

Introduction to Technical and Professional Communication

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Description

The objective of this course is to examine the skills, function, and tools of the field with an emphasis on writing and communication. Career options, academic programs, and the communication process are examined. Assessment is based on assignments, analyses, workshops, presentations, and a final paper.

Books

Joseph Williams. 2009. *Style: the basics of clarity and grace*. New York: Longman. ISBN 978-0-205-60535-4

Policies

Attendance is critical. No more than three absences are allowed. All work is to be typed and stapled. Complete, legible, printed copies of your work are required for all assignments. A USB flash drive is required for bringing assignments to class. All assignments must include your name, name of the course, and name of the assignment. Email submissions are not accepted (except for final paper).

Plagiarism

Plagiarism and any other kind of academic dishonesty may result in failing the course and further disciplinary action by the university. You are responsible for protecting your work from being misrepresented. If you allow your work to be copied and submitted then you are guilty of academic misconduct and may be reprimanded.

ADA

Notify me or contact the disabled student programs office if you have a disability that may encumber your performance.

Assessment

Assessment is based on purpose, reader, information, organization, and style. All assignments are due at 12 noon of the date listed. Late assignments are not accepted.

Revision 10

Proposal 10

References 10

Presentation 20

Paper 30

Participation 20

Schedule

Please note that this schedule serves as a guide and may be modified as a result of course dynamics and aptitude for the material.

Week 1

Syllabus, defining technical and professional communication
Communicating technical and professional information (in-class workshop)
Discuss revision assignment (handout)

Week 2

Classical rhetoric and communication
Technical and professional writing (the basics)
REVISION DUE (9/3 at noon)

Week 3

LAOR DAY (9/7)
Industry, academia, tools (employment opportunities)
Discuss proposal for final paper (handout)

Week 4

Writing at organizations and writing abstracts (discuss paper topics)
Williams 1: Understanding Style (the elusive quality of writing)
Discuss references for final paper (handout)

Week 5

Williams 2: Correctness (real rules, standard English, and folklore)
Williams 5: Cohesion, coherence, and writing references (making it all fit)
PROPOSAL DUE (9/24 at noon)

Week 6

Williams 7: Concision (the art of simplicity)
Williams 6: Emphasis (the art of subtlety)
REFERENCES DUE (10/1 at noon)

Week 7

Williams 8: Shape (rules of thumb for shaping sentences)
Williams 9: Elegance (balance, symmetry, and imperfection)

Week 8

Williams 10: The Ethics of Style (the responsibility of communication)

Week 9

Science writing (quantum computers and the computing universe)
Environmental writing (demystifying the natural world)

Week 10

Technical writing, instructions, and the user experience (simplifying complexity)
Technical illustration and visual design (samples and suggestions)

Week 11

Web style guide (rethinking the problem of screen real estate)
Internationalization (the global dilemma)

Week 12

Summary and recap (employment, education, skills)
Questions/feedback
Discuss presentation for final paper (handout)

Week 13

Presentation tips (design and delivery)
Presentation samples (in-class videos)

Week 14

PRESENTATION DUE (11/24)
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 15

PRESENTATION DUE (all week)

Week 16

PAPER DUE (email 12/10 by noon)