

## ENC 2210- 23213 – Technical Writing Spring 2019

**Instructor Name:** Jacqueline Schnieber

**Course meeting times & locations:** T 2-3 & R 3, MAT 0012

**Office Location and Hours:** TUR 4367, Tuesday 10:30 – 12:30am

**Course website:** Canvas (elearning.ufl.edu)

**Instructor Email:** [jschnieber@ufl.edu](mailto:jschnieber@ufl.edu)

### **Course Description:**

This class introduces students to technical and professional writing in the workplace. Students will analyze and write various technical writing genres such as résumés/CVs, letters, memos, emails, blog posts, formal reports, proposals, technical definitions, and instruction manuals. In addition, students will go through a mock job interview for a job of their choice. When writing in these different genres, students will learn how to adapt to the rhetorical situations as well as considering issues of audience, style, organization, and the visual design of documents.

Students will work closely with the instructor and their peers in the writing and revision process through in-class activities, workshops, peer reviews of longer writing assignments, and collaborative writing projects.

In the course of this class, students will:

- learn to write professional emails and documents,
- understand the differences between the various genres of technical writing,
- identify and adapt to rhetorical situations within technical discourse communities,
- address the specialized needs of audiences, including multiple audiences,
- evaluate and critically revise their own work based on feedback.

### **General Education Objectives:**

- This course confers General Education credit for Composition (C) and also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- *Composition courses* provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University *Writing Requirement (WR)* ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

**General Education Learning Outcomes:**

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

**Required Text:**

Richard Johnson-Sheehan, *Technical Communication Today*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition. (Pearson)  
ISBN: 9780134425733.

Any format is welcome.

**Assignments** (see below for Grading Rubric):

Assignment	Words	Points
Emails	4x 250 = 1,000	4x 25 = 100
Instruction Manual	1,200	100
Job Application Portfolio <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job advertisement and analysis</li> <li>• Cover letter</li> <li>• Résumé/CV</li> <li>• Mock interview evaluation</li> </ul>	Job analysis: 350  Letter: 450 Résumé/CV: 1-2 pages Evaluation: 300 <b>= 1,100</b>	200
Project Proposal	1,000 per student	100
Blog Post	500	50
Project Presentation & Formal Report	1,200	150 (100 for the report, 50 for the presentation)
Peer Review & Mock Job Interview		5x 40 = 200
Class Participation/ In-Class Work		100
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>1000</b>

**Emails (10%):**

Discussion boards on Canvas will be provided to post these emails. They all require the necessary elements of an email and an effective professional style appropriate for the context.

*1. Introductory Email*

Post an email to your instructor to the discussion board: introduce yourself, your goals for the course, and your professional/academic interests.

*2. Request-for-Information Email*

Post an email to your potential employer, introducing yourself and request more information about the job advertisement. Make sure it is a meaningful inquiry and not an obvious attempt to sell yourself to the employer.

*3. Proposal Email*

Post an email to the class, summarizing what project your team has chosen: what is the problem you are addressing? What solutions are you working on? What work will need to be done (research, presentation, creative piece, graphics, etc.), and what is your part in the team? Be as specific as possible.

*4. Response Email*

Post a response to a proposal email that was not written by someone in your group. Provide feedback to their proposal: does the problem seem significant? What do you think of the proposed solutions? Is the group missing something in their approach or methodology? Do you have any ideas that could help them put together a compelling proposal/presentation? Be as detailed as possible, and make sure to give both positive and negative feedback.

**Instruction Manual (10%):**

You will construct an instruction manual for a product, process, or task. The actual technical instructions will be for a “thing” most students at UF would find useful. The manual will contain descriptions and specifications, product warnings, maintenance and troubleshooting advice, and any other information the user is likely to need to complete the task, use the product, or fulfill the process. The manual will be assessed on the quality and readability of the instructions, on the functionality of the instructional visuals, on the effectiveness of the design, and on the rhetorical style of the steps, sequencing, and transitions.

**Job Application Portfolio (20%):**

This assignment requires you to create an E-Portfolio using Canvas. You can find instructions on how to do so here: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10568-4212710326>.

The portfolio needs to include these four elements in this exact order:

### *1. Job Advertisement and Analysis*

Find a job application description for a specific job, internship, graduate school, and/or professional organization. I encourage you to find a job to which you would actually consider applying or are looking into right now. Include links to the job description or a scan/screenshot of the advertisement.

Write a brief analysis of the job description: what type of applicant are they are looking for? What skills do they require? How does it speak to your individual skill set and interests? And how do you plan on tailoring your résumé/cover letter to the job?

### *2. Cover Letter*

Write a cover letter for your application in which you introduce yourself as an ideal candidate: highlight the skills that the position requires, give specific examples from your résumé that demonstrate these skills, and explain shortcomings on your résumé and/or skill set if deemed necessary.

### *3. Résumé/Curriculum Vitae*

Write either a résumé or a CV, depending on the type of position to which you are applying. Make sure to tailor this document to the job description—consider which job or volunteer experiences highlight the skills that the job requires and therefore need to stand out on your résumé/CV.

### *4. Peer Review & Mock Job Interview Evaluation*

As part of the training, we will be conducting a mock job interview during class. You will need to provide your evaluator with your application material beforehand, and you have to read someone else's materials. Your job is not to evaluate the material but to write down and ask realistic questions during the mock interview. You will be provided with an assessment sheet that your interviewer will hand over and discuss with you.

For this portfolio, all you need to do is scan and attach your own assessment sheet, i.e. the peer review and the assessment of your performance during the mock job interview.

### **Project Proposal (15%):**

This small group project will be a technical proposal for the campus or for an academic unit within UF. Your proposal will seek to persuade a target audience that something needs to be done and offer a specific solution to the problem your group has identified. The assessment of this final project will be on the proposed course of action, your audience analysis, your rhetorical strategy, your document design, and the visual quality and effectiveness of your graphics. Each group member will need to have an individual part to compose (as group writing does not count toward your word requirement). Your grade will be determined by your individual part as well as the cohesiveness of the whole proposal.

### **Blog Post (5%):**

Based on your group's project, compose a blog post on Canvas announcing the proposal and relevant details. You may make up a name for your team or create an appropriate

company name. Your blog post must contain all elements identified in class; include images, graphs, or other appropriate visuals; be written in a language appropriate for the target audience; and only contain the most relevant information of your proposal. Your blog post needs to be both eye-catching and convincing for its target audience.

### **Project Presentation & Formal Report (15%):**

#### *Project Presentation*

Based on your group's project proposal, you will need to prepare a very brief presentation (no more than 10 minutes) in which you pitch your ideas. Presentations need to speak to what issue/gap is being addressed, why it is important, and why your proposal is an effective solution. Additionally, all presentations need to include at least one creative element. This may be a poster, video, etc. that you created as a group. (For example, videos may be "interviews" of students that talk about the problem.) Keep in mind that you cannot actually interview students on campus or otherwise conduct experiments with any living being (since this requires IRB approval).

You will be assessed on the effectiveness of graphics and videos used as well as body language and rhetorical strategies. Make sure that everyone in the group has a significant role in the presentation.

#### *Formal Report (1,200 words)*

In this report, you are required to introduce your project (problem and proposed solution), track your thought process in finding adequate solutions, including other attempts and why those fell short, the division of work amongst the group, and the creative process behind the final project presentation. This is where you get to explain why you made certain choices and omissions, refer to research you did on the topic, and explain how you have overcome obstacles as a group.

Each individual student must submit a formal report. Elements the report needs to include are:

- Professional style and correct formatting;
- Explanations of technical jargon that is used;
- A proper introduction that summarizes the problem the project addresses and the group's solution;
- An adequate conclusion that includes a reflection on the limitations of the project;
- Methodology of the project;
- Creative process of the project and the presentation; e.g. how did you come up with your specific solution? Why is it an adequate solution? What rhetorical and visual strategies did you use, and why?
- The division of work amongst the group and how you worked together as a team;

- Any research that was incorporated (include a Reference page in APA if you do).

### **Course Policies:**

1. *Attendance:* Attendance is required. Missing **more than three periods** without a formal excuse (e.g. a doctor's note) or frequent tardiness will negatively affect your grade. If you miss **six periods or more** during a semester, you will fail the entire course, unless those absences involve university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. Please note that missing a **double period** counts as *two* absences. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with me prior to the date that will be missed. If you have a legitimate reason to miss class that you do not wish to discuss with me, you are welcome to go through the Dean of Students' office to have your absence excused. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this class are consistent with university policies that can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

**Important:** It is your responsibility to check whether your attendance was taken, particularly if you come in late. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates. If you miss class, you are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

2. *Assignments:* In order to pass the course, **all required coursework** listed in the latest version of the syllabus **has to be submitted on or before their respective due dates**. Papers are due at the beginning of class or on-line at the assigned deadline. You may be granted one extensions and on the instructor's discretion only (see #3).

All papers have to be submitted online. At the beginning of class, you are required to hand in the respective peer-review drafts and response sheets of the assignment.

3. *Late Papers/Assignments:* A whole letter grade will be deducted from all papers and assignments submitted within 24 hours of the missed due date. Papers and assignments that are submitted later than that will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse.

**If you are struggling with an assignment or think you will not be able to meet a deadline, please talk to me at least 48 hours before the due date about the possibility of an extension.**

4. *Classroom Behavior and Netiquette:* Students come from various cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. It is required that you display open-mindedness and respect in class at all times, but particularly during class discussions and group work, where ideas may be presented that differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal from the class and, accordingly, an absence for that day.

5. *Email Correspondence Policy:* You are encouraged to email me questions, concerns, ask for feedback, or make an appointment with me outside my office hours via email. However, please only use your UF email to contact me, and refrain from sending me messages on

Canvas. I try my best to respond within 24 hours—if I do not, feel free to send a follow-up email.

*6. In-Class Work:* Knowledge is created in collaboration with others. Active participation is thus a crucial part of success in this class and is part of your final grade. You are expected to contribute meaningfully and constructively to each class session. These discussions are designed to help us gain a better understanding of the material. That means that you should come to class prepared to talk and ask questions about the readings. You will also be expected to work in small groups and participate in class and group discussions as well as other in-class activities. Throughout the semester, we will be conducting group peer reviews. You are expected to provide thorough constructive feedback on the drafts of your peers. This feedback will not only help them make necessary revisions, but it will strengthen your writing as well. You are required to bring in **printed copies of your full drafts** on peer review days. Remember that no one's draft will be perfect. Be prepared for unannounced quizzes or activities on the readings or classroom discussion. Students must be present for all in-class activities to receive credit for them. In-class work cannot be made up.

*7. Electronic Devices Policy:* Laptops and tablets are allowed, but I reserve the right to check your screen periodically to ensure that they are not used for anything unrelated to class. If you should be caught misusing this privilege, you will be prohibited from further using laptops/tablets during class and required to bring in hard copies of all readings. **All other electronic devices, including cellphones, are strictly prohibited** unless specifically announced by the instructor beforehand. Therefore, you are not allowed to use your phones to access your readings. Texting in class is extremely rude and, after one initial warning, will result in dismissal and an absence.

*8. Paper Format & Submission:* All papers have to be submitted as MS Word (.doc, .docx) or PDF (.pdf) documents to Canvas. **Hard copies of papers due for in-class workshops, peer reviews, etc., must be brought in.** Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner.

All assignments must have your name, the course number and title, name of instructor, and the date printed on the top left-hand side of the first page. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins, pages numbered, and include a title representative of your argument. Be sure to staple papers before submitting hard copies. **Unstapled papers will receive a grade penalty.**

*9. Paper Maintenance Responsibilities:* It is your responsibility to keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.

*10. Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism:* Plagiarism is a serious violation of the [Student Honor Code](#). The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

- a) Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- b) Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

Student Honor Code Sanctions: For a violation or violations of the Honor Code, a student may receive any of the sanctions that can be imposed for Student Conduct Code violations, including but not limited to conduct probation, suspension and expulsion as well as any educational sanctions. In addition, students may receive the following:

- a) Assignment grade penalty. The student is assigned a grade penalty on an assignment including but not limited to a zero.
- b) Course grade penalty. The student is assigned a grade penalty in the entire course including but not limited to an "E".

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007

<<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire [Student Honor Code](#).

*11. Grade Appeals:* In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

For information on UF Grading policies, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

*12. Course Evaluations:* Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course:

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

*13. Special Accommodations for Students:* The classroom is for everyone, and I will try my best to make the classroom as inclusive as possible. Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor. These are specialists who will help me by giving me advice on how to make the classroom accessible to you.

*14. UF's Policy on Harassment:* UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty:

<http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>

*15. Counselling and Wellness Center:* Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online:

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

16. *U Matter, We Care*: Your well-being is important. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

17. *Policy on Environmental Sustainability*: Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute our course materials. Consider purchasing electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available or used copies of print texts. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County [Friends of the Library](#) annual book sale.)

18. *Writing Studio*: If you seek additional help with your writing, the University Writing Studio is located in Tigert 302 and is available to all UF students. Please make sure to make an appointment before you go in.

## **SYLLABUS**

Readings refer to the required textbook unless otherwise indicated

### **UNIT 1: PROFESSIONAL WRITING**

#### **WEEK 1**

1/8 Introduction: Syllabus, Course Policies & Goals, Assignments, Canvas  
Introduction to Technical Writing

1/10 *Chapter 1: Technical Communication in the Entrepreneurial Workplace*

#### **WEEK 2**

1/15 *Chapter 6: E-mails, Letters, and Memos*

1/17 **Due: Introductory Email**  
*Chapter 7: Technical Descriptions and Specifications*

#### **WEEK 3**

1/22 Introduction to Instruction Manuals  
*Chapter 8: Instructions and Documentation*

1/24 *Chapter 18: Creating and Using Graphics*

#### **WEEK 4**

1/29 *Chapter 19: Revising and Editing for Usability*  
**Workshop: Usability Revisions (bring your draft)**

1/31 **Peer Review: Instruction Manual**

## UNIT 2: JOB APPLICATIONS

### WEEK 5

- 2/5 **Due: Instruction Manual**  
Introduction to Résumés/Curriculum Vitae and Cover Letters  
*Chapter 5: Starting Your Career*
- 2/7 **Workshop: Résumés/Curriculum Vitae**

### WEEK 6

- 2/12 *Chapter 16: Using Plain and Persuasive Style*
- 2/14 **Bring in one Job Advertisement**  
**Workshop: Cover Letter (bring your draft)**

### WEEK 7

- 2/19 **Due: Request-for-Information Email**  
Preparing for Job Interviews
- 2/21 Professional Portfolios and Thank You Letters

### WEEK 8

- 2/26 **Peer Review: Application Package & Portfolio**
- 2/28 Read: "10 Best Job Interview Tips for Jobseekers"  
<https://www.livecareer.com/career/advice/interview/job-interview-tips>  
**Mock Job Interviews**

### WEEK 9

- 3/5 **SPRING BREAK**
- 3/7 **SPRING BREAK**

## UNIT 3: COLLABORATION AND WORKPLACE MATTERS

### WEEK 10

- 3/12 Introduction to Group Assignments  
*Chapter 9: Proposals*
- 3/14 **Due: Application Package & Portfolio**  
Team Meetings/Workshop  
*Chapter 3: Working in Teams*

### WEEK 11

- 3/19 **Due: Proposal Email**  
*Chapter 15: Organizing and Drafting*
- 3/21 *Chapter 4: Managing Ethical Challenges*

### WEEK 12

- 3/26 *Chapter 13: How to be Persuasive*
- 3/28 **Peer Review: Proposal**

## UNIT 4: PRESENTING YOUR IDEAS

### WEEK 13

4/2 **Due: Proposal**

Writing to an Audience

*Chapter 2: Profiling Your Readers*

4/4 *Chapter 21: Writing for the Internet*

### WEEK 14

4/9 **Due: Blog Post**

*Chapter 10: Brief Reports and Chapter 11: Formal Reports*

4/11 *Chapter 20: Presenting and Pitching Your Ideas*

**Workshop: Body Language and Visuals**

### WEEK 15

4/16 **Due: Response Email**

Anticipating Audience Responses

Booth, "Acknowledgment and Responses" (on Canvas)

4/18 **Peer Review: Formal Report**

### WEEK 16

4/23 **Presentations**

*Review: Presentation Guidelines & Evaluation Sheet* (on Canvas)

Course Wrap-Up

4/24 **Due: Formal Report**

## General Education Assessment Rubric

PLEASE NOTE: Assignments short of the minimum word count as well as papers that fail to follow the instructions of the assignment prompts **will not receive credit**.

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.
MECHANICS	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper's argument or points.	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.