

ENC 2210

Technical Writing – Fall 2024

Instructor: Matt Knudsen (matthewknudsen@ufl.edu)

Section: 4B48(12447)

Office Hours: Wednesday (REMOTE: 4PM—5PM, EST) [ZOOM ID: 985 8839 0048, PW: GATORS] – OR 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.

As an introductory writing course, **this class is also practice.** 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. Finally, we will also examine how these forms of technical communication intersect with novel generative AI and consider what the implications of these intersections are for writers today.

What's Inside?

- 1.....Course Objectives
- 2.....Materials Needed
- 3.....Major Assignments
- 4.....Grading Policies
- 5.....Late Work & Revisions
- 6.....Policies and Resources
- 7.....Schedule

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 styles, approaches, formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts.
- The University Writing Requirement 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** in 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 get ahold of 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 this semester on Wednesday (4PM—5PM, EST), but I am also flexible to meet outside of this set time. Just let me know when you'd like to talk and I'll be there!

Major Course Assignments and Grade Categories

Your final grade is composed of the following TWELVE major assignments and evaluative categories, all of which will be detailed at greater length when the assignments become active in Canvas.

Introductory Email (300 words; 25 points)

Due 8/25

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

Letter (300 words; 50 points)

Due 9/8

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

Memo (500 words; 75 points)

Due 9/15

- *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.*

Resume (300 words; 100 points)

Due 9/22

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

Job Ad Analysis (300 words; 50 points)

Due 9/29

- *List and briefly describe three positions currently offered in a field that interests you, critically analyzing the rhetoric and content in their posted ads.*

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

Due 10/6

- *Compose a cover-letter that spearheads an application to a prospective employer, stating your interest and highlighting your unique qualifications.*

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

Due 10/13

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

Gen-AI Audience Transformation Assignment (500 words; 75 points)

Due 10/20

- *Choose a small passage of a technical article related to your field of study, and, using generative AI, rewrite it for a wider, more "general" readership.*

UF Website Accessibility Analysis (500 words; 75 points)

Due 10/27

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

Technical Instructions: Text Document (1000 words; 150 points) **Due 11/3**

- Create a document outlining a selected process, skill, or task's textual instructions, demonstrating your understanding of effective document design and use of graphics and formatting for composing technical instructions.

Technical Instructions: Reflection (300 words; 50 points) **Due 11/17**

- 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.

Experiential Learning Assignment (1000 words or 3 minute video/podcast; 150 points)
Due 12/1

- In week 1, you will select a particular technical skill to learn or improve at over the semester. Here, you'll reflect on your progress and experience learning this skill in a semester devoted to the art and craft of technical communication.

-There will be periodic "check-ins" to track your progress and encourage accountability as you embark on this 15-week long, protracted project.

Each of the three check-ins will be worth **25 points apiece**.

-Word Count and Due Dates TBD-

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 also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR). To satisfy this requirement, every 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 must 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 not confer credit.**

[More information on the University's grades and grading policies can be found here.](#)

Late Work and Revisions

Life happens. There may be times when our planned itinerary conflicts with your other obligations and commitments. Barring such situations, each student is entitled to two instances of no-questions-asked extensions on assignments. The only requirement is that you e-mail me before the assignment's original deadline and let me know you're using the extension. Otherwise, assignments will be penalized 10% for each day they are late.

Revising and Resubmitting

This course is practice, which means that you should feel free to take risks and experiment with our assignments and major projects. To that end, if you would like to revise a major project and resubmit it in light of the feedback you receive on your first attempt, you may do so up until the end 24th of April. Each student is entitled to ONE opportunity for revision and resubmission over the course of the semester so please plan accordingly. No one is obligated to use this opportunity if they don't feel it's necessary.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. See the [UF Conduct Code website for more information.](#) If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

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.

Disability Affirmation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. [See the "Get Started With the DRC" webpage on the Disability Resource Center site.](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

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). Be advised, 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/>.

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

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
- GatorWell: <https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/>, 352-273-4450
- Field and Fork: <https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu>, 564 Newell Drive, (352) 294-3601
- Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu>, (352) 392-1161
- UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:
<https://ufhealth.org/locations/uf-health-shands-emergency-room-trauma-center/>
1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608, 352-733-0111
- University Police Department: <https://police.ufl.edu/>, 352-392-1111
(or 9-1-1 for emergencies)

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

- E-learning technical support: [UF Computing Help Desk](#), 352-392-4357, helpdesk@ufl.edu
- Career Connections Center: [Website](#), Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601
- Library Support: [Website](#), 866-281-6309, ask@ufl.libanswers.com
- Teaching Center: [Website](#), 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010
- Writing Studio: [Website](#), 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138
- Academic Complaints: [Office of the Ombuds](#)
- Enrollment Management Complaints: [Student Complaint Procedure Webpage](#)

TECH SUPPORT

Public and private communication regarding online interaction with this course, Canvas in general, or resolving any other technical issues, can be initiated by [visiting the helpdesk website](#) or calling 352-392-4357.

EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

PLEASE NOTE: This course is FULLY REMOTE, so “attendance” is not part of the grade. However, I’m including the university’s official policy here for posterity and FYI.

Students may only participate in classes if they are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to instructors.

Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first-class meeting.

Acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to engage in class include illness; Title IX-related situations; serious accidents or emergencies affecting the student, their roommates, or their family; special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences); military obligation; severe weather conditions that prevent class participation; religious holidays; participation in official university activities (e.g., music performances, athletic competition, debate); and court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena). Other reasons (e.g., a job interview or club activity) may be deemed acceptable if approved by the instructor.

For all planned absences, a student in a situation that allows an excused absence from a class, or any required class activity must inform the instructor as early as possible prior to the class. For all unplanned absences because of accidents or emergency situations, students should contact their instructor as soon as conditions permit.

Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered during absence from class or inability to engage in class activities because of the reasons outlined above.

If a student does not participate in at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which they are registered, and they have not contacted the department to indicate their intent, the student can be dropped from the course. Students must not assume that they will be dropped, however. The department will notify students if they have been dropped from a course or laboratory.

The university recognizes the right of the instructor to make attendance mandatory and require documentation for absences (except for religious holidays), missed work, or inability to fully engage in class. After due warning, an instructor can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

Technical Writing

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	Assignment	Deadline
1 - 4 (8/22 - 9/15)	Course Introduction and Professional Communication	" Introduction " (Gross et al.)	Introductory Email (300 words, 25 pts)	8/25 @ 11:59 PM
		" Email " (Gross et al.)		
		" 14 Technical Writers on the Future of AI "	Letter (300 words, 50 pts)	9/8 @ 11:59 PM
5 - 7 (9/16 - 10/6)	Resumes and Credentialing	" Resumes " (McMurrey)	Resume (300 words, 100 pts)	9/22 @ 11:59 PM
		Monster: " 10 Worst Resume Mistakes to Avoid "		
	UF's Career Center's Resume Guide	Memo (500 words, 75 pts)	9/15 @ 11:59 PM	
5 - 7 (9/16 - 10/6)	Job Materials	Forbes: " How to Write a Competitive Resume in 2021 "	Resume (300 words, 100 pts)	9/22 @ 11:59 PM
		Sample cover letters and application statements available on Canvas (via Indeed)	Job Ad Analysis (300 words, 50 pts)	9/29 @ 11:59 PM
			Cover Letter (500 words, 50 pts)	10/6 @ 11:59 PM

8 - 10 (10/7 - 10/27)	Generative AI Technology and Audience Considerations	Chapter 2: Audience Analysis " (Gross et al.)	AI-Generated Technical Description Analysis (500 words, 75 pts)	10/13 @ 11:59 PM
		Chapter 13: Communicating Across Cultures " (Gross et al.)	Gen-AI Audience Transformation (500 words, 75 pts)	10/20 @ 11:59 PM
		2.2. Technical Communication, Action, and Community " Using AI Tools in Your Research " 2.3. Audience and Access " (Mussack) Usability 101 " (Nielsen)	UF Website Accessibility Analysis (500 words, 75 pts)	10/27 @ 11:59 PM
11 - 13 (10/28 - 11/17)	Creating Technical Instructions	4.3: Instructions " (Mussack)	Technical Instructions Document (1000 words, 150 pts)	11/3 @ 11:59 PM
		2.6: Instructions " (McMurrey and Race) Chapter 6: Progress Reports " (Gross et al.) 2.5: Progress Reports " (McMurrey)	Reflection (300 words, 50 pts)	11/17 @ 11:59 PM
14 - 15 (11/18 - 12/4)	Experiential Learning		Reflection on Experiential Learning Project (1000 words or 3 minute video or podcast, 150 pts)	12/1 @ 11:59 PM