Technical Writing

ENGL 3203-101 Fall 2021
Monday & Wednesday 12:30 to 1:50 pm in BW 117

Syllabus

Instructor	Dr. Sally Henschel Office: Bea Wood 211 Email: contact me through D2L or sally.henschel@msutexas.edu (Please do not send duplicate emails to both addresses.)
Office hours	Tues. and Thurs. noon – 2:00 p.m., Wed 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Other hours by appointment
Prerequisites	Communication core completed
Course description	The purposes and practice of expository writing in the professions, with particular emphasis on writing related to each student's major. Topics include audience analysis, communication ethics, collaboration, information design, technical editing, and professional writing genres (letters, e-mails, memos, procedures, proposals, reports, and presentations).
Course materials	*Technical Communication* (free, online) https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/technicalwriting/ *Open-Technical Communication* (free, online) https://softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/PySpCEBQodADFZ/html
Course outcomes	Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze communication contexts rhetorically by understanding subject, readers (audiences), and purpose. Measurement: Completion of course reading assignments, and successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Create technical documents that solve problems and improve situations through communication. Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Analyze and apply the ethical responsibilities involved in technical communication. Measurement: Completion of course reading assignments, observation and evaluation of face-to-face and online discussions, and successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Write effective, meaningful technical prose. Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Apply concepts of information design to create convincing, usable, and informative documents. Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.

- Communicate effectively with a diverse audience. Measurement: Observation and evaluation of face-to-face and online asynchronous

discussions, completion of proposal presentation, and successful completion of individual and collaborative projects.

Graded course assignments	**Individual assignments:**	
	• Team-related topic post	5
	• Citation assignment	5
	• Individual research report	20
	• Peer review and Zoom meeting	5
	• Résumé, ad, letter	10
	• Instructions/procedures critique	5
	• Reading discussion posts (3)	15
	Team assignments:	
	• Proposal	10
	• Final team report	10
	• Slide presentation	10
	• Project mgmt. site	2.5
	Team member evaluation:	**2.5**
	Total:	**100 points**

Grading system	A = 100—90%
	B = 89—80%
	C = 79—70
	D = 69—60%
	F = <60%

Late assignment policy	All assignments will be due on dates assigned. **No late work will be accepted.** Students falling two assignments behind are subject to administrative withdrawal from the course by the instructor.
Attendance policy	Students with four unexcused absences are subject to being dropped from the course with a grade of F.
Cell phone use	Cell **phones and earbuds need to be put away during the class session** (e.g., in a pocket, purse, or backpack). If you receive a call or text to which you need to respond, please leave the room to do so. If you are using an e-text, please access the e-text on the class computer. **Earbuds are not allowed in class** unless you have obtained permitted use through Disability Services and provided the instructor the necessary documentation.
Professionalism	Members of this class are expected to treat one another with courtesy, professionalism, and respect. Repeated unprofessional, rude, or inappropriate behavior can result in 50-100 points being deducted from a student's final grade for the course per instance of such behavior.
Tutoring & Academic Support Programs	MSU TASP provides on-campus and distance education tutoring options.

Research & creative opportunities at MSU	Enhancing Undergraduate Research Endeavors and Creative Activities (EURECA) is a program that provides opportunities for undergraduate students to engage in high-quality research and creative activities with faculty. EURECA provides incentives and funding through a system that supports faculty and students in a cooperative research process. For more information, contact the Office of Undergraduate Research, (940) 397-6274 or eureca@msutexas.edu. Information and resources are available on the EURECA website.
Students with Disabilities	The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 940-397-4140.
Writing Proficiency Requirement	All students seeking a Bachelor's degree from Midwestern State University must satisfy a writing proficiency requirement once they have 1) completed 6 hours of Communication Core and 2) earned 60 hours. Students may meet this requirement by passing the Writing Proficiency Exam, passing two Writing Intensive courses, or passing English 2113. If you have any questions about the exam, visit the Writing Proficiency Office website or call 397-4131.

See Assignment Schedule on the next page.

Assignment Schedule

Readings in online text books: *Technical Communication* (TC). *Open Technical Communication* (OTC)

Week	Readings and Assignments
Week One Mon. Aug 23	Read: • Course syllabus and schedule (this document) • Team Development and Topic Selection (D2L) • "Who TC Are" and "What Do TC Do" (On the course Menu, click Communications > Discussions) • Introduction to Technical Communication, Chpt 1 OTC Complete**:** • Reading & Discussion Post: "What Do Technical Communicators Do?" Wed. Aug. 25, by 11:30 p.m. • After reading Team Development and Topic selection, contact your teammate by Thursday, Aug. 26.
Week Two Mon. Aug. 30	Read or view: • Citation assignment instructions • MSU Library videos on using online resources (7 short videos) • MSU Library video on using Inter-Library Loan • Research Tools, Chpt 4.4, TW • Search Strategies, Chpt 4.5, TW • Evaluate Sources, Chpt 4.6, TW • Citations: Chpt 5.1, TW Complete: • Team Related Discussion Post: Understanding the team project, Wed. Sept. 1, by 11:30 p.m. • Citation Assignment, Sun. Sept. 5, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Three Mon. Sept. 6 (Labor Day)	Read for assignments due next week: • Team Project Proposal assignment instructions • Team Peer Review assignment description • Strategies for Peer-Reviewing and Team Writing: Chpt 5.10 in OTC • Collaborative Writing, Chpt 7 OTC • Plagiarism: Chpt 5.2 in TW Complete: • In the team Google shared folder, one team member should create and share a document for the team proposal and both members should begin to draft the document.

Week	Readings and Assignments
Week Four Mon. Sept. 13	Read: • Review Team Project Proposal instructions. • Basic Design and Readability in Publications, CRAP design principles Chpt 11-11.4 in TW Complete: • Team Project Proposal, Sunday Sept 19, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Five Mon. Sept 20	Read for assignments due next week: • Individual Research Report (IRR) assignment description • Team IRR Peer Review assignment description (Team Related Discussion Post) • Strategies for Peer-Reviewing and Team Writing: Chpt 5.10 in OTC
Week Six Mon. Sept 27	Read: • Creating and Integrating Graphics, Chpt 8 (8.1-8.5) in TW Complete: • Attach complete first draft of your Individual Research Report to Team-Related Discussion Post: Peer Review by Mon. Sept. 27, by 11:30 p.m. • Review team member's IRR draft and complete the Team Peer Review Discussion Post, by Fri. Oct. 1, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Seven Mon. Oct. 4	Read for assignment due next week: • Employment Materials Chpt 12-12.5 in TW • Résumé, Ad, Cover Letter assignment description Complete: • Individual Research Report (final draft) upload to the dropbox, Sun., Oct. 10, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Eight Mon. Oct. 11	Read: • Strategies for Peer-Reviewing and Team Writing, in OTC • Plagiarism: Chpt 5.2 in TW • Collaborative Writing, Chpt 7 OTC Complete: • Schedule a team Zoom meeting with Professor for next week. • Résumé /Cover Letter assignment, Sunday Oct. 17, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Nine Mon. Oct. 18	Read: • Final team report instructions (D2L) Complete: • Attend: Team Zoom meeting with Professor • Discussion post: Managing Team Conflict, due Sunday, Oct. 24, by 11:30 p.m.

Week	Readings and Assignments
Week Ten Mon. Oct. 25	Read for assignments due next week: • Instructions/procedures critique • Ethics in Technical Writing Chpt. 9 TW Complete: • Reading & Discussion Post: Cruel Pies: Ethics, Sun. Oct. 31, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Eleven Mon. Nov. 1	Read: • Writing Instructions, OTC • Common Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation Problems , OTC • Common Spelling Problems, OTC Complete: • Instructions/Procedures Critique, Sun. Nov. 7, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Twelve Mon. Nov. 8	Read: • Federal plain language guidelines • Technical Editing: Chpt 8 in OTC
Week Thirteen Mon. Nov. 15	Read: • Oral Presentations, OTC Complete: • Team Report draft, upload to team Google folder for team review, Wed. Nov 17, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Fourteen Mon. Nov. 22 (Thanksgiving week)	Read: • Team Slide Presentation instructions. Complete: • Final Team Report, upload to dropbox, Tuesday. Nov. 23, by 11:30
Week Fifteen Mon. Nov. 29	Complete: • Team Slide Show due by Sunday, Dec. 5, by 11:30 p.m.
Mon. Dec. 6	Finals week (Finals begin on Saturday, Dec. 4) Complete: • Team member evaluation (under Assessments > Surveys), Tues. Dec. 7 by 11:30 p.m. • Share link with instructor to Google team folder, Project Management Site, Tues. Dec. 7 by 11:30 p.m.