Instructor: Jacob T. Riley   MTWRF Period 2 Matherly
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UF Catalog Description:

A survey of the forms and methods of communication used in business, industry, and government. These include non-formal and formal reports, letters, resumes and proposals.

Overview:

This course introduces you to technical and professional writing. It offers practical information about communicating in different kinds of workplace environments and professional communities. You will produce and analyze many common technical writing genres: email messages, letters, resumes, memos, reports, proposals, technical descriptions, technical definitions, technical manuals, proposals, etc. In class meetings, you will discuss assigned readings and projects, receive feedback from me on your writing, write and revise documents in peer workshops, and collaborate with other students on writing projects.

Course Objectives and Outcomes

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

- write more clearly and concisely than you did previously
- identify and understand the genres of technical writing
- analyze and adapt to the constraints of rhetorical situations
- address multiple audiences, including experts and laypeople
- produce professionally designed technical documents
- integrate tables, figures, and other visuals into documents
- develop and administer user tests; analyze and synthesize user test data
- critique and revise your own documents thoroughly
- give written and oral feedback to peers

The university's General Education student learning outcomes for this course are detailed in the Undergraduate Catalog at:

https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1213/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx.

Text

Technical Communication in the Twenty-First Century. 2nd Edition. Sidney I. Dobrin, Christopher J. Keller, and Christian R. Weisser. (Available at the University of Florida Bookstore)

Grade Scale

A   93-100 4.0
A- 90-92   3.67
B+ 87-89   3.33
B   83-86   3.0
B- 80-82   2.67
C+ 77-79   2.33
C   73-76   2.0
C- 70-72   1.67
D+ 67-69   1.33
D   63-66   1.0
D- 60-62   0.67
E   0-59   0.00

Point Values per Assignment

Letter (1)	5
Memos (2)	10
Project: Job Application Packet: Resume and Cover Letter	10
Project: Technical Definition	10
Project: Proposal	20
Project: Progress report	10
Project: Manual	20
Project: User Test / Report	5
Blog	10

Total	100

Assignment Descriptions

<u>Letters</u>

1. Respond to the case study 2 on page 391 in Chapter 13 of TCTC. Submit a draft for instructor comment, present it in workshop for peer evaluation, and revise it for a final grade. (250 words)

2. Write a letter of inquiry/interest to a perspective employer or someone you admire in your career field. Submit in conjunction with job application materials. (150 words)

3. Write a letter of inquiry to an external source as part of the research for the proposal project. (150 words)

Total Word Count: 450

Memos (2)

1. Introduce yourself to your instructor. See memo #1 assignment sheet for more detail. (250 words)

2. Convert John Adams's letter into a memo and highlight critical differences. (350 words)

Total Word Count: 600

Project--Resume and Cover Letter

Responding to exercise #5 of Chapter 14 (p. 438), produce professional-caliber job application materials: a cover letter and a resume. You will submit drafts for peer evaluation and instructor feedback. (400 words)

Project--Technical Definition

Pick a key term from your proposal to define for the target audience. This project will be produced as a Word or PowerPoint document and be formatted as if it were a blueprint for a webpage. (250 words)

Project--Proposal

Write a proposal in response to a TBA case study. (1000 words)

Project--Progress Report

This assignment relates to the manual assignment described below. Submit a progress report to your instructor detailing the progress you have made on the manual assignment. You will include information about what you have finished, what you still need to finish, and how you plan to do so. You'll submit this project mid-way through your work on the manual assignment. (500 words)

Project--Manual

Complete one of these Writing Scenarios from TCTC:
#6 p. 537   #10 p. 538   #11 p. 538
#5 p. 567   #7 p. 568   #10 p. 568   #13 p. 568

(2000 words; manual only)

 **** *This assignment is linked to three other assignments: Letter #3, the Progress Report, and The User Test and Report (see below).*

Project--User Test and Report

Develop a user test methodology, including procedures and protocols (see TCTC chapter 10). Using test groups from outside of the class population, you will conduct user tests to measure the functionability and readability of your technical manual. Based on the data you gather and your evaluation of that data, you'll then revise the technical manual before submitting it for a final grade. In addition, you will produce a user test report (see TCTC chapters 10 and 21) that identifies the user test methodology, the materials, the processes, and procedures. The report will evaluate that data and address how it was considered in regard to the manual's final revision. The report should also detail what revisions were made as a result of the user test. (1000 words)

Blog

Use Sakai Blog for submissions.

(1) Find a news article, journal article, book, video, or picture that relates to the professional workplace (preferably related to the profession you wish to enter). Post a link to this text and write (at least) a 200 word commentary on its relationship to technical communication. Topics may include (but are limited to) visual design, ethics, workplace politics, written texts, legal issues, global issues, environmental issues, etc.

(2) Throughout the semester, I will have you read at least 2 supplementary texts exploring technical communications from a theoretical standpoint. Read and write a 400 word commentary on each of these texts, citing the text at least once. Feel free to use visual elements while composing.

Total word count: 1000

TOTAL WORD COUNT FOR FINAL SUBMISSIONS: 7,300 words

Course Policies

Text and Workshop Requirements

- ☐ All assignments should be computer generated and professional in appearance.
- ☐ Bring two copies of drafts to all writing workshops.
- ☐ Drafts should be complete and polished, not "rough."
- ☐ If you miss a workshop, you must arrange a make-up session with your classmates. Otherwise, it will not receive a grade.
- ☐ Submit all assignments on time. Because deadlines are part of workplace writing, we will stick to them: no late assignments.

Attendance

- ☐ Be present, on time, and prepared. If you are ten or more minutes late, do not come in; you'll be considered absent anyway, and you'll disrupt the class.

☐ If you miss four classes, your final grade will drop by one full letter. If you miss more than four classes, you will fail the course. If absent for a quiz, you will not be allowed to make it up.

☐ When you miss class, you are responsible for getting any assignments and making up any work.

☐ If you develop a medical condition that prevents you from coming to class, see me as soon as possible to discuss options.

Grade Appeals

If you have questions regarding your final grade, see me first. After we meet, if you want to appeal your final grade, see or call Carla Blount in the Department of English. The English Department will consider appeals for final semester grades, not individual assignment grades.

University Policies

Disability Services

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/

Academic Honesty

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php

Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041

General Education Requirements

Composition

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or

Humanities. For more information, see:

https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/Pages/home.aspx

Writing Requirement (formerly Gordon Rule)

This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing. For more information, see:

https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/Pages/home.aspx

Weekly Schedule

Week 1
- ☐ Course introduction, syllabus review, diagnostic essay
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 1: Technical and Professional Communication in the Workplace
- ☐ Assignment: Memo 1
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 2: Rhetoric and Technical Communication
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 4: Ethics and the Workplace Writer
- ☐ Memo 1 due

Week 2
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 12: Email and Memos
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 13: Letters
- ☐ Assignment: Memo 2
- ☐ Memo 2 due
- ☐ Assignment: Letter 1
- ☐ Workshop for Letter 1
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 7: Organizing and Drafting Document
- ☐ Letter 1 due

Week 3
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 14: Finding and Obtaining Employment
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 8, 9: Visual Rhetoric and Layout & Design
- ☐ Job Application assignment (Cover Letter and Resume, Letter 2)
- ☐ Workshop for Job Application materials
- ☐ Conferences for Job Application materials
- ☐ Job Application Materials (Cover Letter and Resume, Letter 2) due

Week 4
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 15: Technical Definitions
- ☐ TCTC Chapter 20: Proposals and Requests for Proposals

- Assignment: Technical Definition, Proposal, Memo 3, Letter 3
- Workshop/Conference for Technical Definition and Proposal
- Technical Definition due
- Assignment: Manual, Progress Report, User Test Report

Week 5
- TCTC Chapter 11: Usability
- TCTC Chapter 19: Manuals
- Proposal and Letter 3 due
- TCTC Chapter 18: Technical Instructions
- Progress Report due
- Conference on Progress Reports

Week 6
- Workshop/Conference for Manual and User Tests
- Manual and User Test Report due
- Course evaluations
- Manuals and User Test Reports returned