EXAM INFORMATION
This exam was designed to evaluate whether candidates possess the knowledge and understanding that would be gained by taking a lower-level college course in technical writing which includes the following content: theory and practice of technical writing; purpose, content, and organizational patterns of common types of technical documents; information design; and technical editing.

The exam contains 100 questions to be answered in 2 hours.

**Form Codes:** SS820, ST820, SY820, SZ820

EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE
The following is an outline of the content areas covered in the examination. The approximate percentage of the examination devoted to each content area is also noted.

I. **Theory and Practice of Technical Writing – 13%**
   a. Understanding contexts, purpose(s), and importance
   b. Audience analysis
   c. Ensuring the validity and reliability of data and sources
   d. Establishing the appropriate style

II. **Purpose of Technical Documents – 23%**
   a. Informing
      i. Progress/inspection reports
      ii. Feasibility reports
      iii. Research/laboratory reports
      iv. Instructions, procedures and process descriptions
   b. Persuading and Making Recommendations
      i. Proposals
      ii. White papers
      iii. Grants

III. **Technical Writing Process – 13%**
    a. Individual and/or collaborative writing
    b. Choice of medium
    c. Drafting and organizing content
    d. Research (primary and secondary)

CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS
The American Council on Education’s College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated the DSST test development process and content of this exam. It has made the following recommendations:

**Area or Course Equivalent:** Technical Writing
**Level:** Lower-level baccalaureate
**Amount of Credit:** 3 Semester Hours
**Minimum Score:** 400
**Source:** www.acenet.edu
IV. Document design – 18%
   a. Elements of document design
      i. Page formatting
      ii. Textual formatting
      iii. Illustration formatting
   b. Strategies of document design
      i. Readability
      ii. Usability
      iii. Accessibility

V. Revising, Editing and Final Sections – 33%
   a. Revising for
      i. Completeness
      ii. Concision
      iii. Accessibility
      iv. Organization
      v. Clarity
   b. Editing for
      i. Concision
      ii. Grammatical accuracy
      iii. Technical and referencing accuracy
   c. Final sections
      i. Cover letters
      ii. Executive summaries
      iii. Abstracts

REFERENCES
Below is a list of reference publications that were either used as a reference to create the exam, or were used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. You may reference either the current edition of these titles or textbooks currently used at a local college or university for the same class title. It is recommended that you reference more than one textbook on the topics outlined in this fact sheet.

You should begin by checking textbook content against the content outline provided before selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study. Sources for study material are suggested but not limited to the following:


SAMPLE QUESTIONS
All test questions are in a multiple-choice format, with one correct answer and three incorrect options. The following are samples of the types of questions that may appear on the exam.
1. A report that studies the practicality of a proposed plan and then recommends an action is a/an
   a. feasibility report.
   b. Lab/test report.
   c. Inspection report.
   d. Investigation report.

2. Which of the following graphics is best for displaying continuous change over time?
   a. Bar chart
   b. Line graph
   c. Schematic diagram
   d. Table

3. The major difference between proposals and many other technical documents is that proposals are
   a. long and formal
   b. written by committees
   c. overtly persuasive
   d. presented orally as well as in writing

4. If the sentences are arranged into a coherent paragraph, which sentence will come third in the sequence?
   a. 1
   b. 2
   c. 5
   d. 6

5. If the sentences now numbered 1 and 6 were combined into one sentence, the new sentence would begin
   with which of the following?
a. When
b. Although
c. Because
d. Thus

6. One significant difference between technical language and lay language is that technical language tends to be more
   a. subjective
   b. sophisticated
   c. abstract
   d. exact

7. Which of the following is a major flaw in a classification?
   a. overlap in the categories
   b. use of the same criterion throughout
   c. division into more than ten groups and subgroups
   d. categories with different numbers of subdivisions

Answers to sample questions:
1-A; 2-D; 3-B; 4- D; 5-A; 6-D, 7-A