

ENC 2210: Technical Writing

Summer 2013

Section 025A

Meets M T W R F 4, Tur 1101

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Office Hours W period 3 or by appointment

Course Description

ENC 2210 is an introduction to technical and professional writing. This course presents students with practical information about communicating in different kinds of workplace environments and professional/technical discourse communities. Throughout the semester students will produce and analyze common technical writing genres, including emails, letters, resumes, memos, reports, technical descriptions, technical definitions, technical manuals, and proposals. Students will work toward understanding how to analyze and react to rhetorical situations each genre and writing situation presents, including issues of audience, organization, visual design, style, and the material production of documents.

Class meetings provide students with the opportunity to participate in ongoing class discussions about assigned readings and writing projects, to work closely with the instructor, to work with peers in writing and revision workshops, and to collaborate with peers on projects. Because much of the communicative work produced in the workplace is collaborative as well as individual, ENC 2210 emphasizes both individual writing projects and collaborative writing projects.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify and understand the facets and functions of the primary genres of technical writing, including emails, memos, letters, resumes, reports, technical descriptions, technical definitions, and manuals
- Produce professional caliber technical documents
- Analyze and adapt to the constraints of specific rhetorical situations, including audiences, purposes, and uses

- Develop strategies for addressing multiple audiences in any given technical document, including accommodations for expert and lay audiences
- Write documents that are accessible and reader-centered
- strategically orchestrate elements of document design and layout, including type, spacing, color, and medium
- Integrate tables, figures, and other elements into documents
- Produce documents both collaboratively and independently
- Develop and administer user tests; analyze and synthesize user test data
- Refine writing style for clarity, concision, coherence, cohesion, and emphasis
- Critique and revise your own documents to insure that they fulfill their purposes
- Work with peers in order to provide oral and written feedback to one another

Required Texts

Technical Communication in the Twenty-First Century, with Tech Com Lab & eText. 2nd Edition. Sidney I. Dobrin, Christopher J. Keller, and Christian R. Weisser.

Pearson, 2012. (ISBN: 032190379X)

Course Assignments

Letters (10 %) - Over the course of the semester, students will write three Letters: the first letter assignment will be written in response to case study #1 provided on page 391 in chapter 13 of the course text. Students will write a letter in response to a series of letters by the National Park Service in 2004.

The second letter assignment will be addressed from the student to the instructor, in which the student will explain which subjects/terms he/she intends to address in the technical description and technical definition assignments.

The third letter assignment will be written as an assessment and evaluation of the manual collaborative project and will be written from the student to the instructor.

Memos (10 %) - Over the course of the semester, students will write three memos. The first memo assignment will serve as an introduction between the student and the instructor. Appropriate memo format will be discussed and provided in class. Word count: 50 words.

In the second memo assignment, students will analyze case study #1 found on pages 38-39 of the course text. Students will write a memo to the instructor explaining the relationship between

ethics and technical writing as it is manifest in the case study. The memo should address how the writers described in this case might have avoided both the disaster explained in the case and how they might have acted more ethically by way of their technical documentation. Students may also choose to argue that the writers in the case study did act ethically, in which case students should explain this conclusion in their memos. Word count: 250 words.

In the third memo assignment, students will explain to the instructor why they made the rhetorical choices they made in their job application packets. Word count: 100 words.

Resume and cover letter (10 %) - Students will produce professional-caliber job application materials: a resume and a cover letter. This assignment is explained in greater detail on page 438 of the course text. Word count: 300 words.

Technical definition (10 %) - For this project, students will respond to case study #1 in chapter 15, page 462 of the course text. Students will write the extended definition portion of the assignment. Word count: 250 words.

Proposal (10 %) - This project is the first of four linked projects. Working in groups of three, four, or five, students will identify a problem that requires detailed technical instructions, policies, and/or procedures in order to solve. The problem should be one with which students are familiar and that is relevant to student lives. Once the group has identified the problem, they will produce a proposal (see chapter 20 of the course text) that identifies how they intend to produce a manual that guides others through the process, procedure, or policy. The proposal will contain subject, schedule, method, and format for the manual. Word count: each student will produce 1000 words of writing.

Progress Report (10 %) - This project is the second of four linked projects. Once each group's proposal has been approved and evaluated by the instructor, each group will begin work on its manuals (see below). Mid-way through the manual project, each group will be required to submit a formal progress report (see chapter 21). The progress report will detail what the group has accomplished, what remains to be completed, a revised schedule for completion, and a general assessment of the group's efforts thus far. Word count: each student will produce 1000 words of writing.

Manual (20 %) - This project is the third of four linked projects. For this project, each group will produce a technical manual (see chapters 18 and 19 of the course text) that defines and provides instructions, policies, and/or procedures for solving the problem students have opted to solve (see proposal). This project is substantial, requiring not only the production of a large amount of

text, but specific consideration of design, layout, images, organization, and accessibility. Word count: each student will produce 1000 words of writing.

User test and report (10 %) - This is the fourth of four linked projects. For this assignment student groups will develop a user test methodology, including procedures and protocols (see chapter 11 of the course text). Using test groups from outside of the class population, groups will conduct their user tests in order to measure the functionality and readability of their technical manuals. Based on the data they gather and the group's evaluation of that data, each group will then revise the technical manual before final submission for grade. In addition, each group will produce a user test report (see chapters 11 and 22 of the course text) that identifies the user test methodology, the materials, the processes, and procedures. The report will provide evaluation of that data and will address how that data was considered in regard to the final revision of the manual. The report will also detail what revisions were made as a result of the user test. Word count: each student will produce 2500 words of writing.

Note: All papers must be submitted via the appropriate assignment drop box in Sakai no later than 11:30AM of the date indicated on the syllabus and must be in Microsoft Word format only. Late work will not be accepted. I am always available to discuss your papers with you during the writing process. If you have any questions or concerns about your work, please feel free to contact me via e-mail, visit during office hours, or schedule an appointment with me.

We will occasionally devote class time during the semester to workshopping various writing assignments. Participation in this process, both as a writer and as a reader, is mandatory. Students will submit drafts both to their peers and to the instructor for feedback. Failure to submit a draft to the instructor will result in a one letter grade reduction on the revised assignment.

Additionally, because each student must meet the minimum writing requirement of 6000 words to pass the course, for all collaborative written work, each student must submit his or her individual written portion of the document to the instructor both in draft and final form. Failure to submit an individual draft to the instructor will result in that student's grade for the assignment being reduced by one letter. Failure to submit a final version of the individual written portion of the document will result in that student receiving a 0 for the assignment.

Class Participation- in order to foster an open and engaging community of learners, all students must actively participate in all class activities, including discussions, in-class writing exercises, and peer-review workshops.

Total: 100 %

Grading Scale

A=95-100 %

A-=90-94 %

B+=87-89 %

B=83-86 %

B-=80-82 %

C+=77-79 %

C=73-76 %

C-=70-72 %

D+=67-69 %

D=63-66 %

D-=60-62 %

E=0-59 %

General Education Requirement

Successful completion of ENC 2210, Technical Writing, satisfies the University of Florida's General Education Requirement for Composition (C). (For more information regarding the University of Florida's General Education Requirement for Composition see:

<http://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>)

Course Policies

Attendance

This course is largely discussion and activity-based, and attendance is therefore mandatory. Much of the learning that occurs during class discussions is spontaneous and cannot be duplicated outside the classroom. Only absences pertaining to university-sponsored events (such as athletics or band), and religious holidays will be exempt. If you are absent, it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates and turn in assignments on time. Please arrive to class on time; being tardy disrupts the entire class.

You are permitted three (3) unexcused absences. Each unexcused absence beyond three will lower your final grade by half a letter. Additionally, please note that I take attendance at the beginning of each class period. If you arrive after I have taken attendance, it is your responsibility to inform me of your presence in class. Failure to do so will result in an absence.

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. (University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007 <<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code.

Important Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the entire course. Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if the student fails to know and employ proper documentation techniques.

Unless otherwise indicated by the instructor for class group work, all work must be your own. Nothing written for another course will be accepted.

Graded Materials

Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the student's responsibility to have and make available this material.

Classroom Civility

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. You are expected to demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own during all class discussions and activities.

Additionally, please note that I have a trained seeing-eye dog who will accompany me to class. He is fully trained and will not pose a threat to your safety in the classroom. While he will undoubtedly be a curiosity to you, I would ask that you please refrain from petting, feeding, or otherwise interacting with him as he is "working" like the rest of us.

Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>

Course Schedule

Note: this schedule is tentative and subject to revision. All readings and written assignments are due on the date indicated. Readings in Technical Communication in the Twenty-First Century will appear as TCTC.

Week One: May 13-17

M- Course Introduction

T- What is Technical Writing? TCTC ch 1

W- Writing Memos and Emails. TCTC ch 12; assign memo 1.

Th- Ethics and Technical Writing. TCTC ch 4; memo 1 due

F- Rhetoric and Technical Writing. TCTC ch 2; assign memo 2

Week Two: May 20-24

M- Workshop memo 2

T- Writing Letters; TCTC ch 13; assign letter 1

W- Technical Writing and Electronic Technologies. TCTC ch 3; memo 2 due

Th- Research and Technical Writing. TCTC ch 6

F- Workshop letter 1

Week Three: May 27-31

M- Memorial Day observed: no class!

T- Organization, Drafting, and Technical Writing. TCTC ch 7; letter 1 due

W- Job application materials. TCTC ch 14; assign job application packet

Th- Revising, Editing, and Rewriting. TCTC ch 10

F- Layout and Design. TCTC ch 9; job application and memo 3 due

Week Four: June 3-7

M- Technical Definitions. TCTC ch 15; assign technical definition

T- Proposals. TCTC ch 20; assign collaborative project

W- Workshop technical definition

Th- Technical Instruction. TCTC ch 18

F- Manuals. TCTC ch 19; technical definition due

Week Five: June 10-14

M- Workshop proposals

T- Reports. TCTC ch 21 and 22

W- User Tests. TCTC ch 11; proposal due

Th- conferences

F- Conferences; progress report due

Week Six: June 17-21

M- Workshop manual

T- Manual/user test report/letter 3 due