

ENC 2210: TECHNICAL WRITING

SECTION 4B50 CLASS# 12647

FALL 2023

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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Office Hours/Method: Time: Tuesday (10:00am – 12:00 pm)

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 produce and analyze common technical writing genres, including emails, letters, resumes, memos, reports, proposals, technical descriptions, definitions, instructions, proposals, and reports.

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, accessibility, and the material production of documents. 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

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.
- 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 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 academic discipline.
- **Communication:** communicated knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the 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

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Identify and understand the facets and functions of the primary genres of technical writing, including letters, memos, emails, resumes, reports, proposals, technical descriptions, technical instructions, and reports.
- Produce professional caliber technical documents, such as those listed above.
- 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 images into documents as necessary.
- Refine writing style for clarity, concision, coherence, cohesion, and emphasis.
- Critique and revise your own documents to ensure that they fulfill their purposes.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND TECHNOLOGY

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

I'll reply to any questions or concerns within 24 hours and can best be reached via UF email or Canvas Email. 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 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.

ASSIGNMENTS

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 (200 words; 25 points)

- Compose an email to your instructor that follows formal email etiquette and guidelines and introduces yourself and goals for this course. **Due 8/27.**

Audience Transformation Assignment (300 words; 50 points)

- Choose a small passage of a technical article related to your field of study and translate it for a wider and more general readership. **Due 9/10.**

Research Profile (500 words; 50 points)

- Generate a document that demonstrates your ability to research technical information in your field, including the use of generative AI technologies. **Due 9/10.**

Letter (300 words; 50 points)

- Compose a formal letter to a company or business that seeks reparation or reimbursement for a past unsatisfactory service. **Due 9/24.**

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. **Due 9/24.**

Resume (250 words; 100 points)

- Create a resume that follows the suggested format and includes the recommended content as outlined in David McMurrey's chapter on resume design. **Due 10/1.**

Job Ad Analysis (300 words; 25 points)

- List and briefly describe three positions currently offered in a field that interests you, critically analyzing the rhetoric and content in their posted advertisements. **Due 10/8.**

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. **Due 10/8.**

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. **Due 10/22.**

Website Accessibility Analysis (500 words; 75 points)

- Select one web found on the University of Florida's overall website and assess its usability and accessibility traits. **Due 10/29.**

Progress Report (250 words; 25 points)

- Submit a formal update on your ongoing Technical Instructions assignment. **Due 11/12.**

Technical Instructions: Text Document (750 words; 200 points)

- Write a document outlining a selected process, skill, or task's textual instruction, demonstrating your understanding of effective document design and use of graphics and structure for composing technical instructions. **Due 11/21.**

Technical Instructions: Video (90-120 seconds; 75 points)

- Create a video that transfers your textual instructions into a step-by-step visual and auditory guide. **Due 11/21.**

Technical Instructions: Reflection (250 words; 25 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. **Due 11/21.**

UFSG Proposal (750 words; 100 points)

- Draft a formal proposal for a new initiative or event to be funded by UF's Student Government. **Due 12/6.**

The following is a general outline of the topics covered in this course by module. Readings and assignment due dates are available on Canvas.

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

The rubric below is intended as a general guide to how work is graded. "Satisfactory" does NOT mean an "A" grade – "Satisfactory" represents a range of acceptable work from "C" to "A".

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
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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

Grading for this course will be rigorous. Do not rely on your instructor for copy-editing, even on drafts. To receive a passing grade, each paper must reach the minimum assigned word count. 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 for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition Requirement.

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

At the discretion of the instructor, minor assignments or activities may be dropped from or added to the schedule. If assignments are dropped, the final grade will be calculated as a percentage of the remaining points.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

This is a fully asynchronous, online course. As such, there is no official attendance policy. That being said, you are required to complete all tasks by their listed due dates as they appear on Canvas.

Submission Requirements

All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc, .docx) documents to Canvas. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. Because professional communication varies in document design, all papers will have specific formatting guidelines to follow. Please read these carefully and ask questions early to avoid losing points.

Papers and drafts are due online at the assigned day and time. Late papers will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse. If illness or injury prevents a student from turning in a paper on time, the student should consult with the instructor to turn in the work as soon as is feasible given the situation.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

As a University of Florida student, your performance is governed by the UF Student Honor Code, (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>). The Honor Code requires Florida students to neither give nor receive unauthorized aid in completing all assignments. Violations include cheating, plagiarism, bribery, and misrepresentation, all defined in detail at the above site.

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:

- 1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.**
- 2. 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, 8, October, 2013)

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

The University takes plagiarism very seriously and treats instances of plagiarism as dishonesty and as a failure to comply with the scholarly requirements of this course. You commit plagiarism when you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own. Each student's work may be tested for its originality against a wide variety of databases by anti-plagiarism sites to which the University subscribes, and negative reports from such sites may constitute proof of plagiarism. Some (but not all!) examples of plagiarism are copying-and-pasting anything from the Internet without proper quotations and attributive tags, using work you have turned in to other classes without permission from the instructor, and insufficient paraphrasing.

If you commit academic dishonesty, you will receive a zero for the assignment, and the instructor will submit the incident to the Dean of Students Office as an Honor Code violation. Punishments can vary, but the instructor will

recommend failing the course. (If you commit plagiarism in the workplace, at the very least you will be reprimanded. You could also be fired or even lose your career.)

If you are unsure if what you are doing is considered academic dishonesty, ask your instructor before turning it in.

CONFERENCES AND WRITING STUDIO

Students are encouraged to use the instructor's office hours (electronic and face-to-face) if there are questions about progress in the course, work underway, or any other course-related concerns. Having conferences on assignments is often the best way to improve the quality of final drafts. The Writing Studio (<http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>) also offers one-on-one assistance on writing projects and is available to students of all levels. The Writing Studio's website includes instructional videos for some of the most common questions about writing.

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

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.

EVALUATIONS

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/>.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES / STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

Students with Disabilities

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Peabody 202. That office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Students in Distress

For guidance during distressing situations, please contact U Matter We Care or the Dean of Students Office. They can help students 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 (CARE)
- Dean of Students: <https://dso.ufl.edu/>, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261
- Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575
- Field and Fork Pantry: <https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>, located near McCarty B, 352-294-2208
- Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>, multiple locations, (352) 392-1161

Course Schedule

This schedule is only a guide and 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 frequently check it along with your e-mail in-box for updates from me as they become available.

Weeks	Major Topics	Readings	Assignments	Deadline
1-3 (8/23—9/10)	Course Introduction	“Introduction” (Gross et al.) “Meet Technical Writers at Google” “14 Technical Writers on the Future of AI”	Introductory Email (200 words)	8/27 at 11:59 PM.
	Audience Considerations	“Chapter 2: Audience Analysis” and “Chapter 13: Communicating Across Cultures” (Gross et al.) “2.2. Technical Communication, Action, and Community” and “2.3. Audience and Access” (Mussack)	Audience Transformation Assignment (300 words)	9/10 at 11:59 PM.
	Information Literacy and Research	“Chapter 4: Information Literacy” (Gross et al.) “Using AI Tools in Your Research”	Research Profile (500 words)	9/10 at 11:59 PM.
4-5 (9/11—9/24)	Memos and Formal Letters	“Chapter 1: Professional Communications” (Gross et al.) “7.1. Correspondence: Text Messages, Emails, and Letters”	Memo Assignment (500 words)	9/24 at 11:59 PM.
			Letter (300 words)	9/24 at 11:59 PM.
6-7 (9/25—10/8)	Resumes and Credentialing	“Resumes” (McMurrey) Monster: “10 Worst Resume Mistakes to Avoid” UF’s Career Center’s Resume Guide Forbes: “How to Write a Competitive Resume in 2021”	Resume (250 words)	10/1 at 11:59 PM.
	Job Materials	Sample cover letters and application statements available on Canvas (via Indeed)	Job Advertisement Analysis (250 words) Cover Letter (500 words)	10/8 at 11:59 PM.
8-10 (10/9—10/29)	Document Design, User X, and Accessibility	“4.2. Definitions and Descriptions” (Mussack and Fuglsby) “Technical Definitions and	AI-Generated Technical Description	10/22 at 11:59 PM.

	Considerations in Technical Writing	Descriptions " (Arnett) 60 Minutes: " Chat GPT and Large-Language Model Bias " "Chapter 6: Usability" (Race) "Chapter 8: Creating and Integrating Graphics" (Gross et al.) "Usability 101" (Nielsen);	Analysis (500 words) Website Analysis (500 words)	10/29 at 11:59 PM.
11-14 (10/30—11/21)	Writing 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 (250 words)	11/12 at 11:59 PM.
			Instructional Document (750 words)	11/21 at 11:59 PM.
			Video Instructions (3:00 and script)	
			Reflection (250 words)	
15-16 (11/27—12/6)	Proposals and Recommendations	"4,4. Proposals" (Mussack)	UF Student Government Proposal (500 words) and Video Pitch (2:00)	12/6 at 11:59 PM.