

ENC 2210

Technical Writing – Spring 2025

Instructor: Matt Knudsen (matthewknudsen@ufl.edu)

*We can keep it pretty casual when it comes to correspondence. No need for "Professor", "Mister", "Instructor", or anything like that. You can always just call me **Matt**. Professionalism and politeness are always appreciated but there's no need to stand on formality. "Matt" always works for me!*

Section: 4B50(11973) / 5072(16708)

Office Hours: TBD (REMOTE: TBD, EST)

[ZOOM ID: TBD, PW: GATORS] – OR BY APPOINTMENT

Course Description

ENC 2210 (Technical Writing) is an introduction to technical and professional writing in contemporary workplace environments. This course is a survey of forms and methods of communication used in business, industry, and government, including formal and non-formal reports, letters, resumes, and proposals. Throughout the semester, this course will present you with practical information about—and practice in—communicating within different kinds of professional/technical discourse communities.

As an introductory writing course, **this class is also practice**. We will work toward understanding how to analyze and react to the rhetorical situations each genre and writing situation presents, including issues of audience, organization, visual design, usability, and accessibility. In addition, the course will help you navigate the challenges of setting career goals and determining priorities, as well as develop problem-solving skills that are needed in today's technologically driven workplace. Finally, we will also examine how these forms of technical communication intersect with novel generative-AI technologies and consider what the implications, possibilities, and limitations of these intersections are for technical communicators today.

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Course Objectives and Outcomes

General education designation: composition (C)

Communication courses afford students the ability to communicate effectively, including the ability to write clearly and engage in public speaking. Composition (C) is a sub-designation of Communication at the University of Florida. Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (i.e. grammar, punctuation, usage) and the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing-intensive and fulfill 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement. Course content must include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts. Students are expected to learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.

General Education Objectives

This course confers General Education credit for Composition (C), and also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).

- Composition courses are writing-intensive and provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, etc.), as well as techniques that produce effective texts.
- Course content includes multiple forms of effective writing, different styles, approaches, formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts.
- The University Writing Requirement ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive the Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive **a grade of C or higher** in the course.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

At the end of this course, Students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication, and critical thinking:

- Content: students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories, and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- Communication: students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline.
- Critical Thinking: students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems."

Additional Objectives and Outcomes

If pursued with appropriate energy, effort, and care, you will achieve the following learning outcomes by the end of this course:

- *Practice* technical communication:
 - Identify and work with various genres of technical communication.
 - Recognize the prevalence of technical writing in everyday experience.
 - Practice using common tools of technical writing production with proficiency—including emergent generative-AI technologies.
- *Analyze* technical writing artifacts and practices:
 - Explain rhetorical choices made as a result of both individual and collaborative work.
 - Analyze specific artifacts (including documents “written” by gen-AI) to better understand the rhetorical, social, cultural, and political implications of technical communication.
- *Research* practices that impact effective technical communication:
 - Plan and implement appropriate research practices that impact technical writing tasks.
 - Explore technical writing as a way of thinking, knowing, and being.
- *Produce* professional artifacts:
 - Apply rhetorical and design principles to compose effective deliverables.
 - Apply principles of fair use, copyright and documentation conventions for print, visual, and digital media.
 - Recognize the rhetorical possibilities of different modes and make sound choices in their combination.

Course Materials Needed

All materials are free and will be posted to Canvas. Our primary texts will be the following, both of which are open-access (yay!):

- [*Technical Writing*](#) by Allison Gross; Annemarie Hamlin; Billy Merck; Chris Rubio; Jodi Naas; Megan Savage; and Michele DeSilva
- [*Introduction to Technical and Professional Communication: Technical Communication through a Social Justice Lens*](#) by Brigitte Mussack

Communication and Office Hours

The best way to get a hold of me is via Canvas Messenger. I'll endeavor to reply to any questions or concerns within 24 hours. Likewise, it is absolutely critical that you actively monitor your inbox and our course website for changes or news from me. I'll be holding regular office hours this semester on Wednesday (3PM - 4PM, EST), but I am also flexible to meet outside of this set time, by appointment.

Major Course Assignments and Grade Categories

Your final grade is composed of the following TWELVE major assignments (and three "check-ins") and evaluative categories, all of which will be detailed in the official assignment instructions on Canvas.

Introductory Email (250 words; 25 points)

Due 1/18

- *Compose an email to your instructor that follows formal email etiquette and guidelines, introducing yourself and your goals for this course.*

Letter (250 words; 25 points).

Due 1/25

- Taking the role of a dissatisfied customer, compose a formal letter to a company or business and seek reparation or reimbursement for the unsatisfactory service.

Memo (250 words; 25 points)

Due 2/1

- *Taking the role of an upper-level manager attempting to combat workplace burnout and stress (and better support your employees' mental, physical, and emotional health), write a memo to your employees that details new policies that will increase well-being and satisfaction.*

Resume (300 words; 50 points)

Due 2/8

- *Create both a formatted and unformatted resume that follows the suggested guidelines and recommended content outlined in this week's readings.*

Job Ad Analysis (300 words; 50 points)

Due 2/22

- *Identify a position currently offered in a field that interests you and critically analyze the rhetoric and content in their posted advertisements, identifying ways that you could adjust your resume to suit that position.*

Cover Letter or Statement of Purpose (400 words; 50 points)

Due 3/1

- *Compose a cover-letter that spearheads an application to a prospective employer, stating your interest and highlighting your unique qualifications.*

Gen-AI Technical Description Analysis (500 words; 75 points)

Due 3/8

- *Critically analyze a technical description populated by a generative AI technology to evaluate its effectiveness, accuracy, and potential limitations*

Gen-AI Audience Transformation Rewrite (500 words; 75 points)

Due 3/29

- *Choose a small passage of a scholarly article related to your field of study and have generative-AI rewrite it for a wider, more general readership. Analyze the adapted passage to evaluate its effectiveness, accuracy, and potential limitations.*

UF Website Accessibility Analysis (500 words; 75 points)

Due 4/5

- *Select one specific page found on the University of Florida's overall website and assess its usability and accessibility traits.*

Technical Instructions: Text Document (750 words; 150 points)

Due 4/12

- *Create a document outlining a selected process, skill, or task's textual instructions, demonstrating your understanding of effective document design and use of graphics and formatting for composing technical instructions.*

Technical Instructions: Reflection (500 words; 100 points)

Due 4/19

- *Highlight, explain, or justify the design and structural decisions made for your textual technical instructions, making it clear how the purposeful choices you made in creating your document add to its overall impression and communicative abilities.*

Experiential Learning Assignment (750 words or 3-minute video/podcast; 125 points)

Due 4/26

- *In week 1, you will select a particular technical skill to learn or improve at over the semester. Here, you'll reflect on your progress and experience learning this skill in a semester devoted to the art and craft of technical communication.*

-There will be periodic "check-ins" to track your progress and encourage accountability as you embark on this 15-week-long, protracted project.

Each of the two check-ins will be worth **25 points and comprise 250 words apiece.**

The initial **PROPOSAL** will also be worth **25 points**, no word minimum. **-Due Dates TBD-**

Total words: 6000. Total points: 900.

QUIZZES: There will be five quizzes, each worth 20 points, spread evenly across the semester.

Grading and Evaluation

Earning A's and B's at this level requires strong, consistent effort. An online learning environment, especially an asynchronous one such as this, further necessitates the need for consistency and ongoing engagement. Your assignments will include specific evaluation criteria, and I will provide feedback on your work that illuminates progress, achievement, and areas for revision. In the past, students who have received A's put significant time and effort into this course right from the start and simply kept at it. Be realistic in your expectations about grades; start assignments early, and work steadily to avoid last-minute rushing.

This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) and also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR). To satisfy this requirement, *all* submissions must meet minimum word counts.

Requirements for make-up work, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the [Catalog](#).

A 90-100	The qualities of a B project, <u>plus imagination, originality, and engaging expression</u> . The work exhibits depth of thought, command of language, and a keen eye for communicating through the selected medium.
B 80-90	A sufficient, thorough execution of the assignment's objectives. The work demonstrates coherent organization, ample supporting details, and a clear expression of ideas.

C 70-80	A satisfactory fulfillment of the assignment's objectives, with baseline organization and style. A "C" means your work met the demands of the assignment in a minimally acceptable way.
D 60-70	The presence of a significant defect in context, substance, organization, style, or delivery in a lackluster paper; the project demonstrates an inadequate treatment of the assignment.
F 0-59	Inadequate coverage of essential points; uncertain or misguided purpose; poor organization; ineffective and inconsistent expression; significant defects in standard usage; uncertain or misguided purpose.

Note: you must also pass this course with a "C" or better to satisfy the General Education requirement for Composition and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit. **A grade of "C-" will not confer credit.**

Grading scale

E	D-	D	D+	C-	C
0.0–59.9%	60.0–62.9%	63.0–66.9%	67.0–69.9%	70.0–72.9%	73.0–76.9%
0	0.67	1	1.33	1.67	2

C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A
77.0–79.9%	80.0–82.9%	83.0–86.9%	87.0–89.9%	90.0–92.9%	93.0–100+%
2.33	2.67	3	3.33	3.67	4

See the UF Catalog's "[Grades and Grading Policies](#)" for information on how UF assigns grade points.

Note: A minimum grade of C is required to earn General Education credit.

[More information on the University's grades and grading policies can be found here.](#)

Late Work and Revisions

(WR) and (C) Credit:

- If an assignment does not meet the minimum word count, **the student risks not receiving credit** for the University's Writing Requirement (WR) nor for the General Education credit for Composition (C) for this course.
- At the instructor's discretion, the student may resubmit the assignment to meet the word count within one week of receiving feedback or by the end of the first day of end-of-term exams, whichever comes first. The instructor will provide the due date for the revised submission in their feedback.

Grade Eligibility:

- **Resubmitted assignments are not eligible for full credit.** The maximum grade an assignment can receive is proportional to the percentage of the word count the initial submission met.
- For example, if the minimum word count is 1000 words and the on-time submission is 900 words, the maximum possible grade for the resubmission is 90%. If the assignment earns 85% based on the rubric, the final grade will be 85% of 90%, which is 76.5%.

Late work

Assignments incur a 0.41% penalty for each hour they are late. This is about 10 percent per day.

Students may waive this penalty for one day up to three times during the semester by emailing the instructor before the deadline. Each of the waivers pushes the student's due date back one day. An assignment submitted more than one day late requires more than one waiver. The student's email should inform the instructor 1) how many waivers will be used and 2) which assignment will be adjusted. No reason is necessary.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

University of Florida students are bound by the Honor Pledge. On all work submitted for credit by a student, the following pledge is required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Student Honor Code and Conduct Code (Regulation 4.040) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code, as well as the process for reported allegations and sanctions that may be implemented. All potential violations of the code will be reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. If a student is found responsible for an Honor Code violation in this course, the instructor will enter a Grade Adjustment sanction, which may be up to or including failure of the course. For additional information, see <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

Diversity Affirmation

The University of Florida does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran. Effective learning environments value and support diversity, and free, open discussion is a hallmark of a functioning democratic society.

Disability Affirmation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. [*See the "Get Started With the DRC" webpage on the Disability Resource Center site.*](#) It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed toward any members of the community. For more information, see: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/>.

Grade Appeals

Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount (cblount@ufl.edu), Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 Turlington). **Be advised**, grade appeals may result in a *higher, unchanged, or lower final grade*.

Procedure for Conflict Resolution

Any classroom issues, disagreements, or grade disputes should be discussed first between the instructor and the student. If the problem cannot be resolved, please contact Carla Blount (cblount@ufl.edu, (352) 294-2872). Be prepared to provide documentation of the problem, as well as all graded materials for the semester. Issues that cannot be resolved departmentally will be referred to the University Ombuds Office (<http://www.ombuds.ufl.edu>, 352-392-1308) or the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu>; 352-392-1261).

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals
3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluera.com>

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Physical and Mental Health Resources

For guidance during distressing situations, please contact U Matter We Care or the Dean of Students Office. They can help you navigate resources and academic procedures for personal, medical, and academic issues.

- U Matter We Care: <http://umatter.ufl.edu>, umatter@ufl.edu, (352) 294-2273
- Dean of Students: <https://dso.ufl.edu>, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261
- Counseling Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu>, 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575
- GatorWell: <https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/>, 352-273-4450
- Field and Fork: <https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu>, 564 Newell Drive, (352) 294-3601
- Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu>, (352) 392-1161
- UF UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center:
<https://ufhealth.org/locations/uf-health-shands-emergency-room-trauma-center/>
1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608, 352-733-0111
- University Police Department: <https://police.ufl.edu/>, 352-392-1111
(or 9-1-1 for emergencies)

Academic Resources

- E-learning technical support: [UF Computing Help Desk](#), 352-392-4357, helpdesk@ufl.edu
- Career Connections Center: [Website](#), Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601
- Library Support: [Website](#), 866-281-6309, ask@ufl.libanswers.com
- Teaching Center: [Website](#), 1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010
- Writing Studio: [Website](#), 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138
- Academic Complaints: [Office of the Ombuds](#)
- Enrollment Management Complaints: [Student Complaint Procedure Webpage](#)

Tech Support

Public and private communication regarding online interaction with this course, Canvas in general, or any other technical issues, can be initiated by [visiting the helpdesk website](#) or calling 352-392-4357.

EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

PLEASE NOTE: This course is FULLY REMOTE, so “attendance” is not part of the grade. However, I am including the university’s official policy here for posterity and FYI.

Students may only participate in classes if they are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to instructors.

Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first class meeting.

Acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to engage in class include illness; Title IX-related situations; serious accidents or emergencies affecting the student, their roommates, or their family; special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences); military obligation; severe weather conditions that prevent class participation; religious holidays; participation in official university activities (e.g., music performances, athletic competition, debate); and court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena). Other reasons (e.g., a job interview or club activity) may be deemed acceptable if approved by the instructor.

For all planned absences, a student in a situation that allows an excused absence from a class, or any required class activity must inform the instructor as early as possible prior to the class. For all unplanned absences because of accidents or emergency situations, students should contact their instructor as soon as conditions permit.

Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered during absence from class or inability to engage in class activities because of the reasons outlined above.

If a student does not participate in at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which they are registered, and they have not contacted the department to indicate their intent, the student can be dropped from the course. Students must not assume that they will be dropped, however. The department will notify students if they have been dropped from a course or laboratory.

The university recognizes the right of the instructor to make attendance mandatory and require documentation for absences (except for religious holidays), missed work, or inability to fully engage in class. After due warning, an instructor can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

Technical Writing

Course Schedule

The schedule below is subject to change. Our Canvas page will be the most accessible, up-to-date site of all resources, texts, due dates, assignments, and course information. Make it a habit to check it along with your e-mail inbox for updates from me as they become available.

Weeks	Major Topics	Readings	Assignment	Deadline
1 - 4 (1/12 - 2/1)	Course Introduction and Professional Communication	“ Introduction ” (Gross et al.)	Introductory Email (250 words, 25 pts)	1/16 @ 11:59 PM
		“ Email ” (Gross et al.)		
		“ 14 Technical Writers on the Future of AI ”	Proposal: Experiential Learning (250 words, 25 pts)	1/18 @ 11:59 PM
		“ Chapter 1: Professional Communications ” (Gross et al.)	Letter (250 words, 25 pts)	1/25 @ 11:59 PM
5 - 7 (2/2 - 3/1)	Resumes and Credentialing	“ Resumes ” (McMurrey)		
		Monster: “ 10 Worst Resume Mistakes to Avoid ”	Resume (300 words, 50 pts)	2/8 @ 11:59 PM
		UF’s Career Center’s Resume Guide		
		Forbes: “ How to Write a Competitive Resume in 2021 ”		
	Job Materials	Sample cover letters and application statements available on Canvas (via Indeed)	Job Ad Analysis (300 words, 50 pts)	2/22 @ 11:59 PM
			Cover Letter (400 words, 50 pts)	3/1 @ 11:59 PM

8 - 10 (3/2 - 4/5)	Generative AI Technology and Audience Considerations	Chapter 2: Audience Analysis (Gross et al.)	AI-Generated Technical Description Analysis (500 words, 75 pts)	3/8 @ 11:59 PM
		“Chapter 13: Communicating Across Cultures” (Gross et al.) “2.2. Technical Communication, Action, and Community” “Using AI Tools in Your Research” “2.3. Audience and Access” (Mussack) “Usability 101” (Nielsen)	Gen-AI Audience Transformation (500 words, 75 pts)	3/29 @ 11:59 PM
			UF Website Accessibility Analysis (500 words, 75 pts)	4/5 @ 11:59 PM
11 - 13 (4/6 - 4/19)	Creating Technical Instructions	“4.3: Instructions” (Mussack) “2.6: Instructions” (McMurrey and Race) “Chapter 6: Progress Reports” (Gross et al.) “2.5: Progress Reports” (McMurrey)	Technical Instructions Document (750 words, 150 pts)	4/12 @ 11:59 PM
			Reflection (500 words, 100 pts)	4/19 @ 11:59 PM
14 - 16 (4/19 - 4/26)	Experiential Learning	TBD	Experiential Learning Project (750 words or 3 minute video or podcast, 125 pts)	4/26 @ 11:59 PM