

ENC 2210: Technical Writing

Class #11062
Section #025B
Summer A 2020
MTWRF Period 5 (2:00 – 3:15)

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office hours: TW Period 6 (3:30 – 4:45)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

ENC 2210: Technical Writing is an introduction to technical and professional writing. Its fundamentals are valuable for any kind of workplace, academic, or professional setting. Besides learning how to communicate in various professional environments, students will analyze technical writing genres such as resumes, cover letters, emails, project proposals, technical manuals, and Wikipedia entries.

You will practice these genres in your assignments, learning how to adapt to the rhetorical situations each presents. You will learn to account for audience, style, organization, visual design, and the transmission of each. As this is an online class, you will have the chance to participate in group discussions and workshops in addition to completing readings and written assignments. The documents you write in this class emphasize clarity, cohesion, professionalism, and polished presentation. Therefore, this course also emphasizes the importance of peer review and revision, both of which will be part of your assignments.

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

- understand the differences between the various genres of technical writing
- identify and adapt to rhetorical situations within technical discourse communities
- produce professional-quality documents
- address the specialized needs of audiences, including multiple audiences
- provide constructive feedback to peers
- evaluate and critically revise their own work based on feedback

SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS COURSEWORK

As a matter of University policy, you are not permitted to enroll in multiple courses during the same period. That is, you may not enroll in a course that conflicts with this class's scheduled meeting time, Summer A, period 5—even if that other course is entirely asynchronous.

This class will be conducted synchronously *and* asynchronously. We will meet as a class via Zoom on certain days (indicated on your schedule at the end of this syllabus). I will provide meeting URLs through Canvas or a class listserv in advance of these sessions. When we meet virtually as a group, it will always be during period 5.

Meanwhile, you will complete much of your reading, drafting, workshopping, and revising on whatever schedule best suits you, whether that is during our designated period or not. Group assignments will be conducted at whatever time best suits your group.

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 TEXTS

- Richard Johnson-Sheehan, *Technical Communication Today*, 6th Ed. ISBN 9780134433981
- Joseph M. Williams, *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*. ISBN 978-0226899152

Please do not purchase any textbooks until after our first meeting of the semester and have discussed how we will be using our textbooks.

Any format of text is acceptable, print or electronic. I suggest whatever is cheapest. You can rent the textbook from [Pearson](#), [Google Books](#), Kindle, or the like.

ASSIGNMENTS

Full-length assignment descriptions will be distributed via Canvas throughout the semester.

Your assignments require access to Microsoft Office. If you do not currently have Office, don't worry; it is available to you all from UF. Download it [here](#) with your GatorLink ID.

| Assignment | Words | Value /1000 |
|---|-------|-------------|
| <u>Introduction Email</u> Deceptively simple, the professional email can take a lot of work. Write to me, using all the markers and rhetorical moves of a professional email, to introduce yourself. | 250 | 50 |
| <u>Job Application Packet (Group Work)</u> A dry run of the full job application process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Job Description Analysis▪ Resume▪ Cover Letter▪ Transmission Letter▪ Group Workshop<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Zoom Meeting▪ Meeting Minutes▪ Revision▪ Follow-Up Letter | 2,500 | 350 |
| <u>Group Style Sheet (Group Work)</u> In your groups, diagnose 3-4 key matters of style (e.g., concision, coherence, clarity) from <i>Style</i> that gave your group the most difficulty throughout your writing and workshopping. Identify specific instances from your papers. | 750 | 75 |

| | | |
|---|-------|-----|
| Explain, in concrete terms, what your group's collective difficulties were and explain, again concretely, the steps you take in your revisions to improve your writing style. | | |
| <p><u>Technical Manual</u></p> <p>We've all encountered a bad manual: in Ikea instructions, a confusing boardgame, a bad video game walkthrough, or in a poorly written course assignment sheet.</p> <p>For this assignment, identify something that you are expert enough in to teach to an absolute beginner, and write and design a manual to do so. Your manual need not be "professional" to be written professionally. It can be a manual about anything, from how to start a vegetable garden at home, how to maximize the first few days in <i>Animal Crossing</i>, or how to change a flat tire. After reading your manual, I should have a clear idea of your instructions and walk away with a new skill.</p> <p>You may use any format you like here: written manual, comic book, PowerPoint presentation, YouTube video (+ script), or pitch something else.</p> | 500 | 150 |
| <p><u>Proposal</u></p> <p>Technical writing is not only a mode of professional communication. It has concrete, real-world purpose beyond just being clear, coherent, and collegial. In this moment of crisis, in particular, the proposal genre offers us a chance to think critically and analytically about the unfolding crisis and to apply some creative problem-solving. How might UF, or Gainesville more generally, work concretely to mitigate the effects of COVID-19?</p> <p>In this proposal, conduct research to identify a specific problem at UF, or in Gainesville, caused by the pandemic and propose a course of action to mitigate or solve the issue.</p> <p>First, write a brief pitch for your proposal project.</p> <p>Second, after I approve your topic, research and write the proposal.</p> <p>Before you turn in your assignments, you will make a short presentation on your proposal to the class via Zoom. You will also write an official memo to distribute to the class, which will serve as an invite and preview of your presentation.</p> <p>Finally, before turning in your proposal, your group will need to arrange a meeting with me in which we discuss any last minute concerns about your project and in which you perform a group self-evaluation.</p> | 2,000 | 275 |
| | 250 | 25 |
| | 1,500 | 200 |
| | 250 | 50 |
| | n/a | 75 |

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|--|-----|-----------|
| Participation Participation includes everything from class discussion, group work, proper use of office hours, to formal presentations and meetings. | n/a | 75 |
|--|-----|-----------|

GRADING SCALE

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------|---------|
| A | 100 – 94 | C | 75 – 73 |
| A- | 93 – 90 | C- | 72 – 70 |
| B+ | 89 – 86 | D+ | 69 – 66 |
| B | 85 – 83 | D | 65 – 63 |
| B- | 82 – 80 | D- | 62 – 60 |
| C+ | 79 – 76 | E | 59 – 0 |

GENERAL GRADING RUBRIC

You can expect more specifications on your individual assignment sheets. Take the below as a general rubric for all written assignments this semester. Exceptional assignments go above and beyond the basic "satisfactory" requirements.

| | SATISFACTORY | UNSATISFACTORY |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| CONTENT | Assignments respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources. | Assignments either include a central idea that is unclear or off-topic or provide only minimal discussion of ideas. Assignments may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources. |
| ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE | Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure, including a clear thesis statements and topic sentences. | Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable thesis statements and topic sentences, may lack coherence or logic, and may also lack transitions and signposting to guide the reader. |
| ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT | Assignments persuasively present ideas and use strong supporting evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, assignments may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or rely on weak support for arguments. | Documents make only generalizations, providing weak to no support (as in uncritical summaries or narratives that fail to provide analysis or new information). |
| STYLE | Assignments are written in a style with diction appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Assignments should show complexity of thought, not complexity of syntax. | Assignments rely on diction that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Assignments may use padded diction (don't rely on a thesaurus to sound smart), overly complex syntax but no complexity and clarity of thought. Documents may also use words incorrectly or unnecessarily (e.g. "utilize" for "use"). |

| | | |
|--------------|--|--|
| MECHANICS | Assignments are error-free. 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 arguments. | Assignments contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or undermine the writer's credibility. |
| PRESENTATION | Assignments have a polished and uniform look, are appropriate to the genre and context of the topic, and use visual components effectively while making a pleasurable experience for readers. | Presentation is poorly executed and/or inappropriate to the genre and context, e.g., with non-uniform organization, illegible graphics, or a visual organization that impedes the reader's understanding or undermines the designer's credibility. |

COURSE POLICIES

COVID-19

- There is nothing more important than your health and wellbeing.
- If you face unforeseen disruptions to your education as a direct or indirect result of the pandemic (illness, COVID-19 or otherwise; a family emergency; caretaking responsibilities; loss of employment or income; etc.) or if you are unable to complete assignments for this course by their due dates because of the same (or because of your job, unreliable internet access, etc.) understand this: I am not here to police you. I am here to help you become stronger writers and critical thinkers.
- Understand, also, that in such situations I refuse to assign punitive grades or to deem late work unsatisfactory.
- However, in such situations I do require this: that you contact me, by email, during Zoom-hosted office hours, or via Canvas as soon as you can to update me on your situation. From there we can plan together accordingly.

ATTENDANCE

- This course is, for the most part, taught asynchronously. However, your telepresence during our *synchronous* meetings is required. Attendance applies, also, to your out-of-class group work.
- For more information on UF attendance policies, including exceptions to the attendance policy, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

COMPORTMENT

- You are expected to understand and follow basic principles of classroom decorum. Unruly or disrespectful behavior in our virtual classroom will not be tolerated.
- Though online rather than face to face, this course still requires the same courtesies you would extend in person. Don't interrupt people, do not go off-screen while others are talking or presenting, don't talk over others, etc.
- But let's face it: a 20-person conversation on Zoom is going to have communication issues. So, let us use this as an opportunity to come up with some strategies for telecommunicating effectively and respectfully.
- Be considerate of diverse identities within and outside of the classroom and treat your peers with respect. Any racist, sexist or misogynist, or homo-, trans-, or xenophobic behavior will absolutely not be tolerated.
- *UF's policy on Harassment:* 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:
<https://titleix.ufl.edu/policy-statement/>

OFFICE HOURS & COMMUNICATION

- My office hours are in place to help you in your assignments, but also to further our discussions and to give you opportunities to expand our engagement with the course materials. So, use these hours for consultation, elaborating on class conversations, planning assignments, pitching ideas, working out interpretations of texts, discussing independently discovered sources, and so on. During these hours, I will not read assignments to see if they're "what I'm looking for" nor will I proofread assignments before submission. Treat your hours like any other kind of professional meeting: come prepared to carry a conversation.
- Email is for quick, routine queries or emergency updates (e.g., informing me you're sick, making an office hours appt., and so on). Use office hours for substantial conversations and matters pertaining to coursework.
- I will do my best to reply to all communications. Under normal circumstances, 24-48 hours is a reasonable amount of time to wait to receive an email response. Under these very abnormal circumstances, I will still read all your emails in a timely fashion and respond within work-day hours (9:00 – 5:00). Be aware, though, that I may take longer than a day or two to respond, depending on influx and on the urgency of your message.
- If you must communicate urgent messages (see, e.g., "COVID-19" above), mark your emails as high priority.
- I will use Canvas Announcements and Mail or a class listserv to deliver updates, including Zoom meeting URLs. As in any professional context, you must check your inboxes frequently. Even after the classes end, continue to check your messages until grades are made available, as I (or other instructors, for that matter) may need to reach you.

ASSIGNMENTS AND SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- You must complete *all* assignments to receive credit for this course.
- Submit your assignments via Canvas, unless otherwise stated on your assignment descriptions.
- Keep duplicate copies of all assignments. Do not discard work until after the semester is over and grades are finalized and made available.
- Unless something exceptional (see “COVID-19) prevents you from submitting your work, stick to your deadlines.
- If, for whatever exceptional reason, you *do* anticipate missing a deadline or you need more time, contact me before the due date. It is absolutely professional to notify me in advance if something poses a real block to completing your work. Telling me on the due date... not so much (this applies to other courses and professional setting as well).
- While my policies provide flexibility for those who need it, they are not *carte blanche* for late or incomplete work. Again, to the best of your abilities and in as timely a manner as possible, you must communicate with me any disruptions that impact your coursework. I cannot accommodate what I do not know about. In general, I will suggest something like a week or ten-day extension. But again, this is something we will work out as need arises and on a case by case basis; it is not a license to put off or assignments or skip deadlines.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism.* UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: “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 Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.
- *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 your instructor early in the semester.
- *Students who are in distress* or who are in need of counseling or urgent help: please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to you. UF’s Counseling and Wellness Center offers additional support: 352-392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>
- *Grading Policies.* For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

- *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
- *Course Evaluations.* Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages requesting that you do this online:
<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

| MAY | M 11 | T 12 | W 13 | R 14 | F 15 |
|------|---|--|---|---|--|
| | Zoom: Course Introduction | Zoom: Intro cont., Email Overview | Reading: from Johnson-Sheehan, <i>Technical Communication Today</i> Chap. 6 | Zoom Discussion: "I Won't Hire..." HW: Chap. 5 | Zoom: Resumes and CVs; Job Application Overview INTRO EMAIL DUE HW: Chap. 5 |
| | | Office Hours (Zoom) | Office Hours (Zoom) | | |
| | M 18 | T 19 | W 20 | R 21 | F 22 |
| | From Williams, <i>Style: Causes</i> | From <i>Style</i> : Clarity | <i>TCT</i> Chap. 7 | <i>TCT</i> Chap. 7 | Zoom: Technical Manual Overview JOB APP. DUE |
| | | Office Hours (Zoom) | Office Hours (Zoom) | | |
| | M 25 | T 26 | W 27 | R 28 | F 29 |
| | <i>TCT</i> Chap. 8 | <i>Style</i> : Cohesion | <i>TCT</i> Chap. 9 | <i>TCT</i> Chap. 9 | Zoom: Proposal Overview GROUP WORK SHEET/MINUTES DUE; |
| | | Office Hours (Zoom) | Office Hours (Zoom) | | |
| JUNE | M 1 | T 2 | W 3 | R 4 | F 5 |
| | <i>Style</i> : Usage TECHNICAL MANUAL DUE | <i>TCT</i> Chap. 20 | <i>TCT</i> Chap. 20 | <i>TCT</i> Chap. 18 | PROPOSAL PITCH DUE |
| | | Office Hours (Zoom) | Office Hours (Zoom) | | |
| | M 8 | T 9 | W 10 | R 11 | F 12 |
| | Group Work: Proposals | Group Work: Proposals; Circulate Proposal Presentation Memos | Zoom: Proposal Presentations; Circulate Proposal Presentation Memos | Proposal Presentations; Circulate Proposal Presentation Memos | Proposal Presentations; Circulate Proposal Presentation Memos |
| | | Office Hours (Zoom) | Office Hours (Zoom) | | |
| | M 15 | T 16 | W 17 | R 18 | F 19 |
| | Proposal Presentations | Group Meetings/Evals. | Group Meetings/Evals. | Group Meetings/Evals. | Group Meetings/Evals. PROPOSAL DUE |
| | | Group Meetings/Evals. | Group Meetings/Evals. | | |