MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

ENGL 3203-X10, X11: Technical Writing

Fall 2024

Syllabus & Schedule

Contact Information
Instructor: Dr. Sally Henschel
Office: PY 211 and PY 214
Office hours: We can visit in person, by phone, or in Zoom (Central Time)

> Mon.   9:00 – 11:00 a.m. (PY 214)
> Wed.   noon – 1:00 p.m. (PY 214)
> Fri.   9:00 – 11:00 a.m. (PY 214)
> Other times by appointment

E-mail: sally.henschel@msutexas.edu

Important Dates
- Academic Calendar
- For Fall long semester courses, last day to drop with a grade of "W": **Monday, Nov. 25, 2024** before 4:00 pm (See: Drops, Withdrawals & Void)

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, instructions, proposals, reports, and presentations). **Prerequisite:** Communication core completed

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies
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.

Textbooks and Technology

Textbooks and Resources
- *Technical Writing* (free, online)
- *Open-Technical Communication* (free, online)
- *MLA Handbook*, ninth edition: free access MSU library, in the A-Z database
- MSU Student Handbook
- MSU Mustangs Survival Guide
- Other readings and resources will be made available in D2L.

Required Technology
- A computer or laptop with access to both the internet and a webcam (for team and instructor Zoom meetings).
- Extensive use of the MSU Desire-to-Learn (D2L) course management system is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. D2L resources:
  - Login to D2L from the MSU homepage: On the homepage menu, click **Login**, and choose either **myMSUTexas** or **D2L**.
  - D2L Login Instructions (See bottom of the page for steps to follow if you have trouble logging in.)
  - Student D2L Aids: helpful tips and how-to guides.

Assignments/Grading

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Individual Assignments	
Discussion posts (2)	10
Citation assignment	10
Individual Research Report	20
DP Peer Review & Zoom Meeting	5
Résumé, Ad, and Letter	10
Instructions	10
	(65%)
Team (Collaborative) Assignments	
Proposal	10
Final Team Report	10
Team Slideshow	10
Project Mgmt. site (Google folder)	2.5
Team member evaluation	2.5
	(35%)
Total Possible Points	**100**

Table 2: Total points for final grade

Grade	Points
A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79
D	60 – 69
F	< 60

Collaborative Team Assignments

Collaborating with a team member on the team assignments is **a requirement** (i.e., you cannot complete these assignments on your own nor receive a grade for an assignment for which you did not contribute). Should your teammate not contribute or withdraw from the course, you will be re-assigned to a different team. (The final team assignments often are some of the highest grades received in the course.)

University and Course Policies and Procedures

Professionalism

Members of this class are expected to treat one another with courtesy, professionalism, and respect.

Instructor Response Policy

I will respond to emails within 24 hours on weekdays, and within 48 hours on weekends and holidays. I typically grade and return assignments within one week following the due date.

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.

University Academic Dishonesty Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty is defined as "Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given)." Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Student Handbook, under Academic Dishonesty Procedure or through the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Course Academic Dishonesty Policy Details and Advice

All work submitted to D2L will be scanned by the Turnitin program which flags text that is quoted from a source or generated by AI. If 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. To avoid this from happening, I suggest the following:

- **Ask for help:** First, and importantly, as the instructor of this course, I am available to assist you with any questions you have about the use and citation of sources. Just contact me several days before the assignment is due with a link to the source so that I have adequate time to look over the article and meet with you to discuss your concerns or need for assistance.
- **Provide Instructor access to all sources used in assignments:** All sources cited in an assignment must be available, accessible online for me, the instructor, to review as I grade your assignments. Simply provide a working link (URL) to the **complete article** at the end of each source cited in your Reference or Works Cited list, which should be included at the end of the document. If you cannot link to the article, upload the article to the dropbox for the submission. A link to an abstract or to an online database which has a paywall won't work: I need to be able to read the entire article, just as you did**.**
- **Accurately cite sources**: When using the ideas of other published and/or unpublished sources,

students must use accepted documentation conventions (i.e., MLA or APA). All quoted content must be placed in "quotation marks," and for quoted, paraphrased, and summarized content, the correct source must be cited in the text. Stating, "I meant to put the text in quotation marks but forgot to do so," "I cited the name of the source but forgot the quotation marks," or "I cited the wrong source" are not acceptable explanations for inaccurately citing sources.

- **Don't use AI**: Generally speaking, you are not allowed to use artificial intelligence (AI) engines, software, or artwork generating programs to produce content submitted for grading in this class **unless** the assignment instructions specifically call for the use of AI. I will provide more information about any specific assignment that involves the use of AI when the time is appropriate in the course. You may not, however, construe this limited use as permission to use these technologies in any other facet of this course.
- **Be aware of the penalty**: Please don't allow inaccurate use and citing of sources to negatively impact your grade. Doing so will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. If this happens twice, you will receive a grade of "F" for the course.

University Closure Practices
In the event of university closure because of inclement weather conditions or emergency situations, students will be notified through official campus channels (MSU Alert, MSU Safety app, Postmaster emails, and website headers) and through communication with the local news networks. Students should refer to their course syllabi, course D2L News announcements, and/or their university email for expectations related to assignments due during the closure. For this course, unless a change is posted to the course D2L News, assignments due to be uploaded or posted to D2L during the closure will remain due as scheduled. Students who are unable to complete assignments due during a closure (for example, due to a power outage) will not be penalized, but will be expected to notify the professor of their situation.

Campus Carry Rules/Policies
Information on the University's policy may be found at Campus Carry at MSU Texas.

Grade Appeal Process
Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University MSU Catalog :
Select the current catalog > under the Catalog Search menu, select **Registrar** > **Appeal of Course Grade**

University Opportunities and Services

Research & Creative Opportunities
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.

Services for Students with Disabilities
In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to Disability Support Services.

Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP)
MSU's TASP provides on-campus and distance education students tutoring options

Assignment Schedule

Notice: Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

*Table 3: **Tentative** Readings and Assignments (If these change, students will be given advance notice.)*

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

Week	Readings and Assignments
Week One Mon. Aug. 26	Read: • Course syllabus and schedule (this document) • Introduction to Technical Communication, Chpt 1 OTC • "Who TC Are" and "What Do TC Do" (See Link to the article in D2L)
Week Two Mon. Sept 2 Univ. closed Mon. for Labor Day.	Read: • Instructions assignment description (for assignment due at the end of next week) • "Technical Communication Team Project and Topic Development" assignment description in D2L. Due: • Discussion Post 1: "What is technical communication; how does/can it apply to my career?" by Sunday, Sept. 8, 11:30 pm
Week Three Mon. Sept. 9	Team Assignments will be posted to D2L News during the 3rd week of class. Do: • Identify your assigned teammate is so that you can complete Discussion Post 2, which is due at the end of next week. • Before you contact your teammate, check your own settings within D2L to see if/where you are forwarding your D2L emails so that you know which accounts to check for a reply from your assigned teammate. Read: • Instructions assignment description • Writing Instructions, 2.6 OTC Due: • Instruction assignment, upload to the dropbox by Sun. Sept. 15, 11:30 p.m.
Week Four Mon. Sept. 16	Do: • On Monday, Sept. 16, email me, your professor, if you have not been in contact with your teammate (i.e., you sent them an email but they have not responded). Read: • Citation Assignment instructions (for assignment due next week.) • Citations: Chpt 5.1, TW Review:

Week	Readings and Assignments
	• Research Tools, Chpt 4.4, TW • Search Strategies, Chpt 4.5, TW • Evaluate Sources, Chpt 4.6, TW Due: • Discussion Post 2: Understanding the Team Project, by Sun., Sept. 22, 11:30 p.m.
Week Five Mon. Sept. 23	Read: • Team Project Proposal instructions (due in two weeks) Due: • Citation Assignment, upload to dropbox, by Sun. Sept. 29, 11:30 p.m.

Week Six
Mon. Sept. 30
	Read:
	• Team Project Proposal instructions (due in two weeks)
	• Plagiarism: Chpt 5.2 in TW
	
	Do:
	• Using Google Drive, one teammate needs to create and share the following with their teammate. (Make sure the teammate is given Editor rights):
	   o A Google folder that will serve as the team project management (PM) folder.
	   o A Google document titled Team Proposal within the folder.
	• Contact the teammate to be sure they have accessed the folder and that they can edit and add content to the Team Proposal document.

Week Seven Mon. Oct. 7	Read: • Individual Research Report (IRR) assignment description (due in 2 weeks) • Common Grammar, Usage, and Punctuation Problems , 5.8 OTC • Common Spelling Problems, 5.9 OTC Due: • Team Project Proposal, upload to the dropbox by Sun. Oct. 13, by 11:30 p.m. • From the team Google PM Folder, one team member should download the document as a PDF, and then upload the PDF to the dropbox.
Week Eight Mon. Oct. 14	Due: • Share draft of your Individual Research Report (IRR) with your teammate by Sunday, Oct. 20, by 11:30 p.m.
Week Nine Mon. Oct. 21	Read: • Strategies for Peer-Reviewing and Team Writing: Chpt 5.10 in OTC Due: • Read your team member's IRR draft and then complete Discussion Post 3: Team Peer Review before Thursday, Oct. 24, 11:30 pm
Week Ten Mon. Oct. 28	Due: • Final draft of your Individual Research Reports for grading, upload to the dropbox by Sun., Nov. 3, 11:30 p.m.

Week	Readings and Assignments
Week Eleven Mon. Nov. 4	Schedule a Team Zoom meeting with instructor for next week (Week 12). There will be signup list on D2L NEWS a week prior. Read for upcoming assignments • Résumé/Cover Letter/Ad assignment instructions • <u>Employment Materials</u> Chpt 12-12.5 in TW • Final Team Report assignment instructions (not due until Dec. 1)
Week Twelve Mon. Nov. 11	Attend: Team Zoom Meeting with instructor Before team meeting read: • feedback on your graded IRR • final team report assignment instructions • team slide presentation assignment instructions Due: • Résumé/Cover Letter assignment, by Sun. Nov. 17, 11:30 pm
Week Thirteen Mon. Nov. 18	Read: • <u>Collaborative Writing, Chpt 7 OTC</u> • <u>Technical Editing: Chpt 8 in OTC</u>
Mon. Nov. 25 Last day to Withdraw	Mon. Nov. 25, before 4:00 pm, last day to withdraw from long-semester courses. Drops after this date will receive grades of "F."
Week Fourteen Mon. Nov. 25 Thanksgiving Holiday no classes W-F	Review: • <u>Ethics in Technical Writing</u> Chpt. 9 TW • <u>Federal plain language guidelines</u> Due: • Draft of Team Report saved in team Google folder for team members to proofread and edit, by Mon. Nov. 25, 11:30 p.m. • Final Team Report, upload to the dropbox by Sunday Dec. 1, 11:30 p.m.
Week Fifteen Mon. Dec. 2 Last week of classes	Read: • Team Slides assignment instructions (due next week) Review: • <u>Basic Design and Readability in Publications, CRAP design principles</u> Chpt 11-11.4 in TW • <u>Creating and Integrating Graphics</u>, Chpt 8 (8.1-8.5) in TW
Week Sixteen Mon. Dec 9 Finals Week	We do not have a final exam, but the following assignments are due: Due: • Team Slide Presentation, upload to the dropbox by Mon. Dec. 9, 11:30 p.m. • Team Google PM Folder: one teammate re-share with the instructor an access link to the folder for grading, by Tues. Dec. 10, 11:30 p.m. • Complete the team member evaluation (under Assessments > Surveys), due by Wed. Dec. 11, 11:30 p.m.