

ENC 2210- 23213 – Technical Writing Spring 2019

Instructor Name: Jacqueline Schnieber

Course meeting times & locations: Canvas, Monday through Friday, Period 4

Office Location and Hours: by appointment via Canvas Chat or Zoom (student's choice)

Course website: Canvas (elearning.ufl.edu)

Instructor Email: 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. 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 peer reviews of 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.

Asynchronous format:

Important: This is a completely asynchronous class, which means there will not be regular class meetings online. However, please be advised that the College prohibits enrollment in two or more classes originally scheduled at the same time, albeit they are all online and asynchronous. In addition, I may decide to use our designated class period for online class meetings to discuss questions and concerns about the material. I will be sure to inform students in advance of these meetings, which you will be obligated to attend.

Course Materials: One textbook is required for this course; please see below. All other materials are posted on Canvas.

Structure: The course is designed to help you work on your own time while keeping track of deadlines of all assignments. As any summer class, with only 6 weeks, the pace will still be very fast and you will be required to do a lot of reading, researching, and writing each week. It is your responsibility keep on top of all assigned readings and submissions for the week. However, you are not alone; each week, I will post brief video lectures to go over the texts, class procedures such as peer review, and my expectations for assignments. These are designed to give you an overview of each unit and make up for explanations I may have been able to give in a face-to-face environment, as well as offer help in improving your

writing. **However, I will not be able to cover everything that was assigned in your readings.** It remains important for you to devote time to understanding the content, format and style in which you will be asked to write.

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*, 6th edition. (Pearson)
ISBN: 9780134425733.

Any format is welcome.

Assignments (see below for Grading Rubric):

Assignment	Words	Points
Emails	4x 250 = 1,000	4x 50 = 200
Instruction Manual	1,200	100
Job Application Portfolio <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Job advertisement and analysis• Cover letter• Résumé/CV• Job Interview Questions & Answers	Job analysis: 350 Letter: 450 Résumé/CV: 1-2 pages = 900	150
Project Proposal	1,000 per student	120
Blog Post	700	80
Formal Report	1,200	150
Peer Review		4x 50 = 200
Total	6,000	1000

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” or process 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 the following 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. Job Interview Questions & Answers

During Peer Review, you will be asked to provide 2 questions that you think an interviewer may ask the team member you are reviewing.

When you submit your portfolio, you need to include all questions your group sent you during peer review and include your brief (2-3 sentences) response to each of them.

Project Proposal (15%):

This small group project will be a technical proposal for the campus or for an academic unit within UF. Groups will be assigned by the instructor after Drop/Add and no later than a week before work on proposals is scheduled to start.

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. For example, previous groups have written proposals on expanding parking or transportation on campus or access to the recreational facilities. Important is that you pick a problem that is focused on an issue you see at UF for which you can propose a reasonable solution (or multiple smaller solutions); make it manageable but also interesting for your group. 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 the online materials; 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.

Formal Report (15%):

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, and the division of work amongst the group. 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;
- 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: This is an asynchronous online course, but attendance to the material is still required. As with a regular classroom, those students who attend and keep up with their work will do well, and those who rush things through at the last minute after skipping class and ignoring readings will do poorly. Your effort to “attend” to the material presented in this course will be reflected in your class performance and grade.

As you can see from the course requirements, a few assignments require collaborative work. If you are not willing to engage in collaborative projects in an online environment, you will not want to take this course, as non-participation is not an option. This is a deliberate aspect of the course since so much of professional writing is collaborative.

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 on-line at the assigned deadline. You may be granted one extension and on the instructor’s discretion only (see #3).

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 at all times, but particularly during group work, where ideas may be presented that differ from your own. Some examples of proper netiquette follow.

- a) Avoid writing messages in all capital letters. THIS IS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD AS SHOUTING.
- b) Be careful what you put in writing. Even if you are writing an email message to one person, assume that anyone could read it. Though you may send an email to a single person, it is very easy to forward a message to hundreds or thousands of people.
- c) Spelling, grammar, and punctuation matter. Online courses demand the same standard of academic communication as face-to-face courses.
- d) Never use profanity in any area of an online course. Transcripts of online course communications are savable.
- e) When responding to messages, use "Reply to All" only when you really intend to reply to all.

- f) Avoid sarcasm and use humor with care. In the absence of nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and voice inflections, the context for your comments may be lost, and your message may be misinterpreted.

5. Email and Virtual Correspondence Policy: You are encouraged to email me questions, concerns, ask for feedback, or make an appointment to chat via Zoom or Canvas Chat. I try my best to respond within 24 hours—if I do not, feel free to send a follow-up email.

I understand and share concerns regarding the risk to privacy that comes with online formats and particularly third-party programs, such as Zoom. **Please note that all emails sent to or from UF email addresses are part of the public record under Florida's Sunshine Law, so sensitive information, such as grades, should never be disclosed in emails.** I personally will not record any private meetings with my students via Canvas Chat or Zoom, but I cannot guarantee that Canvas or Zoom will not.

6. Paper Format & Submission: All papers have to be submitted as MS Word (.doc, .docx) or PDF (.pdf) documents to Canvas. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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](#).

9. 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>

10. 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>

11. Special Accommodations for Students: The classroom, virtual as well as physical, 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/), 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.

Please do feel free to let me know in advance how I can accommodate your needs best.

12. 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/>

13. 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>. Please note that these services are still offered despite COVID-19, and you are encouraged to make full use of them.

14. 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 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.

15. *Writing Studio*: If you seek additional help with your writing, the University Writing Studio is currently offering online tutoring. More information, including how to make an appointment, is available on their website: <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

16. *Privacy Disclaimer*: All materials (such as texts, documents, video instructions) posted on Canvas are for class purposes only and are the property of the instructor, with the exception of materials and texts posted by students. No materials may be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class, unless the instructor has given explicit permission to do so.

SYLLABUS

Chapter readings refer to the required textbook unless otherwise indicated.

Lesson readings refer to explanations, examples, and video lectures posted online by the instructor.

All assignments are due at **11:59PM EST** on their assigned day.

WEEK 1 (05/11 – 05/15): Introduction to Technical Writing

Reading for the week:

- Lesson 1: Introduction to the Course
- Lesson 2: Professional Communication—Forms and Style

- Chapter 1: Technical Communication in the Entrepreneurial Workplace
- Chapter 6: E-mails, Letters, and Memos

Assignments due:

- Use the time to familiarize yourself with the syllabus, policies, and expectations of the class
- Introductory Email, due 05/15

WEEK 2 (05/18 – 05/22): Instruction Manuals

Reading for the week:

- Lesson 3: Instruction Manual 101
- Lesson 4: Peer Review Process and Final Draft Expectations

- Chapter 7: Technical Descriptions and Specifications
- Chapter 8: Instructions and Documentation
- Chapter 18: Creating and Using Graphics
- Chapter 19: Revising and Editing for Usability

Assignments due:

- Peer Review of drafts due 05/21

- Instruction Manual due 05/22

WEEK 3 (05/26 – 05/29): Job Applications

Reading for the week:

- Lesson 5: Job Application 101 (Résumés/CVs, Cover Letters, and More)
- Lesson 6: Preparing for Job Interviews
- Lesson 7: Professional Portfolios and Thank You Letters

- Chapter 5: Starting Your Career
- Chapter 16: Using Plain and Persuasive Style
- [Purdue OWL, "Cover Letter Introduction"](#)
- [Purdue OWL, "Cover Letter Formatting and Organization"](#)
- [Purdue OWL, "Writing the Personal Statement"](#)
- "10 Best Job Interview Tips for Jobseekers"
<https://www.livecareer.com/career/advice/interview/job-interview-tips>

Assignments due:

- Request-for-Information Email, due 05/27
- Job Application Peer Review, due 05/29

WEEK 4 (06/01 – 06/05): Proposals

Reading for the week:

- Lesson 8: Introduction to Group Assignments
- Lesson 9: Proposal Structure and Elements
- Lesson 10: Argumentative Style

- Chapter 3: Working in Teams
- Chapter 9: Proposals
- Chapter 13: How to be Persuasive
- Chapter 15: Organizing and Drafting

Assignments due:

- Job Application Package, due 06/01
- Proposal Email, due 06/04
- Response Email, due 06/05

WEEK 5 (06/08 – 06/12): Blog Posts

Reading for the week:

- Lesson 11: Professional Writing Online
- Lesson 12: Anticipating Audience Responses

- Booth, "Acknowledgment and Responses" (on Canvas)
- Chapter 2: Profiling Your Readers
- Chapter 21: Writing for the Internet

Assignments due:

- Proposal Peer Review, due 06/08
- Blog Post, due 06/12

WEEK 6 (06/15 – 06/19): Reports

Reading for the week:

- Lesson 13: Writing Effective Reports
- Lesson 14: Class Wrap-Up

- Chapter 10: Brief Reports
- Chapter 11: Formal Reports

Assignments due:

- Proposal, due 06/15
- Formal Report Peer Review, due 06/18
- Formal Report, due 06/19

Grading Scale

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.0	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.0	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

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.

Grading Criteria

(adapted from the University of California)

An A paper commands attention because of its insightful development and mature style. It presents a cogent analysis of or response to the text, elaborating that response with well-chosen examples and persuasive reasoning. The paper shows that its writer can usually choose words aptly, use sophisticated sentences effectively, and observe the conventions of written English.

A B paper is clearly competent. It presents a thoughtful analysis of or response to the text, elaborating that response with appropriate examples and sensible reasoning. The paper typically has a less fluent and complex style, but does show that its writer can usually choose words accurately, vary sentences effectively, and observe the conventions of written English.

A C paper is satisfactory, sometimes marginally so. It presents an adequate analysis of or response to the text, elaborating that response with sufficient examples and acceptable reasoning. Just as these examples and this reasoning, will ordinarily be less developed than those in the B range, so the paper's style will be less effective. Nevertheless, the paper shows that its writer can usually choose words of sufficient precision, control sentences of reasonable variety, and observe the conventions of written English.

A D paper is unsatisfactory in one or more of the following ways. It may analyze or respond to the text illogically; it may lack coherent structure or elaboration with examples; it may reflect an incomplete understanding of the text or the topic. Its prose is usually characterized by at least one of the following: frequently imprecise word choice; little sentence variety; occasional major errors in grammar and usage, or frequent minor errors.

An E paper shows serious weaknesses, ordinarily of several kinds. It frequently presents a simplistic, inappropriate, or incoherent analysis of or response to the text, one that may suggest some significant misunderstanding of the text or the topic. It may disregard the topic's demands, does not provide any sufficient evidence of its claims, and/or lack any appropriate pattern of structure or development. It may be inappropriately brief or lengthy. Its prose is usually characterized by at least one of the following: simplistic or inaccurate word choice; monotonous or fragmented sentence structure; many repeated errors in grammar and usage. An E paper may suggest severe difficulties in reading and writing conventional English.