ENC 2210: Technical Writing

Summer B 2024
15455
Section 4902

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Pronouns: she/her/hers
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Student Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 a.m-12:00 p.m. (virtual) Please sign up via the Calendar Feature on Canvas. Or also by appointment

Course Description:

 ENC 2210 (Technical Writing) is an introduction to technical and professional writing in contemporary workplace environments. This course presents you with practical information about—and practice in—communicating within different kinds of professional/technical discourse communities. Throughout the semester, you will analyze and produce common technical writing genres, including emails, letters, resumes, memos, reports, proposals, technical descriptions, definitions, instructions, proposals, and reports.

This course will also engage with community engaged research, reading, and writing practices. Our class, though online/asynchronous, is an example of a community. We will engage in collaborative learning in our online community, but also in communities that extend beyond the University. We will take the time to reflect on the many communities that we as human beings, students, family members, and more are constantly influencing and are being influenced by.

The workplace is often another example of a community with specific professional and communication goals/aims among and between professionals. Understanding how positionalities, histories, and lived experiences influence these aims is vital for understanding the role technical writers play in communities. Effective technical writers must have a clear understanding of their subject matter, an awareness of their intended audience, and a mastery of design principles and practices. We will work toward understanding how to analyze and react to the rhetorical situations each genre and writing situation presents, including issues of audience, organization, visual design, usability, and accessibility. In addition, the course will help you navigate the challenges of setting career goals and determining priorities, as well as develop problem solving skills that are needed in today's technologically driven workplace.

Course Objectives and Outcomes:

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 are writing-intensive and provide instruction in the methods and
  conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the
  techniques that produce effective texts.
- Course content includes multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles,
  approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes,
  and contexts.
- The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency
  in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive the Writing
  Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory
  completion of the writing component of the course.

General Education Learning Outcomes:
At the end of this course, you will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes
in content, communication, and critical thinking:

- Content: demonstrated competence in the terminology, concepts, theories, and
  methodologies used within the discipline of technical communication.
- Communication: communicated knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively
  in written and oral forms appropriate to this discipline.
- Critical Thinking: analyzed information carefully and logically from multiple
  perspectives, used discipline-specific methods, and developed reasoned solutions to
  problems.

Additional Objectives and Outcomes
If pursued with appropriate energy, effort, and care, you will achieve the following learning
outcomes by the end of this course:

- *Practice* technical communication:
    - Identify and work with various genres of technical communication.
    - Recognize the prevalence of technical writing in everyday experience.
    - Practice using common tools of technical writing production with
      proficiency—including emergent generative-AI technologies.
- *Analyze* technical writing artifacts and practices:
    - Explain rhetorical choices made as a result of both individual and collaborative
      work.
    - Analyze specific artifacts (including documents "written" by gen-AI) to better
      understand the rhetorical, social, cultural, and political implications of technical
      communication.

- *Research* practices that impact effective technical communication:
  - Plan and implement appropriate research practices that impact technical writing tasks.
  - Explore technical writing as a way of thinking, knowing, and being.
- *Produce* professional artifacts:
  - Apply rhetorical and design principles to compose effective deliverables.
  - Apply principles of fair use, copyright and documentation conventions for print, visual, and digital media.
  - Recognize the rhetorical possibilities of different modes and make sound choices when combining modes.

Materials Needed:

All materials are free and will be posted to Canvas. Our primary texts will be the following, both of which are open-access:

- *[Technical Writing](#)* by Allison Gross; Annemarie Hamlin; Billy Merck; Chris Rubio; Jodi Naas; Megan Savage; and Michele DeSilva
- *[Introduction to Technical and Professional Communication: Technical Communication through a Social Justice Lens](#)* by Brigitte Mussack

Communication and Office Hours

The best way to contact me is via Canvas messenger. I'll reply to any questions or concerns within 24 hours. Likewise, it is absolutely critical that you actively monitor your inbox and our course website for changes or news from me. I'll be holding regular office hours via Zoom this semester on Tuesday (10:00AM—12:00PM), but I am also flexible to meet outside of this set time. Just let me know when you'd like to talk—I'll make it happen.

Major Course Assignments and Grade Breakdown:

Your final grade is composed of the following major assignments and evaluative categories, all of which will be detailed at greater length as they arrive in class.

Introductory Email (300 words; 25 points)   Due 7/7

- *Compose an email to your instructor that follows formal email etiquette and guidelines and introduces yourself and goals for this course.*

Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Respect Reading Discussion Board (300 words; 50 points)

- Compose a response to the assigned reading *Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Respect: Storytelling as a Means of University-Community Engagement* by J. Estrella Torez. You will reply to two peers.

Professional Communication Packet   <u>Due 7/14</u>
(2 documents, 1,000 words total, 150 points total)

Letter (500 words; 50 points)

- *Compose a formal letter to a company or business that seeks reparation or reimbursement for a past unsatisfactory service.*

Memo (500 words; 100 points)

- *Taking the role of an upper-level manager attempting to combat workplace burnout and stress, and better support your employees' mental, physical, and emotional health, write a memo to your employees that details new policies that will increase employee well-being and satisfaction.*

Job Readiness Portfolio   <u>Due 7/21</u>
(3 documents, 1300 words total, 200 points total)

Resume (300 words; 50 points)

- *Create both a formatted and unformatted resume that follows the suggested format and recommended content outlined in your readings this week.*

Cover Letter or Statement of Purpose (500 words; 50 points)

- *Craft a cover-letter that spearheads an application to a prospective employer, stating your interest and highlighting your qualifications. Link a job advertisement to the end of your cover letter*

Community Journey Box (500 words, 50 points)

- *"A journey box is literally a box (e.g., suitcase, trunk, chest, cardboard container) that contains a themed set of photographs, selected artifacts, literature, informational texts, entries from travel journals, and maps that combine to tell a first-hand story of time, place, and culture" (Labbo & Field, 1999, p. 177). A Community Journey Box tells the story of the communit(ies) in which you are a member and how they shaped you as a person and researcher/teacher/designer. Create a digital or physical Journey Box containing artifacts from communities that have shaped you and your career aspirations. You will write a 300-word Maker's Statement detailing your journey box and artifact choices.*

Innovative Technology and Document Design Evaluation Packet   <u>Due 7/28</u>

Gen-AI Technical Description Analysis (500 words; 75 points)

- *Critically analyze a technical description generated by a generative AI technology to evaluate its effectiveness, accuracy, and potential limitations*

UF Website Accessibility Analysis (500 words; 75 points)

- *Select one specific page found on the University of Florida's overall website and assess its usability and accessibility traits.*

UF Event Document Design (approx 100 words; 75 points)

- *Following design principles and using [Canva](#), create a flyer or infographic that effectively informs a reader of an upcoming event or initiative on campus or in your community.*

Technical Instructions: Three Parts

Progress Report (300 words; 50 points)   <u>Due 8/1</u>
- *You will submit an update as a memo on your work thus far. Which research have you completed? What tasks have been accomplished? Have goals of time and content been met? What objectives still remain?*

Text Document (800 words; 200 points)   <u>Due 8/4</u>

- *Create a document outlining a UF survival guide. You will need to include a skill or task that would aid students and include textual instructions for this task. This may be registering for classes, obtaining a parking permit, navigating the bus routes, etc. You will demonstrate your understanding of effective document design and use of graphics and structure for composing technical instructions for the campus community.*

Technical Instructions**:** Reflection (300 words; 50 points)

- *Highlight, explain, or justify the design and structural decisions made for your textual technical instructions, making it clear how the purposeful choices you made in creating your document add to its overall impression and communicative abilities.*

Community Reflection (500 words or 3:00 video; 100 points)   <u>Due 8/9</u>

- *Reflect on your experiences throughout this course and what you have learned about community-engaged technical writing. Think back to the goals and aspirations you*

outlined in your introductory email. How have you made progress toward these in this course?

Grading and Evaluation:

Earning A's and B's at this level requires strong, consistent effort. An online learning environment, especially an asynchronous one such as this, further necessitates the need for consistency and ongoing engagement. Your assignments will include specific evaluation criteria, and I will provide detailed feedback on your work that illuminates progress, achievement, and areas for revision. In the past, students who have received A's put significant time and effort into this course right from the start and simply kept at it. Be realistic in your expectations about grades; start assignments early and work steadily to avoid last-minute rushing.

This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) and <u>also</u> fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR). To satisfy this requirement, <u>every</u> major project's word count must be fulfilled in your assignment's final copy. Submitted assignments that fail to reach the minimum word count will receive a score of zero.

A 90-100	The qualities of a B project, <u>plus imagination, originality, and engaging expression</u>. The work exhibits depth of thought, command of language, and a keen eye for communicating through the selected medium.
B 80-90	A sufficient, thorough execution of the assignment's objectives. The work demonstrates coherent organization, ample supporting details, and a clear expression of ideas.
C 70-80	A satisfactory fulfillment of the assignment's objectives, with baseline organization and style. A "C" means your work met the demands of the assignment in a minimally acceptable way.
D 60-70	The presence of a significant defect in context, substance, organization, style, or delivery in a lackluster paper; the project demonstrates an inadequate treatment of the assignment.
F 0-59	Inadequate coverage of essential points; uncertain or misguided purpose; poor organization; ineffective and inconsistent expression; significant defects in standard usage.

Note: you <u>must</u> also pass this course with a "C" or better to satisfy the General Education requirement for Composition and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit. A grade of "C-" will <u>not</u> confer credit.

Late Work and Revisions:

You are allowed to make up one writing assignment. If an emergency occurs that affects your ability to complete your work, please notify me as soon as possible. Extensions may be granted at my discretion, but requests must be made **at least one day prior** to the due date of the assignment. A late paper or assignment will receive a **ten point deduction for each day** it is late. I understand that emergencies and extenuating circumstances can occur, so please communicate with me your issues or concerns.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the UF Student Honor Code. Detecting it is often fairly easy—all of your major assignments are sent into a copyright analysis system—and once found, violations are automatically reported to the Academic Dean. UF's Honor Code prohibits plagiarism. You are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Conduct & Honor Code, found here: https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code/. Understanding what falls under the category of plagiarism and academic dishonesty will help prevent you from committing this inadvertently—and will also strengthen your own writing. "I didn't know!" is not an excuse, and will not be counted as one, so ask if you're ever unsure. The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT) Clarification:

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas
- Fine-tuning your research questions
- Checking grammar and style

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts assigned to you or content that you use in or outside of class.
- Completing any type of work that has been assigned to you, unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool. You must see me for approval.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or papers to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited. Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways will receive a reduction in grade based on the instructor's discretion. Multiple instances of AI misuse/ academic dishonesty will result in increased penalties including failure of the course. When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification.

Diversity Affirmation

The University of Florida does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran. Effective learning environments value and support diversity, and free, open discussion is a hallmark of a functioning democratic society.

Accessibility: The process for receiving accommodations for your disability may be more complicated than you realize. For many universities, documentation requires access to affordable healthcare, time, printer services, and knowledge of the institution's bureaucratic processes. You might face experiences that may not qualify you for accommodations, such as:

Your disability is undiagnosed, self-diagnosed, or is difficult to document
Your disability only affects you sometimes
You are injured and do not qualify for accommodations
Your disability is stigmatized, such as anxiety or depression
You may be estranged from your family or support system
You may be a caregiver for a sick, elderly, or young person
You are a single parent
You work a full-time, part-time, or multiple jobs
You are food, housing, or clothing insecure

Whatever you face, it is my responsibility as an educator to work with you to achieve the learning outcomes of ENC 2210. If I am not meeting your learning needs, please see me directly about ways I can adjust the course to your situation.
Please note: I am a mandatory reporter of any known instances of sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic and intimate partner violence, stalking, gender-based discrimination, discrimination against pregnant and parenting students, and gender-based bullying and hazing. Outside of these issues, I will always talk with you confidentially about the things you are facing.

Inclusivity

To affirm and respect the identities of students in the classroom and beyond, I will do my best to refer to you by the name and/or pronouns you tell me. Please contact me at any time during the semester if you wish to be referred by a name and/or pronouns other than what is listed in the student directory or that you have included in the syllabus acknowledgment form.

Disability Affirmation:

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Those requesting accommodation should contact the Disability Resource Center: 001 Reid Hall. That office will

provide documentation to you and then you provide this to me. For more information, see: https://disability.ufl.edu/.

Sexual Harassment Policy:
The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community. For more information, see: https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/.

Grade Appeals:

Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount (cblount@ufl.edu), Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 Turlington). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

Course Evaluations:

You'll have the opportunity to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. You will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email you receive from GatorEvals, in your Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/.

Physical and Mental Health Resources:

For guidance during distressing situations, please contact U Matter We Care or the Dean of Students Office. They can help you navigate resources and academic procedures for personal, medical, and academic issues.

- U Matter We Care: http://umatter.ufl.edu, umatter@ufl.edu, (352) 294-2273
- Dean of Students: https://dso.ufl.edu, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261
- Counseling Center: https://counseling.ufl.edu, 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575
- Field and Fork Pantry: https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu, 564 Newell Drive, (352) 294-3601
- Student Health Care Center: http://shcc.ufl.edu, multiple locations, (352) 392-116

Course Schedule

The schedule below is subject to change. Our Canvas page will be the most accessible, up-to-date site of all resources, texts, due dates, assignments, and course information. Make it a habit to check it along with your e-mail in-box for updates from me as they become available.

Weeks	Major Topics	Readings	Assignments	Due Dates
7/1-7	Course Introduction/ Community-Engaged Technical Writing	"Introduction to Technical Writing" (Cassandra Race) Introduction (Gross et al.).pdf "Email" (Gross et al.) Responsibility, Reciprocity, and Respect: Storytelling as a Means of University-Community Engagement by J. Estrella Torez	Introductory Email Reading Discussion Board with 2 replies	7/7 by 11:59 p.m.
7/8-14	Professional Communication	Chapter 1: Professional Communication (Gross et al.) "7.1. Correspondence: Text Messages, Emails, and Letters" 2.2. Technical Communication, Action, and Community"	Professional Communication Packet	7/14 by 11:59 p.m.
7/15-21	Job Application Materials	"Resumes" (McMurrey) UF's Career Center's Resume Guide; Sample cover letters and application statements available on Canvas (via Indeed)	Job Readiness Packet	7/21 by 11:59 p.m.

7/22-28	Evaluating Generative AI and Document Design Principles	O'Neil, These Women Tried to Warn Us About AI "Chapter 6: Usability" (Race) "Chapter 8: Creating and Integrating Graphics" (Gross et al.) "Usability 101" (Nielsen); "A Beginner's Guide to Using Canva"	Innovative Technology and Document Design Evaluation	7/28 by 11:59 p.m.
7/29-4	Technical Instructions	"4.3. Instructions" (Mussack) "2.6: Instructions" (McMurrey and Race) "Chapter 6: Progress Reports" (Gross et al.) "2.5: Progress Reports" (McMurrey)	Progress Report Technical Instructions and Technical Instructions Reflection	4/1 and 4/4 by 11:59 p.m.
8/5-9	Community Reflection		Course Reflection	4/9 by 11:59 p.m.