

**ENC 3250**

# **Professional Communication**

**Instructor:** Dr. Laura Gonzales    **Contact:** [gonzalesl@ufl.edu](mailto:gonzalesl@ufl.edu)  
**Office:** Turlington Hall 4358    **Office Hours:** Weds. 5-7pm and by appointment  
**Class meets:** MWF 9:35-10:25  
**Class location:** MAT0113    **Class section:** 1LG1    **Term:** Spring 2024

## **Description**

This class will introduce you to the field of technical and professional communication (TPC), which emphasizes that communication is mitigated through relationships between various stakeholders and community members. Through our course projects, you will study TPC in a variety of contexts, as we discuss how issues of access, inclusion, and accessibility are at play in all professional communication contexts. Our course will be structured through the following grounding concepts:

- **Technical and professional writers build and maintain relationships**  
Although things like word choice, visual rhetoric, punctuation, and effective use of digital media are important, these abilities amount to nothing if a technical and professional communicator cannot use them to facilitate relationships between organizations and their communities/publics, writers and publishers, and so on.
- Because technical and professional writers build and maintain relationships, **their social interactions and curiosity are just as important as their ability to construct coherent prose or communicate in multiple media.** Good technical and professional communicators must know how to pose good questions, to listen actively, and at times to observe others' actions. They must know how to seek information and become versatile in determining where that information might be found.
- **Technical and professional communicators write, edit, and design with and on behalf of others**  
Some writers (such as novelists and poets) attach their names to their work. Technical and professional communicators usually leave their names unattached because they produce and maintain an organization's communications. They are essentially stewards of an organization's rhetorical resources. This means that technical and professional communicators must learn to compose texts that others can access, engage with, use and perhaps reuse.

## Texts

All reading assignments are available via Canvas.

## Goals and Structure

This course is designed with three primary learning goals in mind:

- 1) To provide an opportunity to practice and refine technical and professional communication skills, including research, design, drafting, review, collaborating, and editing.
- 2) To acquaint you with the professional practices of technical and professional communication, considering issues of access, accessibility, diversity, advocacy, and justice.
- 3) To reinforce your ability to make research-based arguments and design decisions with clear claims and evidence.

You will meet these goals through our course readings and discussions, and by collaborating with your peers.

**Note:** This course satisfies 6000 words of the University Writing Requirement, provided you earn a final grade of C or higher.

## Materials

It is important that you check the Course Schedule before every class meeting, as our assignments and readings will definitely change throughout the course. All of our required materials will be available through Canvas. You are not required to purchase any additional materials.

## Assignments

Our work will be threaded through the following major projects, which accumulate to 500 possible points:

<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<p><b>P1: Rhetorical Tool Review</b> (100 points possible)</p>	<p>After reading about usability, accessibility, difference, and technical communication, you will be asked to compose a rhetorical review of a tool. By “tool,” I mean a specific piece of software, application, website, or another artifact that is intended to facilitate users’ movement through a process or action.</p>
<p><b>P2: Technical Documentation</b> (100 points possible)</p>	<p>This assignment will introduce you to and give you practice with something that is harder than it looks: writing quality technical documentation, specifically, defining, describing, and instructing and testing your documentation for usability. This assignment asks you to document something with a very specific audience in mind.</p>
<p><b>P3: Content Strategy</b> (100 points possible)</p>	<p>For this project, you will be conducting a content audit of an organization’s website, and you will use your skills to develop a content strategy proposal in collaboration with this organization.</p>
<p><b>P4: Professional Portfolio and Digital Identity</b> (100 points possible)</p>	<p>Being a technical and professional writer often requires that you build and maintain a digital identity and showcase your work portfolio. This assignment asks you to build a digital identity based on your own future professional goals.</p>
<p><b>Reading Quizzes and Knowledge Sharing</b> (100 points possible)</p>	<p>As a way to hold everyone accountable to our class community, most class meetings will include a brief reading quiz to kick off our discussion. These reading quizzes cannot be made up or taken outside of class. Every student will also be responsible for kicking off our class period with a 3-5 minute presentation on a new tool or app that you are using.</p>

# Class Policies

As a community working and learning together, our shared learning space is interdependent, which means that we all need to rely on each other in order to establish a community learning space that works for all of us. I expect every member of our class community to be present when and how you can, and to do your best to communicate with me and let me know how I can make the class more accessible for you given everything that will undoubtedly change throughout the semester. Please do your best to let me know if you cannot make it to our synchronous meetings. If you are sick, get sick, or need to caretake, please prioritize your needs in the moment and speak with me when you can so that we can make a plan for completing your coursework.

In general, all work is due on the day indicated on the course calendar and on Canvas. **Generally, I do not accept late work.** Within the scope of these policies, I also understand that things happen outside of our own control. Please make an appointment to speak with me so that we can ensure you have everything you need to be successful in this course during this difficult time.

No two people learn exactly the same way. If you find that the materials are difficult for you to absorb, don't assume right away that you don't understand the material. Perhaps you prefer to process information through speaking or listening, but all I am providing are written handouts, making it difficult for you to process. Please speak with me if you would like to think through other options for engaging with the material and activities in the course.

Disabilities are visible and invisible, documented and undocumented: I do not distinguish between these designations. If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, I encourage you to speak with me as soon as you can about your learning needs and how I can best accommodate them. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please speak with me and register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) as soon as possible.

**U Matter, We Care:** If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352-392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out.

**The Student Health Care Center at Shands** is a satellite clinic of the main Student Health Care Center located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health @Shands offers a variety of clinical services and is located on the second floor of the Dental

Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 352-392-0627 or visit the website at <https://shcc.ufl.edu>

**Crisis intervention** is available 24/7 at the Alachua County Crisis Center, 352-264-6789. Visit

<http://www.alachuacounty.us/DEPTS/CSS/CRISISCENTER/pages/CrisisCenter.aspx>

Do not wait until you reach a crisis to schedule an appointment. Get the help needed to work through stressful situations that impact your personal life and academic performance. You are not alone.

**Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC)** 352-392-1575 offers a variety of FREE and low-cost services such as psychological assessment, intervention and assistance for math and test anxiety. Visit the website for more information. Online and personal assistance is available.

## Grading

Grades will be assigned on each project and your final grade will be assigned cumulatively based on your scores on each assignment. If you are concerned with your grade at any point in the semester, please make an appointment to see me during office hours. I will not discuss grades via email at any point. The table below outlines grade percentages and their corresponding letter grades.

Percent	Grade
93.0-100.0	A
90.0-92.9	A-
87.0-89.9	B+
83.0-86.9	B
80.0-82.9	B-
77.0-79.9	C+
73.0-76.9	C
70.0-72.9	C-
67.0-69.9	D+

63.0-66.9	D
60.0-62.9	D-
0-59.9	F

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades>

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## Evaluation

Your feedback, both during and after our course, helps me improve my pedagogical practices and course accessibility. At UF, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

## Schedule (subject to change)

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Readings and Assignments Due Before Class</b>	<b>Tool Sharing (add names here)</b>
<b>1 M</b>	1/8	Syllabus intro. <a href="#">Week 1 slides</a>	N/A
W	1/10	O'Neil, <a href="#">These Women Tried to Warn Us About AI</a> (reading quiz)	
F	1/12	Online assignment-what is an example of technical communication?	
<b>2 M</b>	1/15	MLK holiday	
W	1/17	<a href="#">Dragga, "Cruel Pies"</a> (reading quiz)	
F	1/19	Work on P1	
<b>3 M</b>	1/22	Bring draft of P1 to class	
W	1/24	<a href="#">Butler, "Where Access Meets Multimodality"</a> (reading quiz)	
F	1/26	Discuss accessibility and disability studies in TPC	
<b>4 M</b>	1/29	Finalize P1. P1 due on Canvas by 11:59pm	
W	1/31	Introduce P2	
F	2/2	Work on P2	
<b>5 M</b>	2/5	<a href="#">Sun, "The Triumph of Users"</a> (reading quiz)	
W	2/7	Discuss technical communication genres. Proposal for P2 due Friday.	
F	2/9	Submit P2 proposal.	
<b>6 M</b>	2/12	Work on P2	
W	2/14	Work on P2	
F	2/16	Work on P2	

<b>7 M</b>	2/19	Work on P2	
W	2/21	Work on P2	
F	2/23	P2 due on Canvas by 11:59pm	
<b>8 M</b>	2/26	Ståhl, <a href="#">A Beginner's Guide to Headless Content Modeling</a> (reading quiz)	
W	2/28	Introduce P3	
F	3/1	Submit P3 proposal to Canvas by 11:59pm	
<b>9 M</b>	3/4	<a href="#">Reddish, Content Strategy</a> (reading quiz) (reading quiz)	
W	3/6	Work on P3	
F	3/8	Work on P3	
<b>10 M</b>	3/11	Spring break	
W	3/13	Spring break	
F	3/15	Spring break	
<b>11 M</b>	3/18	Finalize P3	
W	3/20	P3 presentations	
F	3/22	P3 presentations	
<b>12 M</b>	3/25	P3 presentations	
W	3/27	Introduce P4-online portfolios and digital identity	
F	3/29	Work on P4	
<b>13 M</b>	4/1	Work on P4	
W	4/3	Work on P4	
F	4/5	Work on P4	
<b>14 M</b>	4/8	Work on P4	
W	4/10	Work on P4	

F	4/12	Work on P4	
<b>15 M</b>	4/15	P4 presentations	
W	4/17	P4 presentations	
F	4/19	P4 presentations	
<b>16 M</b>	4/22	P4 presentations	
W	4/24	Last Class. Final exam portfolio due on Canvas by 11:59pm.	