were engineering technology majors and the courses I taught were in the area then called "Basic Studies." A lot has changed in the intervening years, including three name changes for my university, the addition of graduate degrees, of which I direct one in Information Design and Communication, and the advent of distance learning. But one thing has not changed for me: I wake up every day in love with my work because my students—from basic studies to graduate level—continue to motivate and reward me with their energy and enthusiasm for my courses and by their success in the work world.

Teaching and Learning Philosophy
I'm in a partnership with my students. My side of the partnership is to be on top of my subject, to be innovative and creative in the way I present the content, to engage my students in the process of learning, and to inspire their best work in their product/deliverables. Because I primarily teach professional communication courses, I strongly believe that I must be a role model in my behavior and actions, which are evidenced in all of the materials I prepare for the courses and in the feedback I provide on students' assignments. Even when students are focused on their immediate interest in the grade, I have my eye on their future. I am rewarded by students who tell me that I helped shape their understanding of their work and the need for accuracy, thoroughness, and a firm grounding in research principles. As in my course preparation, I see this effort on my part as modeling behavior for the thoroughness with which they should approach work projects. On the occasion when I have learned of a particular student's success in his or her job or in other courses, I am rewarded for the effort I make with each and every student on each and every assignment.

I have changed, too. Whereas the old days of standup lectures were the norm, the focus now and for some time has been on student-centered learning. It was an easy change for me to make, because I believe in students' ability to be their own best learners, and I believe that with the proper support, they often surprise themselves by what they can accomplish. Group discussion, team projects, real world problems to solve, and incremental assignments, which serve as touch points throughout a project or course, provide me with the chance to give my students feedback on how to stay on the path to success. I use this approach in all of the courses I teach on both the undergraduate and graduate level.

To be an effective teacher, I must be a lifelong learner (clichéd, but true). My professional development activities cover the gamut of things I have enthusiastically embraced to keep me fresh and relevant in a rapidly changing field. A few examples follow.

Global and multicultural understanding
 In 1987 I volunteered to go to China as the first teacher from my university to teach at North China University of Technology. Thinking it would be an important learning

experience, although most likely a painful one (as I had never traveled so far on my own or been away from home for so long), I found myself like Alice in Wonderland, transformed by the newness and strangeness of the world I had fallen into. The shock of my ignorance propelled me onto the path of learning about Asia in general and China in particular. The result is many-faceted, with all subsequent activities indicative of the transforming nature of this experience on me and the ways in which I applied my new-found interest to teach students and help educate fellow teachers. I was funded for a Fulbright-Hays Summer Study Abroad program, through which I took faculty from Georgia to Taiwan and Thailand; I was funded by the Society for Technical Communication to take technical communication faculty to Nanjing, China to teach the first technical writing seminar to Chinese Foreign Language teachers; I took another group of USG faculty (supported by a USG Global Partnership grant) on a technical writing lecture tour in Jiangsu Province universities in China; I took academic courses at Atlanta area universities in Chinese religion and history; I participated in Asian Studies Development Program Summer Institutes in Hawaii and China; and I developed an elective in China Culture, which I then worked with Kennesaw State University to include in a joint minor in Asian Studies. Most recently I provided a training seminar for teachers in Changchun, China, in our current dual-degree program with Northeast Normal University (NENU) and for our SPSU faculty to prepare for the arrival of our first students from NENU. I am currently recognized as a Fulbright Senior Specialist, focusing on professional communication in Asia.

On the graduate level, I took my interest and growing knowledge of Asia and developed a course in International Technical Communication. Not only have I developed this course, but I have also published and presented on the topic at technical communication conferences and at professional training meetings, with my first presentation to Microsoft and my most recent presentation to keynote the Best Practices Conference (for technical communication managers worldwide) in October 2007. Such presentations support my belief that teaching doesn't end at the school house door.

Expanded understanding of technical communication
When I was hired to teach technical writing, I came with the same "lack of credentials" as most of my academic colleagues, in that there were only one or two universities in the U.S. and the world where technical writing was part of a Ph.D. degree. And I hadn't earned one of these degrees. However, I became self-taught in my newly identified discipline, and I had a background in professional writing to help me get started. First I audited engineering technology courses in every department on the campus, which took two years to complete. Then I read every text book published in the field (admittedly, a manageable number at the time). I happily taught the basic technical writing course every semester for a decade, all the while attending professional conferences to stay abreast of changes. During that first decade I won Faculty Member of the Year, Basic Studies, from the Student Government Association and two Outstanding Faculty awards. I also won the National Council of Teachers of English Sci-Tech Publication Award for Best Article on Methods of Teaching.

In the early 1990s I began to realize that technical communication as a career field and academic discipline was limited by its definition of writing documentation. At a Society for Technical Communication conference, I heard the word usability for the first time. It intrigued me, particularly as the focus was on the user experience and not the product itself. Always interested in users, I started looking for a way to create a course in usability so that my students would lead this effort to bring the users' experience into

product documentation and design. In 1993, before there was even a text book on the subject, I persuaded a usability consultant to team-teach a usability testing course in his lab. At the end of that trial course, I wrote the portion of a successful proposal for funding a usability lab as part of an IBM Million Dollar Total Quality Management grant. The lab opened in 1994. Now, I regularly teach a usability testing course in our lab, which was one of the first such labs in a technical communication academic program in the United States. My textbook, *Usability Testing and Research*, published in the Technical Communication Series (Longman, 2002), is the most widely used book in courses where usability testing is taught. The year it was published it won the top STC publications award in the international publications competition.

This semester I have seized on the chance to combine my passion for usability with my passion for international/intercultural issues in my usability testing course, in which four Chinese students from NENU are teamed with two American students to do a usability study of the Holiday Inn China website with Chinese users. This is a sponsored project with Holiday Inn, one of our Usability Center clients, with the sponsor supporting the students' work and being the recipient of the product deliverables. The sponsor has met with the students in class to present the issues, the students are conducting the work in our usability lab, I am providing guidance and instruction along the way, and giving them feedback on drafts of all elements of the project before it is graded and before it is delivered to the sponsor. This week, the students will make their final presentation with video highlights from the testing sessions, a PowerPoint presentation of their findings, and an extensive report of the results.

Technology innovation
Five years ago, I learned of the opportunity to develop an online technical writing course for the WebBSIT. This course would be supported and mentored by ALT. Because I was just getting started with online teaching and was struggling with the challenges of the technology and the methodology—particularly the loss of personal contact with my students—I volunteered to co-create the online course in hopes that I would learn how to be a more effective teacher in this new medium.

From that first online course, I next promoted the need for a graduate online technical writing certificate of six courses. The online graduate certificate proved so successful that applicants frequently stated that they planned to continue after the certificate to complete their MS degree online. Of course, we didn't have an online MS degree, but we could clearly see that students expected to be able to complete one. So, we expanded course development to allow students to apply for and complete their MS degree online.

Looking back on my experience as an early adopter (not a mantle I commonly wear) of the technology of e-learning, I now find myself embracing each new tool that can support connecting with my students in the online environment in which I teach almost exclusively. In the past several years, I have incorporated Wimba's Live Classroom for student-teacher workshops, student presentations, and guest speakers. Last semester, I added weekly video podcasts to keep my students connected with my face and voice, and as one more vehicle to support students' awareness of weekly activities. This semester, I added webcam archived presentations inside Live Classroom to provide success strategies for critical project assignments. I have also used Camtasia for a guided tour/orientation to the online course.

In 2006 I was honored to be one of only two instructors' courses on our campus submitted for a WebCT Exemplary Course Project. Although it did not win, the feedback received from the judges was both positive and constructive.

Again, as was the case with my ability to make connections between China and usability, I have found a way to combine e-learning and usability. When I was invited to keynote at a large e-Learn conference last October, I decided to see what was being written about usability and e-learning. Finding next to nothing being written, I keynoted on the need for these two disciplines to work together to support a good user experience for e-learners. The response to my keynote address, attended by 900 people, led to a request from the editor of e-Learn Magazine (unrelated to the conference) to write an article on usability and e-learning, which then became two articles. Also resulting from the E-Learn Conference, I was invited to speak at the University of Missouri-Columbia, and to meet with doctoral students to discuss incorporating usability testing into their research studies.

Even though I have been teaching online for five years, teaching at a distance does not get any easier. It is quite typical, as my online Information Design course for this semester exemplifies, to have 1000 discussion postings and 73 emails (just counting those posted inside the course) from fewer than 10 students. But I believe all the support I provide through creating a detailed calendar of activities, sending regular announcements as reminders, posting within weekly required discussions to keep my students motivated and show them I am participating, uploading new examples of successful work from students, organizing students into groups and participating in Live Classroom sessions with them, providing ever changing useful articles and resources, and making revisions to instructions, guidelines, etc., while often tedious and time consuming, pays off in students' being fully supported with the resources they need to do well on assignments and have a clear sense of direction about course commitments and requirements. I am rewarded for this upfront and ongoing effort with numerous positive and unsolicited comments from students during the course(s), and even better, afterward.

One student's anonymous unsolicited comment from Fall 05 explains a lot about my teaching philosophy: "This is a demanding professor, but an apparently compassionate one . . . actually a good combination." Another student in the Spring 07 section wrote, " Dr. Barnum is an extraordinary teacher. Her demands and expectations made the whole class perform better. Her use of the purchased materials was exemplary, and her attention to discussion and feedback were also exemplary."

What perhaps means even more to me than comments received from students while in my courses are those comments received later, when students are no longer requested to submit comments. Two recent comments came independently from the two graduates of our online program who participated in graduation in December 2007. Here's what they each wrote to me after seeing me at graduation:
- "I can't tell you what a pleasure it was to see you in the line-up and during the ceremony! For me, perhaps because I have been an online student, the whole thing was about Alan [the other student graduating] and me and you . . . .So, I am really grateful that you were there, you in particular because you are the professor that really challenged me and really made me feel like I was growing in the program. Don't get me wrong—I learned wonderful things from the others!—but you were coach as well as a lecturer. You *pushed.* And I appreciate it immensely." --Becky Hendricks

- "I wanted to express my thanks to you for being at the SPSU graduation last week; it meant a lot to me to see you and know you were there when I graduated. . . . If there is anything at all I may be able to do to support or enhance your program in any way, please do not hesitate to let me know."--Alan Wells.

Support for students outside the classroom

Creating support for student success in my courses is important. But, more important is supporting their success outside the classroom. Toward that end, I have encouraged my students to participate in professional conferences and publications. Among the achievements of my students is the 2004 "Distinguished" journal article award received by my students and me for our co-authored article in *Technical Communication*, based on their project in my usability testing course. More recently, one of my students presented and won the first prize in the 2007 STC International student poster competition for a team project in my marketing communication course. Another student is a finalist in this year's student poster competition, to be judged at the international conference in June.

Ph.D., English, Georgia State University, 1978
Hired as Assistant Professor, 1979
Promoted to Full Professor, 1988
Graduate Program Coordinator, 2006 to present

Courses currently taught
Information Design, Usability Testing, Marketing Communication, International
Technical Communication, Usability Testing, Professional Oral Presentations,
American Literature

Teaching/Professional Development grants
- SPSU Teaching Fellow, Fall 2007, to develop Learning Objects for Usability Testing
- SPSU Teaching Fellow, 2003-4, to capture "best practices" in online teaching at SPSU
- SPSU Teaching Fellow, 2003, to prepare a scholarly article and conference presentation on results of research with former graduate students in usability testing course. Resulted in presentation accepted to STC annual conference, May '03; article accepted in *Technical Communication*, May, '04. Distinguished article award.
- STC (Society for Technical Communication) Special Opportunity Grant, $10,000, to direct Technical Writing Institute for Teachers in China in Summer 2000.
- USG Global Partnership Grant, $5000, to support faculty travel to Technical Writing Institute in China, Summer 2000.
- USG Global Partnership grant to form a consortium to give lectures on technical writing topics in Jiangsu province, China, May 1999, and pursue exchange opportunities
- Invited member (by acting President Dan Papp) of Georgia Delegation to Jiangsu Province, China, May, 1998; to pursue student and faculty exchanges
- Project Director, Co-founder, Usability Lab, funded under $1 million IBM Total Quality Management award, 1993. $100,000 lab built in 1994
- Project Director, $59,000 Fulbright-Hays Group Project to Taiwan and Thailand, July-August 1992. Wrote grant, selected participants, and led group of 12 faculty for five weeks in Taiwan and Thailand

Recent Professional Growth and development
Center for Teaching Excellence SPSU workshops:
- Podcasting, April 11, 2007
- Horizon Wimba, Experienced Faculty session, Aug. 28, 2007
- Integrating WebCT Vista in a Web-based Classroom, May 3, 2007
- Scholarship @ SPSU, Zvi Szafran on the Boyer model, Mar. 22, 2007
- Vista course tool training:
- e-core training, 1 day, July, 2003, Athens, GA
- Vista training, 2 days, Nov. '03, SPSU

Recent/Current Presentations

- Accepted, "The Impact of Agile on UCD: Mixed Messages from a Before and After Survey," The Usability Professionals Association Conference, June 2008 (proposal positively reviewed by 7 reviewers)
- Accepted, panel "Discount Testing by Amateurs: Threat or Menace," invited panelist with two other usability experts, The Usability Professionals Association Conference, June 2008 (proposal positively reviewed by 6 reviewers)
- Accepted, "Show and Tell: Building Usability into E-Learning," STC 2008 Technical Communication Summit, June 2008
- Invited speaker, University of Missouri (Columbia), public address: "Usability and You," March 6, 2008
- Invited Keynote Speaker, ELearn Conference, "Show and Tell: Usability Testing Shows Us the User Experience and Tells Us What to Do about It," Quebec, Canada, Oct. 17, 2007
- Invited Keynote Speaker, Best Practices Conference, "Managing the Challenges of Communication Across Cultures," Sept. 17, 2007, Chateau Elan, Georgia
- STC Annual Conference, May, 2007, with David Dayton, "From a Single Test to User Centered Design" (only 21% acceptance rate).
- "Indexing vs. Full Text Search," presented at Australian Online Documentation Conference, Cairns, May 2006.
- Invited keynote speaker, World Usability Day, Michigan State University, Nov. 3, 2005
- UPA Annual Conference, Montreal, June 2005. "Cross Talk: Communication Strategies for the Global Village."
- Invited speaker, featured panel, IEEE PCS Conference, Limerick, Ireland, July, 2005. "Making Connections: Teaming up to Connect Users, Developers, and Usability experts" (also referred proceedings paper)
- "Communicating with Users Around the World," TCANZ conference, Sept. 2005
- Invited speaker, Writers User Assistance Conference, "Search vs. Index for Lookup Tasks," Las Vegas, March 2004
- Presentation, STC Annual Conference with 2 of my former students in Usability Testing, Dallas, May '03 Note: this was the first time either of the two students making the presentation with me had attended an STC annual conference

Sample Publications – Articles, chapters, books

- Selected paper from among best conference papers at IEEE Professional Communication Conference for Baywood anthology *Connecting People with Technology: Issues in Professional Communication*, in press 2008.
- Co-authored article with (the late) Ken Rainey and Herb Smith: "Steps and Missteps in Negotiating a Joint Degree Program with a Chinese University," for an edited volume of new essays called *Designing Globally Networked Learning Environments*, in press, Sense Publishers 2008.
- *Cutter IT Journal*, "Agile and UCD: Can This Marriage Be Saved?" October 2007. Included in Cutter Consortium Special Report: *Fostering Innovation on the Agile Frontier*, Feb. 2008
- Co-authored with Li Huilin, "Chinese and American Technical Communication: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Differences," lead article in May 2006 issue of *Technical Communication*. Called "groundbreaking" by editor of TC journal
- Contacted by editor in chief of *KnowGenesis International Journal of Technical Communication,* India's first open source journal for technical communication for "discussion piece" in "Rendezous with KnowGenesis," Sept. 06

- Guest Editor, Special Issue of *Technical Communication* on Academic Programs in Technical Communication Aug. 2006. Solicited mss; assigned reviewers; worked with accepted authors through completion process; wrote guest editor's column.
- Lead author of co-authored article: Index vs. Full-Text Search: A Usability Study of User Preference and Performance," *Technical Communication*, May 2004
- *Usability Testing and Research.* Allyn and Bacon Technical Communication Series. New York: Longman, 2002.
  Citations:
- *Techniques for Technical Communicators*, with Saul Carliner, Macmillan, 1993.
- *Prose and Cons: The Do's and Don'ts of Technical and Business Writing*, National (Prentice-Hall), 1986.
- *Secretary's Guide to Modern English Usage*, 2nd ed. Prentice-Hall, 1991.
- *The Fiction of John Fowles: A Myth for Our Time.* Penkevill, 1988.
- *Fundamentals of English,* revised edition, National (Prentice Hall), 1987. Republished as *Office Guide to Modern English Usage,* Fine.

Recognitions/Honors
- Fulbright Senior Specialist 2004-2009
- Award of "Distinguished" Journal Article, *Technical Communication*, for "Index vs. Full-Text Search" article co-authored with former students, 2004
- Award of "Distinguished" (highest level) for *Usability Testing and Research,* in the 2002 STC Atlanta Publications Competition (judging conducted by Houston Chapter of STC); award level provides for automatic entry into STC International Publications Competition)
- International STC Award of "Distinguished" (highest level) for *Usability Testing and Research*, May, 2003; 21 books submitted in this category: 13 received awards; only 2 received the award of "Distinguished"
- "Outstanding SPSU Woman," 2003
- "Top Rated Speaker" European Usability Professionals Association Conference, London, Sept, 2002.
- "Top Rated Speaker" in the Usability and Information Design stem of the STC 49th Annual Conference; also ranked in the top 10% of all 313 conference speakers
- Directory of American Scholars, 11th edition
- Jay R. Gould Award for Excellence in Teaching Technical Communication, awarded by the Society for Technical Communication, May 2000
- NCTE Sci-Tech Publication Award--Best Article on Methods of Teaching, 1983
- Apex Award of Excellence in "One of a Kind Publications" category for co-edited special joint issue of *Technical Communication* and *IEEE PCS Transactions* 2000
- 2-time recipient, Outstanding Faculty Award, Southern Tech, 1984, 1988
- Faculty Member of the Year, Basic Studies, Southern Tech, 1982
- McFadden Visiting Professor of Technical Writing, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA,1989-90

IDC 6002 Information Design   Spring 08
Dr. Carol Barnum
Office: J349
Campus Office Hours: Tu, Th 3:00 pm–5:30 pm
678-915-7201
cbarnum@spsu.edu
Revised: December 2007

***Read this syllabus carefully and refer to as often as needed to be knowledgeable about course goals, expectations, and success strategies.

Course Description (from the catalog)
Prerequisite or Co-Requisite: IDC 6001, IDC 6030
Study of the main design elements in information products with an emphasis on rhetorical and theoretical underpinnings for design decisions. Students work on designing and redesigning products in various media. Should be taken as soon as possible after admission.

Learning Objectives
Students will:
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze documents using gestalt and rhetorical principles
- Demonstrate the ability to create documents using gestalt and rhetorical principles
- Collaborate effectively to analyze and redesign documents in various contexts
- Synthesize and present information from an external authority

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WebCT (Vista) Course Tool
Southern Polytechnic uses WebCT Vista for all online courses. If you are already in WebCTVista, the following instructions are not needed, of course. But, if you are receiving this syllabus before logging in to the course, here's what you do:

Deleted here . . .

Live Classroom Course Support
Deleted here

Library Access
Info deleted here . . .

Office Hours and Email
Although this is a fully online course, if it is convenient for you, you may want to come to see me during office hours or by making an appointment. For many of you, however, it won't be convenient or even possible to meet in person, which means that discussion and Live Classroom sessions are essential to class learning and attaining course goals. We can meet in Live Classroom, as needed, or, if the class wants to designate a mutually convenient time for virtual office hours, I can set up a time to be available.

Reserve your use of email to me for things that can't or shouldn't be discussed publicly. For any questions that would be of interest to your classmates, post these to discussion.

I will check into the course several times per week (but not every day, and not on weekends). You can expect timely responses to email within these parameters. Please reserve the use of my email outside the course for those items that are so time-sensitive that they require same-day response.

Discussion
Plan on accessing the course *at least* several times during each week. When you get online, allow sufficient time to participate fully in online discussions and activities. Before you post to discussion, be sure to read the postings of all others first so that you avoid repetition and also reflect on the postings of others. Check in to discussion at the early part of each week and then return during the week to read and respond to new postings by others. Do not wait until the end of a discussion topic to begin posting. The frequency (and distribution over the discussion period) and quality of your postings and interactions with others' postings is an essential element in your success in this course. Consult the ***discussion grading rubric*** for more information about how grades will be assigned for discussions.

In addition to your individual participation in discussion topics, you may also be assigned as a discussion leader for a topic. Consult the ***grading rubric for discussion leaders*** to learn the specific expectations for those who lead discussions.

For any other topics not covered by official discussion topics, you can create a new topic of interest by using the "***Open Topics***" discussion area.

A discussion area called "***Community Forum***" is for topics outside the particular focus of this course (but these can be very enjoyable and can help us build community).

Technology Needs
Deleted here

Texts
Deleted here . . .

Course Structure and Attendance
The WebCT Vista website is the focal point for all activities in this course. It is important to visit the site frequently, *not less than several times per week.* Housekeeping messages will be placed in **announcements**. You are responsible for keeping up with due dates for all activities and assignments and for reading and noting any announced changes. Regularly check the **calendar** icon on the toolbar at the top of the course page; you can make your own notes in the calendar and you can also print it out. I highly recommend that you do both.

Most course activities begin on a *Monday* and end on a *Sunday* evening. Check the course calendar for all due dates and time deadlines, including scheduled Live Classroom meetings, on four specific *Tuesday* evenings beginning at 6 PM (Eastern).

Assignments
The assignments listed in the table below include workshops (in which you will be working with a different partner for each one), a book report of a supplemental book relevant to graduate students in the area of information/document design, and a major redesign project

For all assignments, consider not only the audience, purpose, and context for the document, but also the impact of your design changes on the cost to produce the document.

Class participation through online discussion is also an important part of your course grade. There are eight graded discussion topics in the course and some optional, but important other discussions. You will receive feedback/grades at several points in the course about the quality and effectiveness of your online discussion/participation (see the ***grading rubric for discussions***).
---table of assignments with weight for each and description deleted here---
Grades and Grading Rubrics ---deleted here---

Approach to Assignments/Grades
Discussions
A significant, early part of the semester is focused on discussion and interaction about the materials and texts presented to establish a basis for learning about information design and to build an online community. Most of the required discussion takes places in the first five weeks of the course when there are no other graded assignments due.

Workshops
The first project assignments provide the opportunity to work for two weeks with a partner in developing ideas for each workshop assignment. Each workshop assignment provides the chance to work with a new partner so as to learn from each other and improve the process of document design as well as the collaborative learning process.

Individual Projects
The book report/oral presentation provides the opportunity for all of us to learn from each other and build community. It also provides the opportunity for students to use library resources to identify and read appropriate professional reviews that comment on the quality of the selected book.

*The final project—a redesign of a product and a report about the redesign—*provides the opportunity to demonstrate the learning acquired through all the activities and assignments leading up to this assignment. Do not delay in starting on this project, as it should be something you work on throughout the course. Check the calendar for the required discussion postings on topics and drafts for this assignment.

Comments on the report are as follows:--very good executive summary. I see you must have worked hard to keep it to a single page; in a report of this size, the summary can be a few pages.

--good cover letter (a few small editing points marked on the original; also, as you are external to the client, this should be a letter, not a memo)

In body of the report:

-- also refer to tables and figures in the body of the report (before showing them)

--avoid using the word "subject" (used in several places) so as to emphasize that these were participants --Very nice overview of organization of findings section of report

--excellent reference to appropriate appendices throughout the report

--very helpful to explain the special circumstances for User 7; but in reading the TofC I was confused by this one subhead; suggestion: begin with summary of the grouping of users 1-6 (did you include pilot, for instance; did you conduct walkthrough and discard?); then do a separate section, as you have done, for user 7

-- Nowhere in the report did you explain the process of using a walkthrough, then a pilot, then 4 users.

--A number at the beginning of the sentence is written out (Three, not 3)

--*Big issue*: Really need screen shots of findings, especially for me, as I am not familiar with the website, but also for the sponsor who will take this report to her sponsor for funding. Must show as well as tell. In the instructions for this report, I specifically address this point ("critical findings with examples, .e.g. screen captures). You do provide text descriptions of the problems, which is helpful, but pictures provide a vivid illustration, and also capture the version of the website for future reference.

--p. 26. If users are asked to rate reactions, it is no longer qualitative, but quantitative, even though the response is "subjective."

--p. 31. Explain what you mean by bug fixes.

--p. 32 Introduce the areas of highest concern table by presenting the top issues.

Grade on report: 97

Appendices:--Appendices should also include the test plan. The test plan, which you could refer to for this information, would clear that up. It would also have helped to know which user was the walkthrough and pilot, and whether you used that data in your analysis.

--Appendices should also include your personas

--Appendix C—pre-test questionnaires—must be assigned to the participant to have any value; as presented, I can't tell who is who or match the particular user's experience to the information presented --same issue for Appendix E and F. You either need to put each person's name on every form or organize the appendices to contain the complete file for each user, starting with screener and then including all of their completed forms. The value of including this information is to provide additional context for those who want to interpret the findings from users based on who they are. We can't do that without this information to provide context.

Grade on appendices: 90

***PowerPoint and oral* presentation:** Great oral presentation, as you know. Wonderful teamwork and excellent integration of clips with slides. Also perfect 30 minute timing! I loved reviewing the slide presentation. It's masterfully done and shows and tells everything so clearly.

Grade on PowerPoint and presentation: 100

Overall assessment: A fantastic job! Really excellent, high quality work. It was a pleasure to see the process and the results. The suggestions I have made for improvements are primarily to make a very good product even better. Screenshots in the report would make a huge difference, for instance, and a closer connection from the user findings to the actual user data would be very useful.

You should be rightfully proud of your work. And, naturally, I hope to receive your permission to use it as examples for future classes. So, please let me know.

April 27, 2008

Dr. Mark Nunes
Humanities and Technical Communication
1100 South Marietta Parkway
Marietta, GA 30060

Nomination of Dr. Barnum for Regent's Teaching Excellence Award

Dear Dr. Nunes,

I feel uniquely qualified to recommend Dr. Barnum for the Regent's Teaching Excellence Award because she has personally influenced the course of my academic and professional career. After 20 years of life experience, I resumed my education at Southern Polytechnic State University. During my six years as an undergrad, as a certificate student, and finally as a master's student, I took four classes from Dr. Barnum.

One of my first classes in technical communication was Dr. Barnum's Oral Presentation class. I was immediately impressed with her poise, flair, and sparkling lecture style. Dr. Barnum's example of her personal life experience showed me that I could retool my skills and embrace the profession of technical communication as a second career. Her advice and coaching gave me confidence in my own abilities and enabled me to open up and become articulate not only in class but later in work-related presentations. She also introduced me to the Society for Technical Communication and encouraged my participation as a student member.

Dr. Barnum showed me how to creatively present myself professionally and maintain a confident demeanor in stressful situations. Soon after receiving my BS, I applied this lesson to a successful job application. As this job was initially a contract position, I sought and received Dr. Barnum's advice in securing fair compensation. This employment gave me the financial security I needed to continue my education in the graduate program.

One of the required classes for the MS in Information Design and Communication is the course in Document Design then being taught by Dr. Barnum. She showed me how to create attractive and functional documentation with a professional edge. I next took her Usability Testing class, which takes place in a state-of-the-art lab for which she is largely responsible. Studying Usability with someone like Dr. Barnum who has literally written the book on this important subject has certainly added to my credibility, and I've been able to apply several lessons learned in her class to the work I currently perform.

Later, Dr. Barnum's popular Marketing Communication class provided me with a unique perspective into this important area of opportunity for technical communicators. I developed a new interest in discovering how marketing communication could be embedded into seemingly mundane documents such as specification sheets with surprising success.

Of the four classes I've taken from Dr. Barnum, three included capstone service projects providing something of value to an outside entity. Her emphasis on this type of community service provides students with real-world experience while also providing tangible benefit to a worthy cause. She leads through example and is generous with her valuable time when guiding our Technical Communication Advisory Board or working to develop scholarships for needy students.

I feel very fortunate to be a student affiliated with a consummate professional such as Dr. Barnum. As a scholar, she contributes a continuous stream of academic research relevant to the field of technical communication. Her text book is a standard for instruction in usability testing, and she continues to influence wide-spread areas of all aspects of our profession.

Dr. Barnum sets a terrific example, and her scholastic inquiry and commitment to professionalism inspire all around her. Students who have the fortune to benefit from her instruction will never forget the experience. Dr. Barnum's teaching career has influenced

hundreds if not thousands of technical communication students of Southern Polytechnic who are now successful professionals.

My association with Dr. Barnum has brought substantial benefits and positive change to my life. She helped me to become a better student and reformulate my career in many ways. Her support helped me develop a poster that won First Place at a student competition hosted by the National Summit of the Society for Technical Communication. More importantly for me, she wrote a lengthy recommendation letter for me to Texas Tech University. Her standing as a nationally recognized leader in technical communication and usability testing added considerable weight to my successful application.

I consider myself the product of a fine school, a fine faculty, and a particularly exceptional teacher, Dr. Barnum. I am truly in her debt. Because of her my horizons have expanded in every dimension, and my life has dramatically changed for the better. She has shown me not only the value of hard work, but also the value in directing that effort in the most effective direction and manner.

Dr. Barnum is a renowned technical communication scholar on the national scene and she unselfishly works to promote technical communication education locally. I can think of no one who better exemplifies a teacher's dedication to excellence and a commitment to service for her students.

Sincerely,

Tom Burns

April 27, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

I have had the distinct pleasure of having Dr. Carol Barnum as my professor at Southern Polytechnic State University on five separate occasions. I began my university studies as a Computer Science major at Southern Polytechnic in the Fall of 1997, and graduated in the Spring of 2001 with two BS degrees (Computer Science and Technical and Professional Communication), along with a minor in Computer Information Systems. Dr. Barnum was the most important and influential person to me during my academic career, and I'm proud to consider her a mentor.

Among the curriculum for my first term at Southern Poly was Chinese Culture, taught by Dr. Barnum. The impression Dr. Barnum made upon me was immediate. Not only was the class very well organized and focused, as evident by the well-planned syllabus, but it was also quite a challenge. What I enjoyed most about the class was Dr. Barnum's style in presenting the diverse material. Dr. Barnum utilized a professional, fresh, and versatile approach that I had never come close to seeing during my high school days. Dr. Barnum utilized a lecture-based style, but encouraged interaction that always furthered lecture topics. She mixed in group activities, outside readings, and student presentations that gave the class variety and bolstered learning. Expectations were clear and quality work was required. Although Dr. Barnum was always very friendly, she didn't waste time in the classroom – she delivered the material in an efficient manner that I found highly conducive to retention. I recognized even then that Dr. Barnum was someone from whom I could learn from and consider a mentor. I thought at the time that I would certainly enjoy taking another class from her in the near future.

About midway through my college career, I discovered that I enjoyed technical communication as much as I enjoyed computer science, so I decided to go for two degrees simultaneously: Technical and Professional Communication and Computer Science. I must admit, this was quite a big decision for me to make at the time, as it would increase my workload tremendously. However, an analysis of the Technical and Professional Communication future course offerings revealed that Dr. Barnum taught several courses that I thought would be the most relevant, useful, and challenging to me. Since I already had exposure to Dr. Barnum's teaching style, and as she had remained my favorite professor two years into my studies, I made the plunge into the dual major plan without the trepidation that I would have otherwise had.

During the next two years, I took Technical and Professional Communication classes from Dr. Barnum every chance my schedule allowed, and in fact, I would work my schedule around Dr. Barnum's course offerings. The four courses I took from Dr. Barnum during this time were: Business Communication, Small Group Communication, Professional Oral Presentations, and Usability Testing (Master's class, special permission granted).

Each of these classes was fresh, unique, and of the highest academic quality. The classes all mixed in lectures, group activities, student interaction, and presentations, but each time in different proportions as Dr. Barnum deemed appropriate by the respective material. Business Communication gave me the foundation of how to communicate professionally in both written and oral contexts. Small Group Communication taught me how to interact with others professionally in team and group contexts, recognize personality types, to persuade, and avoid conflict. Professional Oral Presentations polished my skills as a presenter in different environments and high-pressure situations. Usability Testing, for which Dr. Barnum wrote the book we used in the classroom, was the single most challenging and enjoyable class of my entire college career – the intertwining of the theoretical, the practical, and the real-world (we actually worked with a real client and presented our findings as groups in their corporate headquarters!) was second to none.

Dr. Barnum was equally dedicated outside the classroom as she was in it. She could always be reached via telephone and email, and she encouraged students to come see her during office hours to discuss the class in general or any particular topics that may arise during the course of a term. Not only that, but Dr. Barnum was always glad to see me during her non-office hours (which I'm not ashamed to say I took full advantage of), in which time we discussed past and current classes. She was essential in helping me shape my schedule for upcoming semesters so that my academic goals would be focused and achieved as efficiently as possible. In short, Dr. Barnum was a mentor both inside and outside the classroom.

In conclusion, I will always hold Dr. Barnum in the highest esteem, and I consider her the definitive professor of my academic career at Southern Polytechnic State University. I sincerely recommend Dr. Carol Barnum as the ideal candidate for the Regents' Excellence in Teaching Award.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael T. Morgan

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To: Dr. Mark Nunes;   April 25, 2008

It is my pleasure to recommend Dr. Carol Barnum for the *Regents Teaching Excellence Award*. Dr. Barnum has been very helpful to me all throughout my Master's program at Southern Polytechnic. She has been patient to listen to me as I struggle to define my career path and has also provided insight and good advice in this matter. She is accessible to students taking her classes and even when students are done with her course.

Her experience and expertise are inspiring for students who desire a career in the Technical Communications industry. She always comments on the grades she assigns and is available for discussing questions that students might have on a particular assignment. I think Dr. Barnum is an incredible asset for SPSU's English & Technical Communications Department and I highly recommend her for this distinguished award.

Sincerely,

Karentie Riddering
Graduate MSIDC student

1534 briarfield way Marietta, ga 30066 karenfieriddering@yahoo.com 678.206.1801

LETTERS OF SUPPORT FROM ADMINISTRATORS & COLLEAGUES

April 25, 2008

Dear Regents' Teaching Excellence Award Committee:

It is with great pleasure that I recommend Dr. Carol Barnum for the Regents' Teaching Excellence award. Dr. Barnum is truly an exceptional teacher. She balances her dedication to the classroom with her ongoing scholarship and professional activity. She also engages in ongoing professional development that directly impacts her effectiveness as a teacher. She also provides noteworthy service to students through mentorship and professional guidance.

Although Dr. Barnum is a distinguished scholar with an international reputation, she places equal emphasis on her teaching. She sets a high standard for student engagement in her courses, both face-to-face and online. She implements a range of instructional technology tools to help increase student engagement in the course, including Live Classroom, Impatica, and Camtasia. Her teaching evaluations reflect both her rigor and her commitment to student learning. Without question, she is an exemplary instructor who inspires students to reach their highest potential.

Dr. Barnum's service to the Department and the University demonstrates her commitment to students and to learning. As both the Department's Director of Graduate Studies and chair of our graduate admissions committee, she works hard to grow our enrollment while at the same time maintaining high admissions standards. She has helped shape the direction of distance learning at SPSU through her service on the Distance Learning Task Force. She is active in the Society for Technical Communication (STC), and she is the faculty liaison for the TCOM Advisory Board. She encourages students and alumni to become active in these organizations as a way to strengthen the connection between classroom studies and professional world experience. She has mentored numerous students into the field of technical communication over the years through internship supervision, through workplace collaboration, and through support of research.

Throughout her career, Dr. Barnum has consistently demonstrated her ongoing commitment to the classroom. She provides meaningful service to the Department, the University, and her profession. While her international reputation as a usability expert puts her in high demand as an invited speaker, she is generous with her time and expertise in assisting students in their transition into the professional world. In short: I strongly and wholeheartedly support her nomination as this year's Regents' Teaching Excellence Award recipient.

Sincerely,

Mark Nunes
Associate Professor and Chair
English, Technical Communication, and Media Arts

April 28, 2008

Dr. Dorothy Zinsmeister
Asst. Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia
270 Washington Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30334-1450

Dear Dr. Zinsmeister,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of support for Dr. Carol Barnum's nomination for the 2008
Regents' Teaching Excellence Award.

Carol has been a faculty member at SPSU since 1979. It is fair to say that no single faculty
member has had a stronger influence on her department (English, Technical Communication,
and Media Arts) than Dr. Barnum has. Dr. Barnum is one of the mainstays of SPSU's Technical
Communication program, and is the coordinator of the department's graduate programs. She
teaches in the areas of Information Design; Marketing Communication; International Technical
Communication; Small Group Communication/Collaborative Writing; and Usability Testing/User
Centered Design. She is also the Director of SPSU's Usability Center. Much of her teaching is
online, and she is an expert and campus leader in the use of WebCT Vista, Wimba Live
Classroom, Impatica, and Camtasia. One of her courses was submitted as a WebCT Exemplary
Course Project.

Her teaching in all of the above areas is exemplary. One of her students summed up her
attributes well by writing "Dr. Barnum is an extraordinary teacher. Her demands and
expectations made the whole class perform better…her attention to discussion and feedback
were also extraordinary…I don't think that many teachers [are] as dedicated and capable as Dr.
Barnum. Not to say that there aren't other wonderful teachers in this program, but Dr. Barnum
is rare in that everything she does inspires us to do better." Many students note her rigor,
passion for her field, and compassion.

Dr. Barnum has earned an international reputation in several areas.   She is both a Fellow and a
Senior Member of the Society for Technical Communication (the largest international
organization in the field), and has won the J.R. Gould Award for Excellence in Teaching
Technical Communication from them. She has also been a member of several of their national
committees. Carol is a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the Technical Communication
Quarterly and the Journal of Usability Studies. She regularly presents at the conferences of the
Usability Professionals Association, the Society for Technical Communication, ELearn, IEEE,
the European Usability Professionals Association, and many others. She has published a great
number of papers in scholarly journals, and is the winner of the International STC
"Distinguished" Award for her book, <u>Usability Testing and Research</u>. She is also in high
demand as a usability consultant.

On a more personal level, Dr. Barnum is an outstanding senior faculty member. She is not shy
about speaking her mind, but always with a broader perspective of what is best for the
University and its students. She is both passionate and easy to work with, and a leader who
inspires others to follow.

In short, Dr. Carol Barnum would be an excellent choice for the Regents Teaching Excellence Award.

Sincerely,

Dr. Zvi Szafran
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Southern Polytechnic State University

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Tel: 678-915-7202 Fax: 678-915-7625

April 28, 2008

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am pleased to support Dr. Carol Barnum's nomination for the 2008 Regents' Teaching Award. Dr. Barnum has served the University System of Georgia for over 30 years as an exemplary scholar and leader in her discipline, as well as a committed mentor and teacher.

Dr. Barnum has been instrumental in building Southern Polytechnic's department in English, Technical Communication, and Media Arts and has lead the department's graduate program in Information Design and Communication (IDC) since its inception. Today, IDC is widely recognized as one of the premier graduate programs in the field of technical communication, due in no small measure to Dr. Barnum's efforts. Her internationally recognized scholarship in the field of usability testing certainly helps draw students to the program, but it is her commitment to rigorous and innovative teaching that has made the program a success.

Dr. Barnum has been a pioneer in the development of distance learning and continues to integrate new technologies into her online courses. Today, she employs LiveClassroom technology to create "virtual workshops" in her design courses, and she has developed podcast channels for each of her online courses. Our students enthusiastically seek out Dr. Barnum's courses, precisely because of the active learning community she creates online, using a strategic mix of synchronous technology, asynchronous communication tools, media-rich content, and guest practitioners from industry.

Connecting with students outside the classroom – whether directing master's theses, guiding graduate internships, managing graduate assistants, or conducting usability tests with students – is also a key component of Dr. Barnum's impact as a teacher. Among students, she enjoys a reputation as a rigorous, fair, and supportive teacher, and she is a much sought after adviser. In fact, many students so value their experience under Dr. Barnum's mentorship that they remain involved with the program years after graduation through our industry advisory board.

Equally important, Dr. Barnum's expertise in international and cross-cultural communication has been essential to our department's success in reaching students worldwide. She single-handedly developed a cooperative relationship with Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology in New Zealand and recruited students from Christchurch to our online graduate programs. She has also leveraged her relationships with two universities in China to help build our undergraduate joint-degree program. And to support the growing global reach of our programs, Dr. Barnum has lead comprehensive faculty-development workshops to ensure that every instructor in our department is equipped to teach, advise, and mentor international students.

In short, Carol Barnum demonstrates the best the University System of Georgia has to offer, and she is well deserving of the Regent's Award in Teaching Excellence. All of us at Southern Polytechnic are honored to support her nomination.

Sincerely yours,

Michele Shauf, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Southern Polytechnic State University
English, Technical Communication & Media Arts