

Technical Writing

RWS 3359:24512/24513 • UGLC 234

Dr. Levi Martin

LRMARTIN@UTEP.EDU • HUDSPETH 207

OFFICE HOURS: MW 9:00 AM-11:00 PM & 3:00 PM-4:00 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces you to the principles and methods of technical writing and provides 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 as well as tasks that the information must support;
- 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, such as articles, manuals, and websites, etc.;
- Compose content appropriate for the users and genres, revise and edit written work for accuracy, clarity, coherence, and appropriateness, and document resources as defined by a specific field;
- 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
- Work critically and collaboratively to complete projects.

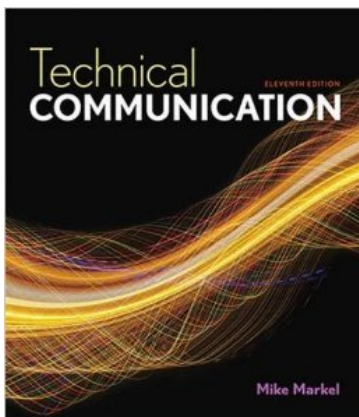
ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory. University policy requires that you attend every class. If you miss a class, for whatever reason, you are responsible for finding out about missed information and activities from classmates or the instructor on your own time, not during scheduled class time. **Missing a scheduled office visit also counts as an absence.** Persistent tardiness and early exits may count as absences. You are allowed three (3) “unexcused” absences for the semester; starting with the fourth missed class, every absence will lower your final grade by 10%, or one letter grade. After a student has accrued five (5) absences, the instructor may drop the student from the course.

REQUIRED TEXT

This course will use Mike Markel’s *Technical Communication* (11th Edition) as the guiding textbook. The textbook will be required for in-class activities and should be brought to class with you each day. **You will need a copy of the textbook by Wednesday, January 24, 2018.**

Below is the textbook for this course:



Markel, M. (2014). *Technical Communication* (11th ed.). Bedford/St. Martin's: Boston, MA.

ISBN: 978-1-457-67337-5

[Link to text on Amazon.com](#)

ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECTS

Assignment sheets will be posted to Blackboard before the class in which the assignment is introduced. All assignments are to be submitted via the Blackboard “assignments” section by the end of the day (11:59 PM) of the due date (see course calendar for information on each assignments specific due date). **All assignments are required to be submitted in PDF format.** This is the only format that is accepted and the only format that will be graded. If you need help saving your document as a PDF, please speak with the instructor.

Do not email assignments to me. Assignments sent to my email will not receive credit or graded. Keep in mind that, as with any technology, you may experience issues with Blackboard. It is your responsibility to plan for this and submit your assignments in a timely manner. Waiting until minutes before the deadline is a risky and I advise submitting your assignments well ahead of the deadline to account for any issues you may experience.

This course works on a 1,000 point scale and final grades will be determined using the scale below. Grades will be posted to Blackboard. Please see me during my office hours if you wish to discuss your grades.

A=900-1,000 points

B=800-899 points

C=700-799 points

D=600-699 points

F=599 or below

This courses assignments and their associated point value is as follows:

- Daily Journals - 200 points
- Participation - 100 points
- Instructions Analysis Report - 100 points
- Instructions Proposal - 100 points
- Instructions Project - 150 points
- Instructions Project Report - 50 points
- Product Proposal - 100 points
- Product Project - 100 points
- Product Presentation - 50 points
- Product Project Report - 50 points

COMPOSITIONS

Your written work is a reflection of your capabilities and efforts and comprises the majority of your final grade. You are therefore expected to produce high-quality, sophisticated documents. A part of that quality is the appearance of your work. Neatness, visual appeal, and mechanical and grammatical correctness are important, although they do not, alone, guarantee a well-made text (or a good grade). Your written documents should have appropriate margins, spacing, pagination, and formatting. Your productions in electronic and other media should be well-designed. In short: **take pride in your writing and aim to produce high quality documents.**

LATE WORK/MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Late work is not accepted. Additionally, **I will not grade any assignments submitted via email.** You must submit all assignments via Blackboard. **Emailing an assignment is never an option.**

NETIQUETTE

Please review “The Core Rules of Netiquette” by Virginia Shea at <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>.

We will be talking about audience a lot in this course, and I want you to keep in mind that you’re speaking to a professional audience. Additionally, this is a professional writing course and you should take this into account in all writing you do for this course (postings, responses, assignments, and even emails). When you email me, this is how it should be written:

Dear Dr. Martin:

Write the content of your email here. Make sure you have proofread for proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Do not use IM language (“2” for “to,” “u” for “you,” etc.).

**Sincerely,
Your Name
Your Course & CRN**

If your email does not follow this format, I will not respond. **I do not check email on Sundays.**

COURSE POLICIES

Please refer to the following policies for this course. If you have any questions, please see me during my office hours or send me an email and I’ll be happy to help.

- UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER (UWC): I encourage you to make use of the UWC during the planning, drafting, and/or revising phases of writing any assignment in this class. The trained writing consultants can help give you a fresh perspective on ideas and help you with things like correctness, formatting, etc. The UWC is located on the main floor of the library, to the right of the elevators and computer lab.
- RESOLVING ISSUES: It is your responsibility to manage your workload, complete all assignments and stay on top of your grades. It is also your responsibility to arrange an office meeting with me to discuss questions/concerns. The earlier you contact me with questions/concerns, the better we can deal with them.
- PLAGIARISM is an issue I take very seriously. An act of plagiarism (or other form of academic dishonesty) will result in an ‘F’ for the course, and may include other University disciplinary action, such as suspension or expulsion. You should become familiar with the ethical guidelines for conduct spelled out in the [Student Affairs](#) section of the [Handbook for Operating Procedures](#). Additionally, please be aware that you may not submit work for this class that was produced for another class. You must produce your own original work in this class and appropriately identify and portion of your work which is collaborative with others, borrowed from others, or which is your own work from other contexts. Always cite your information. If you have doubts as to whether or not you are using your own or others’ work legally and ethically, ask me or stop by the UTEP Writing Center. Follow this primary principle: Be upfront and honest.
- ADA: The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, 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 located in Room 106, Union East. Students are responsible for presenting the instructor with any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.

COURSE CALENDAR

TOPIC READINGS HOLIDAYS-NO CLASS DUE DATES

WEEK 1: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17

MONDAY INTRODUCTIONS TO THE COURSE, SYLLABUS, TEXTBOOK, AND BLACKBOARD

WEEK 2: MONDAY, JANUARY 22 & WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24

MONDAY HISTORY OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

RUTTER, R. - HISTORY, RHETORIC, AND HUMANISM (ON BLACKBOARD)

WEDNESDAY INFORMATIONAL REPORTS // INTRO TO INSTRUCTIONS ANALYSIS REPORT

CHAPTER 17: WRITING INFORMATIONAL REPORTS (P. 445)

WEEK 3: MONDAY, JANUARY 29 & WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31

MONDAY NO CLASS

WEDNESDAY INTRO TO INSTRUCTIONAL PROJECT // DESIGNING DOCUMENTS

CHAPTER 11: DESIGNING PRINT AND ONLINE DOCUMENTS (P. 248)

WEEK 4: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5 & WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7

MONDAY WRITING TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS

CHAPTER 3: WRITING TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS (P. 41)

WEDNESDAY WRITING COLLABORATIVELY

CHAPTER 4: WRITING COLLABORATIVELY (P. 57)

FRIDAY (2/9) INSTRUCTIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT DUE BY 11:59 PM ON BLACKBOARD

WEEK 5: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12 & WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

MONDAY AUDIENCE & PURPOSE

CHAPTER 5: ANALYZING YOUR AUDIENCE & PURPOSE (P. 82)

WEDNESDAY WORKING WITH PROPOSALS

CHAPTER 16: WRITING PROPOSALS (P. 419)

WEEK 6: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19 & WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

MONDAY EMPHASIZING IMPORTANT INFORMATION

CHAPTER 9: EMPHASIZING IMPORTANT INFORMATION (P. 192)

WEDNESDAY WORKING WITH CORRESPONDENCE

CHAPTER 14: WRITING CORRESPONDENCE (P. 358)

FRIDAY (2/23) INSTRUCTIONS PROPOSAL DUE BY 11:59 PM ON BLACKBOARD

WEEK 7: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26 & WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

MONDAY GRAPHICS IN TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION

CHAPTER 12: CREATING GRAPHICS (P. 294)

WEDNESDAY WORKING WITH DEFINITIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS - WRITING INSTRUCTIONS

CHAPTER 20: WRITING DEFINITIONS, DESCRIPTIONS, & INSTRUCTIONS

WEEK 8: MONDAY, MARCH 5 & WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7

MONDAY RESEARCHING FOR TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS

CHAPTER 6: RESEARCHING YOUR SUBJECT (P. 114)

CHAPTER 13: REVIEWING, EVALUATING, AND TESTING DOCUMENTS AND WEBSITES (P. 340)

WEDNESDAY INSTRUCTIONS PEER REVIEW

INSTRUCTIONS COMPLETE DRAFT DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS ON DISCUSSION BOARDS

WEEK 9: MONDAY, MARCH 12 & WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14

MONDAY **SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS**
WEDNESDAY **SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS**

WEEK 10: MONDAY, MARCH 19 & WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21

MONDAY COMMUNICATING PERSUASIVELY
 CHAPTER 8: COMMUNICATING PERSUASIVELY (P. 170)
WEDNESDAY INSTRUCTIONS WORKSHOP
FRIDAY (3/23) **INSTRUCTIONS DUE BY 11:59 PM ON BLACKBOARD**

WEEK 11: MONDAY, MARCH 26 & WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28

MONDAY INTRODUCTION TO PRODUCT PROJECT
WEDNESDAY WRITING EFFECTIVELY FOR TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS
 CHAPTER 10: WRITING CORRECT AND EFFECTIVE SENTENCES (P. 215)
FRIDAY (3/30) **INSTRUCTION PROJECT REPORT DUE BY 11:59 PM ON BLACKBOARD**

WEEK 12: MONDAY, APRIL 2 & WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4

MONDAY PRODUCT IDEAS AND DISCUSSION
WEDNESDAY TEAM WRITING AND RESEARCHING WORKSHOP
FRIDAY (4/6) **PRODUCT PROPOSAL DUE BY 11:59 PM ON BLACKBOARD**

WEEK 13: MONDAY, APRIL 9 & WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11

MONDAY ORGANIZING YOUR INFORMATION
 CHAPTER 7: ORGANIZING YOUR INFORMATION (P. 146)
WEDNESDAY TEAM WRITING WORKSHOP

WEEK 14: MONDAY, APRIL 16 & WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18

MONDAY WORKING WITH APA
 APPENDIX B: DOCUMENTING YOUR SOURCES
WEDNESDAY TEAM WRITING WORKSHOP

WEEK 15: MONDAY, APRIL 23 & WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25

MONDAY MAKING ORAL PRESENTATIONS
 CHAPTER 21: MAKING ORAL PRESENTATIONS
WEDNESDAY PRODUCT PROJECT PEER REVIEW
 PRODUCT PROJECT COMPLETE DRAFT DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON DISCUSSION BOARDS

WEEK 16: MONDAY, APRIL 30 & WEDNESDAY, MAY 2

MONDAY PRODUCT PRESENTATIONS
WEDNESDAY PRODUCT PRESENTATIONS
FRIDAY (5/4) **PRODUCT PROJECT DUE BY 11:59 PM ON BLACKBOARD**

WEEK 17: MONDAY, MAY 7 & WEDNESDAY, MAY 9

MONDAY **PRODUCT PROJECT REPORT DUE BY END OF DAY ON BLACKBOARD**