RWS 3359 Technical Writing

Spring 2023

Fully Online - Asynchronous on Blackboard

Instructor: Jagadish Paudel
Email: jpaudel@miners.utep.edu

Office hours: 10.00 am to 11.30 am Mountain Standard Time, Wednesday.

If you have any concerns regarding this course (readings, assignments, discussion posts, etc.), please make an appointment for a virtual meeting. To make an appointment, I encourage you to email me 24 hours ahead. Office hours will be held online via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra at the stipulated time. I have posted a recurring link on the left sidebar menu on our Blackboard page. To join the meeting, please click on the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra.

If you have any concerns regarding this course, please feel free to reach out to me!

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

This course introduces you to the principles and methods of technical writing that provide you with the skills to improve your ability to communicate through a variety of technical documents and media. Together, we will examine (analyze) a number of writing and design principles and practice (produce) a variety of technical genres. Successful completion of this course will improve your ability to:

- Analyze the rhetorical situation and define the users and/or audience in an instance of communication;
- Apply rhetorical principles to plan and design effective technical documents for diverse media;
- Direct, manage, and monitor the publication cycle of small- and large-scale texts;
- Compose content appropriate for users and genres, revise and edit written work for accuracy, clarity, coherence, and appropriateness, and document resources as defined by a specific field;
Syllabus and Schedule  
University of Texas at El Paso

- Apply technological and visual rhetorical skills (e.g., document design, graphics, computer documentation, electronic editing, and content management applications) in the composing process and publish, deliver, and archive as required; and
- Narrate stories that are related to social (in)justice, with reference to technical communication.
- Work critically and collaboratively to complete projects.


**Assignments**
There are four major ways of scoring points for this class: major assignments with several minor writing assignments leading up to it; peer review for final drafts of major assignments; discussion board posts, Narrative Assignment, and video reflection of the course. Here are the assignments and associated points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Discussion board posts (Individual Work)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Almost every week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technical Documentation Project:</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Peer review on Instruction Analysis</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>January 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Instructions Analysis (Individual Work)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>February 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Peer Review of Instructions Manual (Group Work)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>February 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Designing an Instructions Manual (Group Work)</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>February 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Research Portfolio (Group Work)</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Topic Memo</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>February 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Research Proposal</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>March 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Progress Report</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>April 8</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Syllabus and Schedule

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>April 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation Report</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>April 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Assignment (Individual Work)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>May 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection on the course (Individual Work)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>May 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignment Submission Guidelines:

- Submit all final drafts as PDFs.
- Submit documents for peer review in Word format (.doc or .docx); uploaded to your respective groups in Blackboard on the “Group Activities” discussion board.
- For daily discussion board posts, type your post in the space provided or copy-paste your post there from another location.

Blackboard: Blackboard will be the primary interface for our course. This is where you’ll find all documents, course materials, resources, and instructions; participate in online discussion groups; submit all assignments; check your grades; and much more. For training or information regarding its use, please refer to the UTEP Connect Online Support Center.

Course Policies:

Email and Availability

Outside office hours, you’re welcome to email on weekdays, I typically respond within 24 hours. I may or may not respond over the weekend. Plan your emails accordingly. To send emails to me, please use your UTEP email account and include a subject line that clarifies the purpose; this enables me (and you) to keep good records and for easy retrieval in the future.

I have provided a link, “Ask Questions,” on the Blackboard page for asking questions. This is useful for three reasons: First, in my experience, 90% of your questions are on the minds of other students. Secondly, several of your questions can be answered by your classmates without my intervention. Thirdly, for those who did not have the problem you posted, your post and my or other students’ answers could provide useful insight. Thus, you do everyone a great service by sharing your question. So, unless a question or issue is private and urgent, post your question on our Blackboard question page instead.

Attendance for Online Asynchronous Class

You will demonstrate your attendance by completing each week’s Blackboard module, which includes actively engaging in discussions, reading, participating in activities, and submitting assignments by the indicated deadlines.

Late Policy

It is important to submit work before deadlines for full credit and feedback. Failing to complete modules/assignments by the stipulated time will negatively affect your grade. Late or insufficient
posts will not receive full credit. Consistent failure to complete modules will prevent you from passing the class. I will recommend a student withdraw if s/he/they has/have not submitted a major assignment or contributed significantly to weekly modules. However, if any eventuality occurs in your life and prevents you to submit your assignments on time, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I will try to be lenient as far as possible. My primary job is to make you successful in your studies rather than block you from succeeding.

Netiquette

It is important that you familiarize yourselves with netiquette--or online etiquette. Please adhere to the following policies:

- Respect and be courteous to classmates and the instructor. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- Do not use inappropriate language, all capital letters, or language shortcuts. Online entries should be written with edited spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- When reacting to someone else’s message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Be sure to read everyone’s responses before posting. Avoid repetition of what someone else has already said. Add something new to the discussion.
- Do not copy other classmates’ responses on a discussion board.
- Post in a timely fashion to receive credit for the discussion. Pay close attention to the posted deadlines.
- Finally, Blackboard is not a public Internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted in these online spaces is intended for classmates and the professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space. If students wish to do so, they have the ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).

University Policies:

Academic Dishonesty Academic dishonesty is never tolerated at UTEP. All cases will be reported to the Dean of Students for Academic Sanctions. These sanctions may include expulsion. All work submitted must be original; students may not submit graded work from another course. Forms of academic dishonesty include:

- Collusion: working with others on an assignment intended to be an individual project.
- Fabrication: deliberately creating false information on the works cited page.
- Plagiarism: the presentation of another person’s work as your own, whether intentional or not (i.e., copying parts of or whole papers off of the Internet).

Please visit the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution page](#) for more information on Academic integrity.
If you need additional coaching and guidance in understanding collusion, fabrication, and plagiarism, please make an appointment with me. I am happy to help you with this.

**Copyright and Fair Use**

The University requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. Students are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend students nor assume any responsibility for student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject students to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under university policies. If you need additional support and guidance in understanding copyright and fair use law, please feel free to contact me.

**University Writing Center (UWC)**

The University Writing Center (UWC) is physically located on the second floor of the UTEP Library in Room 227 and offers free one-on-one writing assistance for students. Online consultations are also available. Graduate and undergraduate consultants work with writers on projects for various classes and provide help during all parts of the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Meetings with consultants are on a first-come, first-served basis, but you may also make appointments with specific consultants. Some consultants are bilingual: Spanish and English speakers. Consultants will not edit your work for you; you are ultimately responsible for the work you submit and the grade you earn. Visit the website to learn more or to sign up for online consultations, and be sure to request consultations well before the deadline of your project.

**ADA Accommodations**

UTEP is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services, and activities with documented disabilities to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship for the University. Students requesting accommodation based on a disability must register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you suspect that you have a disability and need accommodation, please contact the Center for Accommodations & Support Services (CASS) at 915.747.5148 or at cass@utep.edu. The CASS office is Room 106, Union East. Students are responsible for submitting CASS accommodation letters to the instructor.

I want to inform you that if you have a disability, you can request an accommodation service to the CASS office without revealing your disability. Even if you do not have a letter of disability from an authorized institution or person, you can request accommodation service for a semester.
So, if you suspect that you have a disability, please reach out to CASS as soon as possible. Our sole aim is to make you a successful student.

**Military Students**

If you are a military student (veteran, dependent, active) please visit the Military Student Success Center. I also recognize the complexities of being a student veteran. If you are a student veteran, please inform me if you need special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran-related developments can complicate your academic life. If you make me aware of a complication, I will do everything I can to assist you or put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you.

**Some Important Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title IX</th>
<th>915-747-8358</th>
<th>Institutional Compliance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>915-747-5648</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTEP Health &amp; Wellness Center</td>
<td>915-747-5624</td>
<td><a href="https://www.utep.edu/chs/shc/studenthealth@utep.edu">https://www.utep.edu/chs/shc/studenthealth@utep.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTEP Police Department</td>
<td>915-747-5611</td>
<td><a href="https://www.utep.edu/police/police@utep.edu">https://www.utep.edu/police/po</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling and Psychological Services</td>
<td>915-747-5302</td>
<td><a href="https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/caps@utep.edu">https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/caps@utep.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Academic Calendar Spring 2023**

- **Jan 17th**  
  Spring classes begin

- **Jan 17th-20th**  
  Late Registration (Fees are incurred)

- **Feb 1st**  
  Spring Census Day  
  Note: This is the last day to register for classes. Payments are due by 5:00 pm.

- **Feb 13th**  
  20th Class Day  
  Note: Students who were given a payment deadline extension will be dropped at 5:00 pm if payment arrangements have not been made.

- **Feb 17th**  
  Graduation application deadline for degree conferral

- **Mar 13th-17th**  
  Spring Break

- **Mar 30th**  
  Spring Drop/Withdrawal Deadline  
  Note: Student-initiated drops are permitted after this date, but the student is not guaranteed a grade of W. The faculty member of record will issue a grade of either W or F.

- **Mar 31st**  
  Cesar Chavez Holiday - No classes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 7th</td>
<td>Spring Study Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 14th</td>
<td>Deadline to submit candidates’ names for commencement program</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 4th</td>
<td>Spring – Last day of classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 5th</td>
<td>Dead day</td>
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