Technical Writing

ENGL 3203-X20 and X21 Spring 2021

Syllabus

Instructor	Dr. Sally Henschel Office: Bea Wood 211 940.397.4731 sally.henschel@msutexas.edu
Office hours	Tues. noon – 3:00 p.m., Thur. noon – 2:00 p.m. 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	*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:**	
	• Resume	5
	• Cover/application letter	5
	• Policies & procedures	10
	• Research progress rpt	10
	• Reading posts (4)	20
	• Editing quizzes (10)	10
	Team assignments:	
	• Project pitch	2.5
	• Proposal	10
	• Final 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.

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.

All work submitted to D2L will be scanned by the Turnitin program which flags text that is quoted from a source. If this quoted text is not placed in quotation marks and the correct source cited, you will receive a grade of zero for that assignment. If this occurs twice in the course, you will receive a grade of "F" for the course. There are no exceptions to this rule.

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 and Academic Support Programs (TASP)	TASP provides free drop-in tutoring for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, TASP's Learning Center provides tutoring support in a number of core courses and subject areas. Writing tutors are available Monday through Thursday from 11:00am to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Remember that you don't need an appointment to utilize these services. For Distance Education students, TASP has partnered with Thinkingstorm, an online tutoring company that provides you with high-quality, 24/7 tutoring support. At the top of your D2L course page, select the tutoring tab to book an appointment with a tutor.
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.

Assignment Schedule

Readings for online text books: *Technical Communication* (TC). *Open Technical Communication* (OTC)
Collaborative/Team assignments are tagged with (C)

Week	Readings and Assignments
Week One Sunday, Jan 10	Read: • Introduction to Technical Communication, Chpt 1 OTC • "Who TC Are" and "What Do TC Do" (Posted to Discussion Board: on the course Menu, click Communications > Discussions) Due**: Discussion Board Post 1,** (Role of TC) Sunday Jan 17, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Two Sunday, Jan 17	Read: • Employment Materials Chpt TC 12-12.5 in TC • Résumé and Cover Letter Assignment descriptions in D2L • Review exercises linked in D2L for this week's editing quiz. Due: • **Quiz 1.** Subject/Verb Identification. (Quiz will open on Monday, Jan 18 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Jan 24, at 11:30 p.m.)
Week Three Sunday, Jan 24	Read: • Basic Design and Readability in Publications, CRAP design principles Chpt 11-11.4 in TC Due: • Resume Thursday, Jan 28 by 11:30 p.m. • **Quiz 2.** Phrases/Clauses/Fragments. (Quiz will open on Monday, Jan 25 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Jan 31, at 11:30 p.m.)
Week Four Sunday, Jan 31	Read: • Research Tools, Chpt 4.4 in TC • Search Strategies, Chpt 4.5 TC • Evaluate Sources, Chpt 4.6 in TC • Review Team development/topic selection information in D2L Due: • **Job/Internship Ad and Cover Letter,** Thursday Feb. 4, by 11:30 p.m. • **Quiz 3.** Comma Splices and Fused Sentences. (Quiz will open on Monday, Feb 1 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Feb 7, at 11:30 p.m.)

Week	Readings and Assignments
Week Five Sunday, Feb 7	Read: • Collaborative Writing, Chpt 7 OTC • Federal plain language guidelines • Team project pitch assignment description in D2L • Writing procedures assignment description in D2L Due: • Team formation and Google PM Site • **Discussion Board Post 2** (Ethics), Sunday, Feb 14 by 11:30 p.m. • **Quiz 4.** Subject/Verb Agreement (Quiz will open on Monday, Feb 8, at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Feb 14 at 11:30 p.m.)
Week Six Sunday, Feb 14	Due: • **Writing procedures,** Thursday, Feb 18, by 11:30 p.m. • **Quiz 5.** Pronoun-antecedent Agreement. (Quiz will open on Monday, Feb 15 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Feb 21, at 11:30 p.m.)
Week Seven Sunday, Feb 21	Read: Project Proposal Assignment Description in D2L Due: • **Project pitch (C)** Zoom presentation to Dr. Henschel: to be scheduled for week of Feb. 21. Upload by Sunday, Feb 21, 11:30 p.m. • **Quiz 6. Pronoun Case**. (Quiz will open on Monday, Feb 22 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Feb 28, at 11:30 p.m.)
Week Eight Sunday, Feb 28	Read: • Citations: Chpt 5.1 Citations in TC • Plagiarism: Chpt 5.2 in TC Due: • **Project Proposal (C)** Thursday, Mar 4 by 11:30 p.m. • **Quiz 7. Commas** (Quiz will open on Monday, Mar 1, at 5:00 a.m. and close on Sunday, Mar 7, at 11:30 p.m.)
Week Nine Sunday, Mar 7	Read: • Strategies for Peer-Reviewing and Team Writing: Chpt 5.10 in OTC • Technical Editing: Chpt 8 in OTC Attend: • **Online workshop**: Preparing Effective Oral and Poster Presentations (Date to be announced) • **Quiz 8**. Semicolons and colons. (Quiz will open on Monday, Mar 8, at 5:00 a.m. and close on Sunday, Mar 14, at 11:30 p.m.)
Week Ten Sunday, Mar 14	Due: • **Progress Report,** uploaded to dropbox by Thursday Mar 18, by 11:30 p.m. • **Quiz 9. Parallelism** (Quiz will open on Monday Mar 15, at 5:00 a.m. and close on Sunday, Mar 21 at 11:30 p.m.)

Week	Readings and Assignments
Week Eleven Sunday, Mar 21	Read: Creating and Integrating Graphics, Chpt 8 (8.1-8.5) in TC Due: • **Discussion Board Post 3** (Managing Team Conflict), due Sunday Mar 28, by 11:30 p.m. • **Quiz 10. Apostrophes**. Quiz will open Monday Mar 22, at 5:00 a.m. and close on Sunday, Mar 28 at 11:30 p.**m.**
Week Twelve Sunday, Mar 28	Team Zoom meetings will be scheduled this week. Discuss: • Team members' Individual Progress Rpts • Style Guide • Team Google PM site
Week Thirteen Sunday, Apr 4	Attend: Online Celebration of Scholarship (April 7-9). The forum will be a virtual symposium hosted on ForagerOne.com. The links will be posted here once they are set. Open to the MSU Texas community. Due: **Discussion Board Post 4** (Reflection on Celebration of Scholarship), due Sunday, Apr 11, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Fourteen Sunday, Apr 11	Read: • Slides and Powerpoint Presentations, Chpt 11.5 TC
Week Fifteen Sunday, Apr 18	Due: • **Upload final presentations** (C), Sunday April 18 by 11:30 p.m. • Team evaluation survey opens on Apr 18 • Zoom presentation of team projects to be scheduled this week.
Fri. April 23	Last day to withdraw from a course, 4:00 p.m. Drops after this date = "F"
Week Sixteen Sunday, Apr 25 Finals Week	Due: Sunday Apr 25, by 11:30 p.m. • **Recommendation Report** (C), • **Team Google PM site w/style guide** (C) • **Team Evaluation** (survey format)