

# Technical Writing

ENGL 3203-202 (MW 2:00) Spring 2020

## Syllabus

Instructor	Dr. Sally Henschel Office: Bea Wood 211 940.397.4731 sally.henschel@msutexas.edu
Office hours	Tues. and Thur. 11:00 - noon Wed. 9:00 - noon Other hours by appointment
Prerequisites	Communication core
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	<i>Technical Communication:</i> <a href="https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/technicalwriting/">https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/technicalwriting/</a>  <i>Open-Technical Communication:</i> <a href="https://softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/PySpCEBQodADFZ/html">https://softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/PySpCEBQodADFZ/html</a>
Course outcomes	Upon completion of this course, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– 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.</li><li>– Create technical documents that solve problems and improve situations through communication. Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.</li><li>– 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.</li><li>– Write effective, meaningful technical prose. Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.</li><li>– Apply concepts of information design to create convincing, usable, and informative documents. Measurement: Successful completion of individual assignments and collaborative projects.</li></ul>

- 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:**

- Resume 5
- Cover/application letter 5
- Policies & procedures 10
- Progress report 10
- Reading posts (4) 20
- Editing quizzes (10) 10

**Team assignments:**

- Project pitch 2.5
- Proposal 10
- Recommendation/  
Feasibility report 15
- PM site w/style guide 2.5
- Final presentation 5

**Team member evaluation** 5

**Total points:** 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

After 5 absences, a student is subject to being dropped from the course with a grade of "F."

Two tardies are counted as one absence. A "tardy" is when one arrives late to class or leaves early (i.e., 5-14 minutes)

Arriving 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes before class ends counts as an absence.

## Academic dishonesty

All students are expected to adhere to the Midwestern State University Student Honor Creed when completing any work for this course. When using the content or ideas of others, both published and unpublished sources, students must use accepted documentation conventions (e.g., APA or MLA). See the *MSU Student Handbook* (attached to course website) to read the Student Honor Creed and the university's policy on academic dishonesty.

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.
Cell phone use	<b>Cell phones and earbuds need to be put away during the class session</b> (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. <b>Earbuds are not allowed in class</b> unless you have obtained permitted use through Disability Services and provided the instructor the necessary documentation.
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 <a href="mailto:eureca@msutexas.edu">eureca@msutexas.edu</a> . Information and resources are available on the <a href="#">EURECA website</a> .
Americans with Disabilities Act	<p>Midwestern State University is committed to providing equal access for qualified students with disabilities to all university courses and programs, and by law, all students with disabilities are guaranteed a learning environment that provides reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. This guarantee is provided through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA reads: "No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subject to discrimination by any such entity."</p> <p>To obtain disability support services, students must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- be accepted for admission to Midwestern State University,</li> <li>- complete a request for services form available through the Office of Disability Services, and</li> <li>- provide current documentation from a qualified professional (such as a licensed physician, psychologist, audiologist, etc.) diagnosing the disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.</li> </ul> <p>If the instructor does not have proper notification, she will expect the same performance from each student enrolled in the course.</p> <p>For information see the <a href="#">Disability Services</a> website.</p>

## Assignment Schedule

Mon./Wed.	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Week One Jan. 22	Introduction to Technical Communication Starting Your Career	Reading: Chapters 1, 5 Assign: Read "Who TC Are" and "What Do TC Do"  Discussion Board Post 1 Sunday Jan. 26, by midnight. (Role of TC)
Week Two Jan. 27, 29	Basic Design and Readability in Publications  Profiling Your Readers  Résumés, Cover letters	Discuss Résumé Reading: Purdue OWL <a href="#">Grammar Exercises</a> and <a href="#">Grammar Bytes</a> (For all quizzes)
Week Three Feb. 3, 5	Organizing and Drafting  Designing Documents and Interfaces	Discuss Application Letter/Personal Statement  Due: Resume Feb. 5 printed at end of class  Q1 Subject/verb identification
Week Four Feb. 10, 12	Working in Teams  Writing Descriptions, Specifications, Procedures	Discuss Team development/topic selection  Due: Application Letter/job Feb. 12 printed at end of class  Q2 Phrase, clause, sent. Fragments
Week Five Feb. 17, 19	Writing Instructions and Documentation  Using Plain and Persuasive Style	Discuss team project pitch  *Discussion Board Post 2 Sunday Feb. 16, by midnight (Ethics)  Q3 Comma splice, fused sentences
Week Six Feb. 24, 26	Managing Ethical Challenges	Due: Writing a procedure or instructions (individual), Feb. 26  Q4 Subject/verb agreement
Week Seven Mar. 2, 4	Writing a Proposal	Due: Project pitch (team) March 2 in-class presentation  Q5 Pronoun/Antecedent agreement
Week Eight Mar. 9, 11	Researching in Technical Workplaces  Writing a Progress Report	Discuss Writing a Progress Report (individual)  Due: Project Proposal (team) Mar. 11, printed at end of class.  Q6 Pronoun Case

Mon./Wed.	Topic	Readings and Assignments
Week Nine Mar. 16-20	Spring Break!	
Week Ten Mar. 23, 25	ADA and documentation	*Discussion Board posting 3 (ADA), due Tuesday, March 24 by midnight  Workshop progress report
Monday Mar. 30	Last day to withdraw from a course, 4:00 p.m. Drops after this date = "F"	
Week Eleven Mar. 30, Apr 1	Writing a Formal Report  Creating and Using Graphics	Due: Progress Report (individual), Apr 1, printed at end of class  Q7 Commas
Week Twelve Apr. 6, 8	Team meetings scheduled: no formal classes this week. Each team will meet with instructor in her office.	
Week Thirteen Apr. 13, 15	Using Styles, Creating a TOC  Managing Team Conflict	Q8 Semicolons/colons
Week Fourteen Apr. 20, 22	Revising and Editing for Usability	*Discussion Board posting 4 (Team Conflict), due Sunday Apr. 19 by midnight  Q9 Parallelism
Week Fifteen Apr. 27, 29	Preparing and Giving Presentations [April 30: Attend Celebration of Scholarship 9-5]	Q10 Apostrophes  Due: Recommendation Report (team), April 29, uploaded and printed at end of class.
Week Sixteen May 4, 6	Presentation Workshop	Due: Team PM site w/style guide (team), May 6, in class.
Finals Week	Wed. May 13, 5:45 – 7:45 pm	Upload final presentation, Sunday May 10 by 5:00 pm  Due: Final team presentation  Due: Team Evaluations