

English 2100

Technical Communication



Catalog Course Description

English 2100 teaches basic technical writing skills used in a variety of professional settings. Emphasizes audience analysis, document design, and using precise language for a particular audience.

Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Produce a variety of technical communication genres that are common in workplace writing.
2. Profile audiences for clear, effective, and professional communication that takes into account their values and knowledge.
3. Write accurately and precisely about technical subjects in a clear style that allows readers to take action.
4. Design document interfaces that enhance the readability and usability of a text.
5. Apply primary and secondary research methods and strategies to produce technical documents.
6. Interpret, contextualize, explain, and visualize data sets in the context of specific rhetorical contexts or problems.

Required Materials

1. Johnson-Sheehan, R. (2017). *Technical communication strategies for today* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Pearson. **Please purchase the e-book rental version of this text, and make sure to get the 3rd edition.**
2. Other articles and materials that will be provided via Canvas.

Course Framework

This semester, we are going to work together in a semester-long project to propose an amusement park for Utah Valley and develop technical documentation for that park. As such, each assignment will contribute toward our achieving those end goals. There will be four projects, with additional smaller assignments throughout.

Spring 2024
Section 001
3.0 credits

Modality: Face to Face
MWF 11:00am – 11:50am
LA 027

Instructor: Shelton Weech
Office: CB 408C
Email: sweech@uvu.edu

Office Hours:
MW: 2:00p – 3:00p
TR: 10:00a – 11:00a
or by appointment

Assignments

Project 1 – User Personas (100 points): Students will develop and describe two user personas representing stakeholders in the amusement park venture and potential readers for their recommendation reports in Project 2.

Project 2 – Recommendation Report (200 points): Students will research local and national trends and make recommendations about where/how to build an amusement park in Utah Valley. This report will make use of technical writing skills, share data and use design principles.

Project 3 – Team Charter and Plan (100 points): Students will form teams and create a team charter and plan that will guide their work in Project 4.

Project 4 – Technical Documents Portfolio (300 points): Student teams will create a portfolio of technical documents pertaining to their assigned area of the proposed amusement park. Documents may include case studies, technical descriptions, specifications, instructions, procedures, fact sheets, etc. 100 points of this assignment will be for initial submissions over the course of the term. 200 points will be for the final portfolio.

Peer Workshops (100 points): Students will participate in regular peer workshops in which they review, critique, and offer constructive criticism of peer work in both oral and written forms.

Additional Assignments (200 points): Students will complete other minor assignments throughout the semester, including participation in the discussion board and reading quizzes.

Grading

The course grade will be determined as follows. All grades are final. I do not round up (or down). Note: Regardless of points, students may receive a failing grade if they fail to complete the main deliverables of Projects 2 or 4, or if they show persistent lack of engagement in completing Additional Assignments.

Assignment	Points
User Personas	100
Recommendation Report	200
Team Charter and Plan	100
Technical Documents Portfolio	300
Peer Workshops	100
Additional Assignments	200
TOTAL	1000

Letter Grades/Points
A+ = 970 – 1000
A = 940 – 969
A- = 900 – 939
B+ = 870 – 899
B = 840 – 869
B- = 800 – 839
C+ = 770 – 799
C = 740 – 769
C- = 700 – 739
D = 600 – 699
F = Below 600

General Course Policies

Participation: Your success in this class is largely dependent on your engagement and daily efforts. Because this is a face-to-face course, there are points (200) that are contingent on your presence in class, including quizzes, in-class writings, and other activities. These activities cannot be made up unless you reach out to me and I make an exception. I reserve the right to deny exception requests.

Technology Expectations: While this class is in-person, important course content (announcements, assignment descriptions, some readings) and course procedures (turning in assignments, etc.) will be done on the Canvas platform. Online access to Canvas is required, and you should be checking Canvas regularly for announcements, due dates, and other communications. I recommend forwarding your Canvas communications to your email so that you don't miss anything.

Students are also expected to have access to an internet connection and to a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer. I've seen students try to do classwork on a phone before, and they're only making life difficult for themselves. Students are welcome to complete course work in computer labs on campus.

Late work: Just as in any work environment, you are expected to organize your time and meet deadlines. **I generally do not accept late work.** That said, if circumstances arise that make it impossible for you to complete an assignment on time, please reach out to me as soon as possible so we can work something out.

Contacting the Instructor: Please contact me via email at sweech@uvu.edu. I will respond within 1 business day. Don't expect a reply after 6:00pm MST/MDT. If I reach out to you for any reason, **please respond to me** within a similar timeframe. This way I don't have to wonder if I reached you or not.

My office hours are Monday/Wednesday from 2:00 – 3:00p and Tuesday/Thursday from 10:00 – 11:00a, or by appointment. I am also happy to meet via Teams. If you can't stop by my office in person, please send me an email so we can make arrangements.

Attendance: This is an in-person, face-to-face course. As such, attendance is an integral part of your success. There are 200 points allocated to in-class activities that cannot be made up if you are absent, regardless of your reason for missing class. A few absences will not hurt your grade, but with repeated absences, those points add up. I will take attendance every class period—sometimes at the beginning of class, sometimes later. If you get to class after I have taken attendance, you will be counted as absent. You can still get classwork points for these days if you are there for the work. **If you are absent for a total of more than 6 class periods, you will automatically fail the class.**

Artificial Intelligence: This course is about communication, and as such, I expect you to do the writing for this course yourself. AI-powered writing tools like Chat-GPT can be useful invention resources, but they should not be doing your writing for you. The UVU English department acknowledges the potential usefulness of AI for writers, but copy/pasting the exact wording from an AI is considered plagiarism and will be treated as such.

UVU Policies

Student Rights and Accountabilities: On its Student Rights and Accountabilities page (<https://www.uvu.edu/studentconduct/students.html>) UVU specifies that all UVU students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner acceptable at an institution of higher learning. All students are expected to obey the law, to perform contracted obligations, to maintain absolute integrity and high standards of individual honesty in academic work, and to observe a high standard of conduct for the academic environment.

The Student Rights and Responsibilities Code outlines for students what they can expect from the University and what the University expects of them. Students should review their Rights and Responsibilities. The Student Code of Conduct (<https://policy.uvu.edu/getDisplayFile/5bedd0ef7b23736d542192e3>) also outlines the process for academic appeals, and appeals related to misconduct and sanctions.

Plagiarism: The Student Rights and Accountabilities (<https://www.uvu.edu/studentconduct/students.html>) also discusses UVU's policy and procedure regarding plagiarism, which includes different types of academic misconduct, such as cheating, plagiarism, or fabrication. Sanctions, conduct resolution, and due process are also covered on this page. Students need to familiarize themselves with UVU's procedures in an effort to avoid any form of academic misconduct.

In addition, The Department of English's Policies and Procedures page (<https://www.uvu.edu/english/resources/policies-procedures.html>) provides detailed information about plagiarism, as well as the sanctions it will implement in cases of academic dishonesty. In cases of intentional plagiarism, students will receive a failing grade on the assignment and may also fail the course depending on the severity of the incident.

Nondiscrimination Policy: UVU is committed to preparing all students for success in an increasingly complex, diverse, and globalized society. We value and promote collegial relationships and mutual respect among students, faculty, staff, and the community. We acknowledge and seek to address the needs of populations who are underserved as well as students with varying levels of academic preparation. Since your experience in this class is important to me, it is my intent to promote civility and respect the voice, dignity, and potential of each individual. I aim for an inclusive learning environment that provides equitable opportunities and fosters the understanding, appreciation, and recognition that diversity and individual differences are a source of strength. I aim for a course that is respectful of diversity including age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, nationality, race, religion, sexuality, and socioeconomic status.

Please contact me if you need to talk about any issues you are facing. I value any suggestions on how to improve the effectiveness of this course. If that feels uncomfortable to you, you can contact the Inclusion and Diversity Committee to ask for help and support.

Equity and Title IX: Title IX states that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Students who believe they have been excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or discriminated against because of their sex may contact the EO/AA office to make a report, ask questions, or share concerns by email at: titleix@uvu.edu, in-person at

BA-203, or by phone at: (801) 863-7999. To learn more about the Equity and Title IX office please visit us online at: <https://www.uvu.edu/equityandtitleix/>.

Religious Accommodation: UVU values and acknowledges a wide range of faiths and religions as part of our student body, and as such provides accommodations for students. Religious belief includes the student's faith or conscience as well as the student's participation in an organized activity conducted under the auspices of the student's religious tradition or religious organization. The accommodations include reasonable student absences from scheduled examinations or academic requirements if they create an undue hardship for sincerely held religious beliefs. For this to occur, the student must provide a written notice to the instructor of the course for which the student seeks said accommodation prior to the event. The UVU campus has [a place for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of individual religious expression](#) as is described on their website.

Accessibility and Accommodations: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, prohibit Utah Valley University from engaging in discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity. Discrimination is also prohibited in all aspects of employment against persons with disabilities who, with reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of a job. Students who believe they have been denied program access or otherwise discriminated against because of a disability are encouraged to initiate a grievance by contacting the Accessibility Services Director, Sherry Page at 801-863-8747. Employees can contact the ADA Coordinator, Irene Whittier at 801-863-8389.

Upon request, this information is available in alternative formats, such as mp3, Braille, or large print. To request this format, email asd@uvu.edu.

Students needing accommodation due to a disability including temporary and pregnancy accommodations may contact the UVU Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu or 801-863-8747. Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in LC 312.

English 2100 Course Calendar

This calendar will be periodically adjusted to meet the needs of the class. Readings may change or additional readings may be added.

	Weekly Topics	Readings and Assignments
UNIT 1: Recommending to an Audience		
Week 1 Jan 8-14	M: Introductions W: What is Technical Communication? F: Profiling Your Readers	M: No reading W: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 1 F: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 2
Week 2 Jan 15-21	M: Martin Luther King Jr. Day W: User Personas F: User Persona Workshop	M: Enjoy your holiday! W: Reading TBD F: User Persona Workshop
Week 3 Jan 22-28	M: Reports, part 1 W: Reports, part 2 F: Reports, part 3	M: User Personas Due before start of class W: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 9 F: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 11
Week 4 Jan 29-Feb 4	M: Research in the Technical Workplace W: Synthesis F: Primary Research	M: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 12 W: Reading TBD F: Reading TBD
Week 5 Feb 5-11	M: Citation W: Writing Better Sentences F: Data	M: Reading TBD W: Reading TBD F: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 14
Week 6 Feb 12-18	M: Visual Rhetoric W: Introduction to InDesign F: Workshopping Recommendation Report	M: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 13 W: Reading TBD F: Rough Draft of Recommendation Report Due
Week 7 Feb 19-25	M: President's Day W: Introduction to Illustrator F: Pitching Your Ideas	M: Enjoy your holiday! W: Final Draft of Recommendation Report Due F: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 15
UNIT 2: Designing Cohesive Technical Documents		
Week 8 Feb 26-Mar 3	M: Pitch Day W: Working in Teams F: Working in Teams, pt. 2	M: Prepare an elevator pitch for your amusement park idea W: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 3 F: Reading TBD
Week 9 Mar 4-10	M: Introduction to Genre W: Managing Ethical Challenges F: Managing Ethical Challenges, pt. 2	M: Team Charter and Plan Due W: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 4 F: Reading TBD
Week 10 Mar 11-17	Spring Break	Spring Break

Week 11 Mar 18-24	M: Group Check-In W: Technical Descriptions & Specifications F: Technical Descriptions & Specifications, pt. 2	M: Ethical Case Study Draft Due W: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 7 F: Reading TBD
Week 12 Mar 25-31	M: Group Check-In W: Instructions & Documentation F: Usability Testing	M: Technical Description/Specification Draft Due W: <i>TC Strategies</i> , Chapter 8 F: Reading TBD
Week 13 Apr 1-7	M: Group Check-In W: Fact Sheets F: Public Communication	M: Instruction/Documentation Draft Due W: Reading TBD F: Reading TBD
Week 14 Apr 8-14	M: Group Check-In W: Studio Day F: Studio Day	M: Fact Sheet / Public Communication Draft Due W: Studio Day F: Studio Day
Week 15 Apr 9-21	M: Peer Workshop W: Studio Day F: Presentations	M: Peer Workshop W: Studio Day F: Presentations
Week 16 Apr 22-23	M: Presentations	M: Presentations
Finals: Apr 25-May 1		
Project 4 and Team Evaluations Due Friday April 26 11:59pm		