

# ENGL 3203: Technical Writing

Spring 2022 | Midwestern State University | Dr. Coenen

Day	Time	Location
MW	2-3:20 PM	BW 117

## Contact

**Professor:** Dr. Hillary Coenen (HC) | **Phone:** 940.397.4058  
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**Office Hours:** M: Noon-1:50pm, W: 9-9:50am  
TR: 10-11:50am, & by appointment  
**Email** is the best way to contact me.

## Course Materials

### Required Text:

- *Technical Writing* (free:  
<https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/technicalwriting/>)
- *Open-Technical Communication* (free:  
<https://softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/PySpCEBQodADFZ/html>)

### Other Resources:

- Access to D2L/Brightspace to receive messages and news and submit assignments
- A Gmail account (like MSUTexas account) to collaborate & access digital materials
- Regular computer and internet access
- Microsoft Office or Google Suite (Pages & Word Perfect will not work). You may use the free Microsoft Online through MSU Portal.

## Course Goals

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze communication contexts rhetorically by understanding subject, readers (audiences), and purpose.
- Create technical documents that solve problems and improve situations through communication.
- Analyze and apply the ethical responsibilities involved in technical communication.
- Write effective, meaningful technical prose.
- Apply concepts of information design to create convincing, usable, and informative documents.
- Communicate effectively with a diverse audience.

Additional information about course objectives can be found on the department webpage, <http://libarts.mwsu.edu/english/>.

## 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).

"You cannot afford to think of being here to receive an education: you will do much better to think of being here to claim one. One of the dictionary definitions of the verb 'to claim' is: to take as the rightful owner; to assert in the face of possible contradiction. 'To receive' is to come into possession of: to act as receptacle or container for; to accept as authoritative or true. The difference is that between acting and being acted-upon."

--Adrienne Rich

## Grades

<i>Individual Tasks</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Due</i>	<i>Grade Scheme</i>	
Citation assignment	5	1/21	<b>Letter</b>	<b>Total/100</b>
Individual research report (IRR)	20	2/25	A	89.5-100
Résumé, cover letter (RCL)	10	3/4	B	79.5-89.4
Instructions/procedures critique (IP)	5	4/1	C	69.5-79.4
Labor Log	20	5/2	D	59.5-69.4
			F	0-59.4
<i>Team Tasks</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Due</i>	<i>Submission Format and Policy</i>	
Proposal	10	2/11	Formal assignments must be typed and formatted with sources documented in APA style. Minor tasks may be submitted in class. All major tasks must be uploaded into the D2L Dropbox folder. <i>Note:</i> You may not submit a paper for a grade in this class that already has been (or will be) submitted for a grade in another course, unless you obtain the explicit written permission of me and the other instructor involved in advance.	
Final team report	10	4/20		
Slide presentation	10	4/25		
Shared Google folder	5	4/27		
Team member evaluation	5	4/29		
Total	X/100			

### *On Language Assessment*

You may expect to learn “proper grammar” in this class, but linguists argue that every language and dialect has a distinctive grammar and that no one grammar is inherently better or more correct. American universities rely on “Standard (American) Academic English” (SAE) to determine “college readiness,” but this [“standard” is a false one rooted in intentional gatekeeping and discrimination](#) based on race, class, and citizenship status. In this class, your professor will assume that SAE is a false and flawed standard. Your language practices are relevant. You will not be chastised for using grammars other than SAE in discussion. We will discuss clarity, conciseness, and common language expectations in various professional environments, and you will be given feedback based on those expectations; these goals are more practical and more inclusive than striving for an arbitrary and false notion of correctness. Grammar police be warned. (See also [CCCC’s 2020 Demand for Black Linguistic Justice.](#))

### *Late Assignments*

Late assignments, or work not submitted to the proper dropbox by the designated due date and time, will not be accepted unless negotiated with HC in writing prior to the due date in writing. If you have difficulty submitting, email me with your work attached.

### *Assessment and Revision*

I will provide written or oral feedback on drafts prior to submission as needed, and I will inquire about your writing progress regularly. You may revise and resubmit any coursework within 2 weeks of receiving a grade and prior to finals week for additional feedback. Grade revisions will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis and should establish expectations in a revision plan.

## Course Practices & Policies

### *Attendance Policy*

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It is important that you attend class and be on time, whether in person or via D2L/Zoom. If you have a total of more than two (2) weeks' worth (TR: 4 class sessions) of absences excused or not, it will be difficult for you to excel in the class. Students who miss class will not be directly penalized, but they will miss opportunities to earn points for in class activities. These activities may be made up if you make arrangements with me to do so in a timely manner. If you need to miss multiple sessions for personal/health reasons, alert the Dean of Students office and provide them with the necessary information so that they can verify the situation for me and your other instructors.

Notify me via email in advance if you will not be able to make class or will join on Zoom. Consider it your responsibility to be present (physically or virtually) and prepared for class in order to succeed and maximize your learning.

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### *Accessibility & Technology*

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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.

I want to ensure that this course is accessible to all students. If you have problems accessing campus sites or learning materials (physical or digital), talk with me about how we might improve that. I may refer to uses of technology that are not covered during class, but I will provide one-on-one or workshop-based support for students who are unfamiliar with said platforms.

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### *Writing Center & Tutoring*

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[Tutoring and Academic Support Programs \(TASP\)](#) provides free drop-in tutoring for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, Writing tutors are available Monday through Thursday from 11:00am to 6:00pm and Sunday 2:00pm to 9:00pm. You don't need an appointment to use these services. Writing tutors will not edit your papers for you, but they provide support and feedback at all stages of writing, from brainstorming to drafting, revising to proofreading.

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### *Academic Dishonesty*

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Plagiarism is the use of someone else's thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument in your own work without appropriate documentation (a parenthetical citation at the end and a listing on the Works Cited page)—whether you use that material in a quote, paraphrase, or summary. At the very least, plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment; at worst, the consequence will be an F in the course. Offenders will be reported to the Chair of the Department of English, Humanities, and Philosophy and/or the Director of Student Conduct.

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### *Contacting Me*

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Email is the best way to contact me. In the body of your email, indicate your course and section number. Please allow at least 24 hours for a response during the week and 48 hours over the weekend.

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### *D2L & Google Drive*

We will use D2L to access most course materials including the syllabus, timeline updates, assignment sheets, PowerPoints, your grades and writing feedback, and others. You will also submit formal assignments and find announcements on D2L, so please check it daily, especially before our class meets. Google Drive will also be used as a collaborative space and to store info.

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### *Campus Carry Statement*

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to MSU Texas's Campus Carry page (<https://msutexas.edu/campus-carry/>).

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### *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.

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## **Course Community**

### *Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility*

Because we have diverse bodies, experiences, and needs, and because language helps shape our world, as a community, we must reject language and behaviors that denigrate others based on aspects of identity. In this inclusive learning space, hate speech and any form of harassment, discrimination, or violence will have serious consequences and won't be tolerated.

As a professor, my commitment to equity, inclusion, and accessibility on this campus begins with acknowledging the ways that our institutions (academic and otherwise) have excluded, neglected, and marginalized community members based on race, religion, gender expression, sexual orientation, immigration status, national origin, language, ethnicity, sex, ability status, socioeconomic status, age, body type, and other aspects of identity, and continues with seeking to understand and resist those failures. To create a safer, more just community, we should educate ourselves about systems of oppression and marginalization, foster learning about those topics, develop practices that respond to the needs of historically marginalized communities and individuals, and hold communities accountable for becoming more equitable.

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### *Learning with Generosity*

This course encourages the discussion and consideration of topics that may be uncomfortable. We can work through discomfort, and this class should be a brave space for learning and exploration. I will provide content warnings as needed; if you have a need for warnings before particular kinds of content, please let me know.

We will demonstrate respect and consideration of perspectives that differ from our own. Realize that there is a lot we don't know about each other, and our choice of words in discussing social, political, and economic issues matters a great deal. As a group, we should acknowledge that, while ignorance is not an excuse for cruelty or dismissiveness, we all make mistakes as we learn, so we should be willing to forgive & learn from these situations.

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### *Courtesy and Hospitality*

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The college classroom should be a vibrant environment that fosters creativity, discussion, and intellectual growth. You have the freedom to create the kind of intellectual community you desire. Included here are behaviors that I believe will help foster a generative community:

- *Pay attention.* This means when HC or classmates are addressing the class you are attentive to the speaker and NOT (1) talking, (2) using electronic devices for unrelated tasks, or (3) sleeping. If emergencies or mitigating circumstances mean that you may need to do one of these things, please be considerate by quietly excusing yourself.
  - *Be respectful.* You are expected to be respectful to your instructor, your classmates, and yourself. If you witness behavior that is less than respectful, you are welcome to hold the community accountable by calling us in.
  - *Be prepared & responsible.* Know what is happening in class by checking the schedule and your emails. Bring materials and assignments to class when needed. Submit work on time, and communicate with me in mitigating circumstances.
  - *Participate.* Since you are working to become an expert in your field, the class and our scholarly community stand to benefit and learn from your contributions. Practice now by sharing what you know and are learning when it is relevant.
  - *Communicate.* Come by or call me during office hours if you have issues with course material or want feedback on your writing. You can also email me.
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### ***Labor Log***

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This class works better, is more fun, and generates more learning when everyone participates. The Labor Log allows you to track and earn credit for your effort & participation. Record all daily work related to the class in your log with the type & number, date, time spent, and a brief description. Word & Google Docs versions of the template are on D2L. See the main types below:

<b>Type (Abr.)</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Pts/</b>	<b>Description</b>
Meaningful Contribution (MC)	10	.5	MCs represent the everyday ways that you engage in class work, and they can take many forms: comments or questions in class or via email, relevant chat on GroupMe, excellent group work, volunteer to read aloud or report group work, activities on D2L, and others. If you're not sure if it counts, just ask!
Homework & Tasks (HT)	10	1	HTs will be indicated when they are assigned and may include homework, reflection, work on major writing assignments (including planning, drafting, revision, and editing), and other activities as announced. There will many opportunities to complete homework or tasks, and you should strive to do all of them. About one per week will keep you on track.
Writing Collab (WC)	2	2.5	WCs include peer review & meetings with HC or TASP about your writing. These sessions should be recorded in your log and documented well in your own notes. Peer review notes should summarize the 2 or 3 main suggestions for revision that you gave your partner, which should also be provided to your peer. You can meet with me during designated conference times or office hours, or use the writing center and document your visit (w/ writing & photos).

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## Class Schedule Spring 2022

This version of the schedule is a projection. Some items will change throughout the semester, and they will be updated on [this Google Doc version of the schedule](#). Changes will also be discussed in class and posted to D2L. D2L also houses PDFs of readings and details for tasks and assignments not listed here.

**TW** = [Technical Writing](#) (online textbook)

**LL** = Labor Log entry (Add a description of this work to your Labor Log described above)

**OTC** = [Open-Technical Communication](#) (online textbook)

**SGF** = Shared Google Folder (Google Drive space where teams collaborate & share in-progress work with HC)

Wk	Dates	Complete Before Class	In Class & Due
1	M Jan. 10	<a href="#">Complete Survey, Join GroupMe</a>	Introductions, Syllabus & Policies
	W Jan. 12	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course syllabus and schedule</li> <li>Team Development &amp; Topic Selection (D2L)</li> <li>"Who TC Are" and "What Do TC Do" (DB)</li> </ul>	Syllabus & Labor Log Q & A <b>Discuss:</b> Technical Writing; Citation assignment <b>Complete:</b> <b>LL:</b> Reflect on readings by 1/12 @11PM <b>Contact</b> Teammate by F 1/14 @5PM
2	M Jan. 17	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday	
	W Jan. 19	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">TW Ch 4.4: Research Tools</a></li> <li><a href="#">TW 4.5: Search Strategies</a></li> <li><a href="#">TW 4.6: Evaluate Sources</a></li> <li><a href="#">TW 5.1: Citations</a></li> </ul>	<b>Discuss:</b> Citation assignment & research strategies <b>Complete:</b> Citation Assignment by F 1/21 @5PM
3	M Jan. 24	<b>Read or view:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">MSU Library videos on using online resources</a> (7 short videos)</li> <li><a href="#">MSU Library video on using Inter-Library Loan</a></li> <li><a href="#">Collaborative Writing, Chpt 7 OTC</a></li> </ul>	<b>Introduce:</b> Team Project Proposal & Team Peer Review <b>Discuss:</b> Collaboration, project management <b>Complete:</b> <b>LL:</b> Understanding the team project reflection by M 1/24 @11PM
	W Jan. 26	<b>Read:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">OTC 5.10: Strategies for Peer-Reviewing and Team Writing</a></li> <li><a href="#">TW 5.2: Plagiarism</a></li> </ul>	<b>Discuss:</b> Peer review & ethical writing <b>Complete:</b> <b>SGF:</b> one team member should create and share a document for TPP; both members draft the document.
4	M Jan. 31	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">TW 11-11.4: Basic Design and Readability in Publications, CRAP design principles</a>	<b>Discuss:</b> Team Project Proposal (TPP) & Shared Google folder (SGF) evaluation
	W Feb. 2	<b>Write:</b> TPP	<b>Workshop:</b> TPP
5	M Feb. 7	<b>Write:</b> TPP	<b>Discuss:</b> Individual Research Report (IRR) & Team IRR Peer Review <b>Workshop:</b> TPP
	W Feb. 9	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">TW 8.1-8.5: Creating and Integrating Graphics</a>	<b>Submit TPP</b> by F 2/11 @ 11PM (D2L)
6	M Feb. 14	<b>Read:</b> Individual Research Report (IRR) & Team IRR Peer Review Assignments	

	W Feb. 16	<b>Write:</b> IRR	<b>Complete:</b> Share IRR draft by W 2/16 @ 2PM (SGF) Complete peer reviews by F 2/18 @ 11PM (SGF)
7	M Feb. 21	<b>Revise:</b> IRR	<b>Discuss:</b> Résumé/Cover Letter (RCL)
	W Feb. 23	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">TW 12-12.5: Employment Materials</a>	<b>Submit IRR</b> by F 2/25 @ 11PM (D2L)
8	M Feb. 28	<b>Write:</b> RCL	<b>Complete:</b> Schedule a conference w/ HC Workshop RCL
	W Mar. 2	<b>Write:</b> RCL	<b>Discuss:</b> Final Team Report (TR) <b>Submit RCL</b> by F 3/4 @ 11PM (D2L)
9	M Mar. 7	<b>Write:</b> TR	Team Conferences w/ HC
	W Mar. 9	<b>Write:</b> TR	<b>LL:</b> Managing Team Conflict by W 3/9 @5PM
<b>Stay Safe on Spring Break!</b>			
10	M Mar. 21	<b>Read:</b> TW 9: <a href="#">Ethics in Technical Writing</a>	<b>Discuss:</b> Instructions/procedures critique (IP) <a href="#">Update Labor Log</a>
	W Mar. 23	<b>Write:</b> IP	Workshop IP <b>LL:</b> Cruel Pies: Ethics by W 3/23 @5PM
11	M Mar. 28	<b>Read:</b> OTC: <a href="#">Writing Instructions</a>	
	W Mar. 30	<b>Read:</b> OTC: <a href="#">Common Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation Problems</a> & <a href="#">Common Spelling Problems</a>	<b>Submit IP</b> by F 4/1 @ 11PM (D2L)
12	M Apr. 4	<b>Read:</b> OTC 8: <a href="#">Technical Editing</a>	<a href="#">Update Labor Log</a>
	W Apr. 6	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">Federal plain language guidelines</a>	Mini-conferences
	4/7-4/8	<b>Holiday Break</b>	
13	M Apr. 11	<b>Read:</b> <a href="#">OTC: Oral Presentations</a>	
	W Apr. 13	<b>Draft:</b> TR	<b>Share TR for team review</b> by 4/13 @11PM (SGF)
14	M Apr. 18	<b>Edit &amp; Polish:</b> TR	<b>Discuss:</b> Team Slide Presentation (SP), Team member evaluations (TME), & SGF submission
	W Apr. 20	<b>Draft:</b> SP	<b>Submit TR</b> by W 4/20 @ 5PM (D2L)
15	M Apr. 25	<b>Edit &amp; Polish:</b> SP	<b>Submit SP 4</b> by 4/25 @1:00PM (D2L) Presentations
	W Apr. 27	<b>Edit &amp; Polish:</b> SGF, TME, LL	Presentations (cont'd if needed) <b>Submit SGF</b> by W 4/27 @ 5PM (D2L) <b>Submit TME</b> by F 4/29 @ 5PM (D2L)
Final	Wednesday, May 4 @ 5:45PM		