

ENGL-321 WRITING IN THE TECHNICAL PROFESSIONS

Basic Information

North Dakota State University
ENGL 321 Writing in the Technical Professions
Fall Semester 2020 | 3 credits
ENGL 321-06 (4203)
MoWeFr 10:00AM - 10:50AM | Minard Hall, Rm 214
Prof. Ryan Christiansen
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Office: Minard 316C
Hours: MoWeFr 8:00AM - 9:00AM

Course Objectives

Students will learn to manage sophisticated writing and research projects, planning, documenting, completing, and assessing work on time and within the constraints of the project.

Required Student Resources

Technical Communication: A reader-centered approach, 9th Edition, by Paul V. Anderson (Wadsworth Publishing ISBN-13: 978-1305667884)

Bulletin Description

Intensive practice employing the conventions of professional genres to write about technology development and use for expert, business, and more general audiences. Prereq: ENGL 120, Junior standing.

General Education Approved Course for the Communication (C) Category

This course has been approved by the NDSU Faculty Senate to meet the requirements for upper division writing.

The General Education Communication Learning Outcome

Students will use a variety of modes, particularly written, oral, artistic, and visual to

- a. effectively communicate analysis, knowledge, understanding, expression and/or conclusions
- b. skillfully use high-quality, credible, relevant sources
- c. demonstrate appropriate conventions in a variety of communication situations
- d. demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with diverse audiences in a variety of contexts

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Course Schedule/Outline/Calendar of Events

Class Schedule		
Day	Date	What you need to prepare for this day, and what we'll do
Wednesday	28-Aug	Print out this document and bring it to class. We will discuss the project requirements and the schedule
Design Phase		
Friday	30-Aug	Cooperative brainstorming
Monday	2-Sep	HOLIDAY – NO CLASS
Wednesday	4-Sep	Cooperative brainstorming
Friday	6-Sep	Cooperative brainstorming
Monday	9-Sep	You will look at an example of a proposal.
Wednesday	11-Sep	We will discuss Chapter 23 “Writing Reader-Centered Proposals.”
Friday	13-Sep	We will discuss Chapter 12 “Creating Reader-Centered Graphics” and Chapter 14 “Designing Reader-Centered Pages and Documents.”
Monday	16-Sep	You will look at an example of a proposal and critique how well it meets the expectations for proposals in your textbook.
Wednesday	18-Sep	We will discuss your critiques of the example proposal.
Friday	20-Sep	The instructor will share how you can use Microsoft Word to format your proposal and use Microsoft Paint to create graphics for your proposal.
Monday	23-Sep	Bring a printed copy of your completed proposal to class for peer review.
Wednesday	25-Sep	Conferences
Friday	27-Sep	Conferences
Monday	30-Sep	Conferences
Wednesday	2-Oct	Bring a printed copy of your proposal, updated to address the feedback you received from your instructor, to class for peer review.
Implementation Phase		
Friday	4-Oct	You will look at an example of instructions.
Monday	7-Oct	We will discuss Chapter 27 “Writing Reader-Centered Instructions.”
Wednesday	9-Oct	You will look at an example of instructions and critique how well they meet the expectations for instructions outlined in your textbook.
Friday	11-Oct	We will discuss your critiques of the example instructions.

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Monday	14-Oct	The instructor will share how you can use Microsoft Word to format your instructions and use Microsoft Paint to create graphics for your instructions.
Wednesday	16-Oct	Bring a printed copy of your completed instructions to class for peer review.
Friday	18-Oct	Conferences
Monday	21-Oct	Conferences
Wednesday	23-Oct	Conferences
Friday	25-Oct	Bring a printed copy of your instructions, updated to address the feedback you received from your instructor, to class for peer review.
Testing Phase		
Monday	28-Oct	We will discuss Chapter 16 "Testing Your Drafts for Usefulness and Persuasiveness."
Wednesday	30-Oct	You will practice testing an example game and instructions.
Friday	1-Nov	Bring your game prototype and instructions. You will conduct a performance test of your instructions.
Monday	4-Nov	Bring your game prototype and instructions. You will conduct a performance test of your instructions.
Wednesday	6-Nov	Bring your game prototype and instructions. You will conduct a performance test of your instructions.
Friday	8-Nov	You will look at an example of an empirical research report.
Monday	11-Nov	HOLIDAY – NO CLASS
Wednesday	13-Nov	We will discuss Chapter 24 "Writing Reader-Centered Empirical Research Reports."
Friday	15-Nov	You will look at an example of an empirical research report and critique how well it meets the expectations for empirical research reports in your textbook.
Monday	18-Nov	We will discuss your critiques of the example empirical research report.
Wednesday	20-Nov	The instructor will share how you can use Microsoft Word to format your empirical research report and use Microsoft Paint to create graphics for your empirical research report.
Friday	22-Nov	Bring a printed copy of your completed empirical research report to class for peer review.
Monday	25-Nov	Conferences
Wednesday	27-Nov	HOLIDAY – NO CLASS
Friday	29-Nov	HOLIDAY – NO CLASS
Monday	2-Dec	Conferences
Wednesday	4-Dec	Conferences

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Friday	6-Dec	Bring a printed copy of your empirical research report, updated to address the feedback you received from your instructor, to class for peer review.
Monday	9-Dec	You will be required to attend the Showcase of Student Writing, where you will exhibit and share your proposal, instructions, game prototype, test observation form, Likert-scale questionnaire, and empirical research report.
Wednesday	11-Dec	We will talk about the Showcase of Student Writing and you will be encouraged to fill out your course evaluation.
Friday	13-Dec	NO CLASS due to a scheduled English Department assessment
Wednesday	18-Dec	8:00 a.m. – final examination

Due Dates for Graded Assignments

Day	Date	Assignment
Thursday	29-Aug	Research Memo
Thursday	3-Oct	Proposal
Thursday	31-Oct	Prototype
Wednesday	6-Nov	Test Observation Form
Wednesday	6-Nov	Likert-scale Questionnaire
Friday	6-Dec	Empirical Research Report
Tuesday	10-Dec	Instructions
Wednesday	11-Dec	Portfolio

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Evaluation Procedures and Grading Criteria

The quality of student work and achievement of learning outcomes is indicated by a letter grade. You will receive a letter grade that reflects the professor's compound assessment of the quantitative, qualitative, and promptness aspects of your work.

Grade	What this grade means
A – Excellent (90-100%)	<p>This is excellent work for a student in this course at this university. The document you created includes more than the minimum amount of content required for the assignment and is very helpful for and persuasive to the reader, in both the quality of the text and in the design of the document.</p> <p>In addition, you turned in your work on time.</p>
B – Good (80-89%)	<p>This is good work for a student in this course at this university. The document you created includes the amount of content required for the assignment and is desirably helpful for and persuasive to the reader, in both the quality of the text and in the design of the document.</p> <p>In addition, you may have turned in your work late, up to a day late.</p>
C – Average (70-79%)	<p>This is average work for a student in this course at this university. The document you created includes only most of the content required for the assignment and only attempts to be helpful for and persuasive to the reader, in both the quality of the text and in the design of the document.</p> <p>In addition, you may have turned in your work more than a day late, but not more than a week late.</p>
D – Passing (60-69%)	<p>This is only tolerable work for a student in this course at this university. The document you created only superficially includes the content required for the assignment and only casually attempts to be helpful for and persuasive to the reader, in either or both the quality of the text and in the design of the document.</p> <p>In addition, you may have turned in your work more than a day late, but not before the last day of regular classes.</p>
F – Failure (0-59%)	<p>This is failing working for a student in this course at this university. The document you created omits much of the content required for the assignment doesn't succeed in being helpful or persuasive to the reader, in either or both the quality of the text and in the design of the document.</p> <p>In addition, you may have turned in your work after the last day of regular classes, or not at all.</p>

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Assignment or Responsibility	Points	No.	Total Points
Research Memo	300	1	300
Proposal	1440	1	1440
Prototype	300	1	300
Test Observation Form	300	1	300
Likert-scale Questionnaire	300	1	300
Empirical Research Report	1680	1	1680
Instructions	1360	1	1360
Portfolio	300	1	300
GRAND TOTAL			5980

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Attendance Statement

According to NDSU Policy 333 (www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/333.pdf), attendance in classes is expected. The course instructor must clearly inform students on the first day of class and in writing in the syllabus of their (1) policy regarding class absence and (2) policy, if any, for making up missed assignments. If class attendance is a component of the course grade, the course instructor must clearly communicate this to the class in writing in the syllabus. See NDSU Policy 333 for faculty and student responsibilities related to attendance, including for university-sponsored activities.

Veterans and student service members with special circumstances or who are activated are encouraged to notify the instructor as soon as possible and are encouraged to provide Activation Orders.

Why the Writing Program Values Attendance You may wonder why the NDSU writing program places so much value on attendance. The NDSU writing program operates on the following principles regarding attendance:

- Regular attendance correlates positively with student success in our courses.
- Regular attendance helps students achieve the goals of our courses.
- Regular attendance is a first step for true participation and engagement in our courses.
- Regular attendance helps foster a positive classroom community, particularly in small classes such as ours where regular interaction with one's peers is expected.
- Regular attendance is professional. Students who attend class regularly are learning to adopt the habits of mind that will enable them to succeed in the professional world.

In addition, research has shown that writing is a process-based, social activity. Our classes aim to create the kind of learning environment that will provide students the benefits of going through a writing process to produce larger written texts and interacting with peers to learn from one another. **Writing is a process.** Writing development occurs, in part, through regular writing practice—and all acts of writing are not the same, so it's important to practice different writing concepts or skills over time. We provide many opportunities for writing practice in class. Subsequent homework, essays, or later class activities will presume that you have had that initial in-class practice with a key concept or skill. Missing class can set you back or confuse you when you are asked to draw upon previous in-class practice. Final written texts may not be as strong without knowledge of, and practice in, the key writing concepts or skills introduced in previous class sessions. **Writing is a social act.** Writing development occurs, in part, through interaction with others. Talking through ideas for writing can help one develop ideas, identify new avenues for exploration, and recognize the benefits or limits of a particular line of thinking. Students in a writing class learn from each other and gain practice at being thoughtful readers of writing. Our classes include many small-group activities and opportunities for peer review, which cannot easily be replicated outside of class. Missing class can affect the overall quality of final written texts, because they do not benefit from developing in response to the perspectives of other readers/writers.

Americans with Disabilities Act for Students with Special Needs Statement

Any students with disabilities or other special needs, who need special accommodations in this course, are invited to share these concerns or requests with the instructor and contact the Disability Services Office (www.ndsu.edu/disabilityservices) as soon as possible.

Approved Academic Honesty Statement

The academic community is operated on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. NDSU Policy 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct applies to cases in which cheating, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct have occurred in an instructional context. Students found guilty of academic misconduct are subject to penalties, up to and possibly including suspension and/or expulsion. Student academic misconduct records are maintained by the Office of Registration and Records. Informational resources about academic honesty for students and instructional staff members can be found at www.ndsu.edu/academichonesty