

ENC 2210: TECHNICAL WRITING

Section 0248, Summer A 2016

Instructor: Chloe Lane

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Classroom: TUR 2306

Meeting times: MTWRF, Period 2 (9.30–10.45am)

Office hours: Wednesday 10.45–11.45am & by appointment

Office location: TUR 4315

Required Textbook

Technical Communication Today. Richard Johnson-Sheehan. Fifth Edition. ISBN: 978-0321907981

Course Description

Technical Writing is an introduction to technical and professional writing. This course presents students with practical information about communicating in different workplace environments and discourse communities. Throughout the semester students will produce and analyze texts within a number of common technical writing genres, including emails, letters, résumés, memos, reports, proposals, technical descriptions, technical definitions, technical manuals, and proposals.

Students will analyze and respond to the different rhetorical situation each assignment presents. Students will also consider concepts such as audience, organization, visual design, style, and the material production of documents. Class meetings provide students with the opportunity to participate in on-going class discussions about assigned readings and writing projects, to work closely with the instructor, to work with peers in writing and revision workshops, and to collaborate with peers on projects. Technical writing is produced individually as well as collaboratively. Accordingly, ENC 2210 emphasizes both individual and team efforts.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the course, students enrolled in ENC 2210 should be able to:

- identify and understand the facets and functions of the primary genres of technical writing, including letters, memos, emails, résumés, reports, proposals, technical descriptions, technical definitions, and technical manuals
- produce professional caliber technical documents
- 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 visuals into documents

- produce documents both collaboratively and independently
- refine writing style for clarity, concision, coherence, cohesion, and emphasis
- critique and revise documents so as to insure that they fulfill their intended purposes
- work with peers in order to provide written and oral feedback to one another

Grading

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

Major Writing Assignments	Points	Words
Instruction Manual	60	800
Job Application (cover letter, résumé)	100	600
Annotated Bibliography	50	500
Technical Descriptions	100	1000
Research Report	100	1200
Prospectus & Progress Report	100	800
Proposal	150	1200
Proposal Presentation	40	
Subtotal for Major Assignments	700	
Other Required Elements		
Planning Emails (4 x 20 points)	80	
Peer Reviews (4 x 25 points)	100	
Quizzes & Activities	70	
Overall Participation	50	
Total Possible Points	1,000	6,100

Grading Scale

A: 93-100	A-: 90-92	B+: 87-89	B: 84-86
B-: 80-83	C+: 77-79	C: 73-76	C-: 70-72
D+: 67-69	D: 63-66	D-: 60-62	E: 0-59

Major Assignments & Group Projects

The assignments below include one major group project. For this group project, planning and research will be collaborative, while the written work will be completed both independently and collaboratively. Most major assignments will begin with a planning email written to the instructor in correct, effective, professional style.

Instruction Manual

For this assignment students will write instructions for a device, process, or task. The instructions will contain descriptions and specifications, warnings, maintenance and troubleshooting advice, and any other information the user is likely to need to use the device, complete the process, or accomplish the task. The assignment will be assessed on the quality and clarity of the instructions, on the functionality of the instructional visuals, on the effectiveness of the design, and on the rhetorical style of the steps, sequencing, and transitions.

Job Applications: Cover Letter & Résumé

In this multi-part assignment, students will first identify an internship or job they hope to secure. Next, students will research the field and construct a profile for the ideal candidate for this position, followed by an analysis of their own qualifications. Then, students will write a letter of application and a résumé for this particular position.

Technical Descriptions for Expert and Non-Expert Audiences

Focusing on a current technical innovation, students will write a detailed description of a device or process for various audiences, and present the device or the implementation of the procedure. The report will include at least one visual aid and cite at least five sources, using an appropriate manuscript form. To get started, students will also prepare an Annotated Bibliography of the 5 sources used for the project.

Group Project: The Research Report and Proposal Project

The capstone project will be a proposal for the UF campus or local community. The proposal will seek to persuade a target audience that a significant problem exists and offer a feasible solution. Drawing on all of the skills developed over the semester, students will analyze the rhetorical situation and employ communication strategies designed to persuade the audience to act on the plan. This project will also include a prospectus, a progress report, a research report, and presentation.

Research Report

Derived from the scientific method, the research report is the most common type of report written in academia. It is the form taken by lab reports and other documents that are based on original data collected by the researcher or research team. In this assignment, students will collect empirical data to support a Proposal. Working in a small group, students will establish a research question, devise a method of gathering original data, and collect the data, and then write their individual report. This report will eventually form part of the argument made in the Proposal.

Prospectus

This is a brief report to the project supervisor emphasizing the problem statement driving the proposal, a possible feasible solution, and a tentative schedule for completion.

Progress Report

Students will write a group progress report on proposal work. This will track activities, problems, and progress for both the individual's tasks, and the group's overall task. The focus will be on

schedules, setbacks, problems solved, and the dates and stages of the progress.

Presentation

The final part of the proposal project will be a short presentation where students will sell their problem, research, and solution to the rest of the class. The presentation will include appropriate and effective visual material.

Course Policies

Attendance

This is a participation-oriented, skills-based writing course, which means that you will build your skills incrementally and systematically in each class throughout the semester. Much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class.

Consequently, if you miss more than two classes during the semester, your grade will drop considerably. **Each absence beyond two will lower your overall course letter-grade by half a letter (eg. A to A-, A- to B+ etc.). If you miss more than four classes, you will fail the course.** Exempt from this policy are only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays, for which you must provide appropriate documentation in advance of the absence. Absences for illness or family emergencies will count toward your two allowed absences. I advise that you save your absences for when you are truly ill.

If you are absent, it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all class discussions and activities as well as any new developments, such as assignments and due dates. You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time. However, you will not be able to make up any in-class assignments. I will not follow up regarding absences and missing or late assignments. Please establish contact with a classmate or myself in order to update yourself on the course happenings in the event that you miss class. If you anticipate having a prolonged absence for any reason, please speak with me in advance to make appropriate arrangements.

Tardiness

Tardiness creates a problem for the entire class since it can disrupt work in progress. Three instances of tardiness (arriving more than 5 minutes late) will result in one absence.

Participation

Participation is a necessary component of your time in this class, and as such will factor into your grade. You are expected to arrive to class prepared, with homework done, articles/books read, and paper and writing utensils at hand. You will work individually, in small groups, and in class-wide discussions. I will expect each of you to participate actively each day.

Collaborative Work

Workplace writers often find themselves contributing and completing documents and projects with co-workers. Learning how to collaborate is an essential and valuable skill. In this course, students will complete some assignments in groups. I will also require students to respond and/or evaluate to each other's writing. Each student is responsible for completing work for both individual and group work thoroughly and in a timely fashion. Failing to effectively contribute to collaborative work will negatively impact grades.

Canvas Submissions

All assignments will be submitted via Canvas, and should be turned in by the appropriate time. Late assignments will be penalized half a grade (A to A-, A- to B+ etc.) per day, unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Failure of technology (hard drive crashes etc.) is not an excuse. If Canvas is not functioning properly when you attempt to submit a paper, you must immediately email me and apprise me of the situation.

Email Correspondence

This is an English class, so I expect your emails to me to be professional and follow rules of grammar and etiquette. Please include proper salutations and a signature that includes your name.

Classroom Conduct

Please treat classmates and myself with respect. Keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that students demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from their own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class. Any use of electronic devices not related to classroom learning: phones, personal data assistants, iPods, etc. are disruptive and will not be tolerated. Please turn them off and keep them out of sight.

Plagiarism

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 Writing Program 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.

General Education Learning Outcomes: (C) and (WR)

Composition Credit: Students must pass this course with a "C" or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C). To earn general education Composition credit, students will

- Demonstrate forms of effective writing (focusing on analyses, arguments, and proposals);
- Learn different writing styles, approaches, and formats and successfully adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts; effectively revise and edit their own writing and the writing of others;

- Organize complex arguments in writing, using thesis statements, claims, and evidence;
- Employ logic in arguments and analyze their own writing and the writing of others for errors in logic;
- Write clearly and concisely consistent with the conventions of standard written English;
- Use thesis sentences, claims, evidence, and logic in arguments.

University Writing Requirement: The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Course grades now have two components. To receive University Writing Requirement (WR) credit (E6), a student must earn a course grade of C or higher **and** assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling at least 6000 words. Thus, to earn WR-E6 credit, **students must complete all the major writing assignments.**

The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Conferring credit for the University Writing Requirement, this course requires that papers conform to the following assessment rubric. More specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments may be delivered during the course of the semester.

University Statements

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

Statement on harassment: UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

Statement on academic honesty: All students must 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>

Tentative Course Schedule

Week One: May 9

- M 9** Intro Day!
- T 10** In class: Thinking about audience / Writing emails
Read: *TCT* Chapter 5 (Emails); Chapter 7: Instructions and Documentation
- W 11** In class: Introduce Instruction Manual Assignment
Read: *TCT* Chapter 4: Managing Ethical Challenges; Chapter 17: Designing Documents
Due: Planning Email #1, 9.30am
- R 12** In class: Ethics in technical writing / In-class work
Due: Planning Email #2, 9.30am
- F 13** In class: Instructions Peer Review / In-class work
Assignment Due: Instruction Manual, Sunday 5PM
Homework: Bring 2 x internship possibilities to class on Monday

Week Two: May 16

- M 16** In class: Introduce Job Applications Assignment
Read: *TCT* Chapter 11, pages 293–311
- T 17** In class: Résumés
Read: *TCT* Chapter 5, pages 106-109; Chapter 11, pages 312–316
- W 18** In class: Writing letters
- R 19** In class: Job Applications Peer Review
Assignment Due: Job Applications, Thursday 11PM
- F 20** In class: Introduce Technical Descriptions & Annotated Bibliography Assignments
Read: *TCT* Chapter 2: Communicating in a Reader-Focused Way; Chapter 6: Technical Descriptions & Specifications
Due: Planning Email #3, Sunday 5PM

Week Three: May 23

- M 23** In class: Technical Description outline
Read: Synthesizing Sources Handout
Homework: Annotated Bibliography Post #1, due 5PM
- T 24** In class: Synthesizing sources
Homework: Annotated Bibliography Posts #2 & #3, due 5PM
Homework: Synthesizing Sources Exercise
- W 25** In class: Technical Descriptions
Assignment Due: Annotated Bibliography, Wednesday 11PM
- R 26** In class: Technical Descriptions Peer Review
- F 27** In class: Technical Descriptions
Assignment Due: Technical Descriptions, Friday 11PM

Week Four: May 30

- M 30** Holiday: Memorial Day
- T 31** In class: Introduce Research Report & Proposal Assignments
Read: *TCT* Chapter 8: Proposals, pages 195–202; Chapter 3: Working in Teams
- W 1** In class: Figuring out research questions
Read: *TCT* Chapter 5: (Memos); Read: Chapter 14: Researching in Technical Workplaces
Due: Planning Email #4, 5PM
- R 2** In class: Introduce Prospectus Assignment
Read: *TCT* Chapter 14: Researching in Technical Workplaces
- F 3** In class: Prospectus / Methods
Read: Chapter 10: Analytical Reports, pages 253–264
Assignment Due: Prospectus, Friday 11PM

Week Five: June 6

- M 6** Primary Research Day
Read: *TCT* Chapter 9: Activity Reports
- T 7** In class: Introduce Progress Report Assignment
- W 8** In class: Research Report & Progress Report
Assignment Due: Progress Report, Wednesday 11PM
- R 9** In class: Research Report
- F 10** In class: Research Report Peer Review
Read: *TCT* Chapter 8: Proposals
Assignment Due: Research Report, Sunday 5PM

Week Six: June 13

- M 13** In class: Writing Proposals
- T 14** In class: Writing Proposals
- W 15** In class: Writing Proposal Presentations
Read: *TCT* Chapter 20: Preparing and Giving Presentations
- R 16** Conferences
- F 17** In class: Proposal Presentations
Assignment Due: Proposal, Friday 11PM