

English 3300

Collaborative Communication for Technology Professions

Fall 2024
Section 001
CRN 34549
3.0 credits

Modality: Face to face
LA 029
TTh 10am-11:15am

Instructor: Shelton Weech
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Office Hours:
Wednesdays 9am – 1pm
or by appointment



Catalog Course Description

English 3300 teaches technical communication skills and methodologies in demand by business and industry. Provides collaborative experience in the development of a professional, team-oriented project, using suitable technology. Integrates textual and visual rhetorics through effective design practices. Emphasizes primary and secondary research as well as usability testing.

Course Outcomes

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

1. Choose appropriate genres of writing
2. Create collaborative writing projects
3. Apply principles of information design
4. Write documents that convey an understanding of audience and purpose
5. Create documents that meet client needs using appropriate technologies
6. Prepare documents that meet local community needs
7. Effectively construct technical documents

Required Materials

1. Moses, J. & Tham, J. (2023). *Writing to learn in teams: A collaborative writing playbook for students across the curriculum*. Parlor Press.
2. Other articles and materials that will be provided via Canvas

Additional Materials

1. Access to a laptop/computer: I know it's all the rage to do work on your phones, but in the technology workplace, you'll really need to get used to doing work with a computer. And your work will look better for it.
2. Access to design software such as Canva or InDesign (InDesign is preferred, and you DO have access to it through UVU—you'll need to request it through IT though)
3. Microsoft Teams **on your computer**

Coursework

1. **Interview and Reflection:** Students will interview someone who works in a technology profession about that person's experiences collaborating on the job. Students will write a 2-page (single spaced) summary and reflection of the interview. **(100 points)**
2. **Collaborative User Guide:** In groups, students will run usability tests of Microsoft Teams to determine its features and potentials for collaborative projects. Students will then create a Collaborative User Guide that outlines procedures, instructions, troubleshooting steps, and an FAQ. This assignment consists of four parts:
 - a. **Team Charter:** A document that outlines how the team will divide responsibilities, schedule tasks, and resolve conflicts. **(50 points)**
 - b. **Usability Testing Results:** A brief document that includes the notes you took during your testing of Teams. **(50 points)**
 - c. **User Guide:** A comprehensive procedural document that walks users how to use Teams features in their collaborative work. Includes sets of instructions for different collaborative tasks, troubleshooting suggestions, and an FAQ. **(150 points)**
 - d. **Team Evaluation:** A form that students will fill out that describes how each member of the team contributed to the project. **(50 points)**
3. **Disaster Preparedness Plan:** In teams, students will create a disaster preparedness plan designed for a local nonprofit organization. Students will research the types of emergencies that could occur in the area and create a plan that makes appropriate suggestions. Each plan should include at least 4 different genres of technical writing. This assignment consists of five parts:
 - a. **Team Charter and Organizational Proposal:** A document that outlines how the team will divide responsibilities, schedule tasks, and resolve conflicts. You will also tell me here which organization you are writing for. **(50 points)**
 - b. **Research Memo:** A 4-page memo outlining primary research methods, results, and how those results are connected to other areas of the project. This memo will also list and summarize preliminary secondary sources **(50 points)**
 - c. **Disaster Preparedness Plan:** This is a 20-30-page document put together as a team that includes at least 4 different genres of technical writing. **(200 points)**
 - d. **Presentation:** A 10-minute presentation of at least two elements of your plan. **(points included in "Other Assignments")**
 - e. **Team Evaluation:** A form that students will fill out that describes how each member of the team contributed to the project. **(100 points)**
4. **Peer Workshops:** Teams will exchange drafts and offer feedback to each other. **(100 points)**
5. **Other assignments:** This includes in-class writings (aka Lite Writes), group activities, conferencing, etc. *These assignments cannot be made up when absent.* **(100 points)**

Grading

The course grade will be determined as follows. All grades are final. I do not round up (or down).

Assignment	Points
Interview and Reflection	100
User Guide	300
Disaster Preparedness Plan	400
Peer Workshops	100
Other Assignments	100
TOTAL	1000

Letter Grades/Points
A = 940 – 1000
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 and Attendance: Your success in this class is largely dependent on your engagement and daily efforts. As such, attendance is an integral part of your success. Because this is a face-to-face course, there are 100 points that are contingent on your presence in class. These activities cannot be made up. A few absences will not hurt your grade, but with repeated absences, those points add up. If you reach out to me, you can request an exception, but I reserve the right to deny requests.

In addition, 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 4 class periods (the equivalent of two weeks of class), you will automatically fail the class.**

Technology Expectations: This class focuses on how to write collaboratively in technology-focused professions. This means that you are expected to have a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer. We meet in a computer classroom, so if you don't have one, you can use one of the machines in the classroom. You will also need to have access to either Adobe InDesign or Canva to create professional documents. **You should not be completing any of the coursework for this class on your phones.**

Because teamwork is an integral part of this course, you will be required to use Microsoft Teams (in fact, one of the major assignments is all about how to collaborate on Teams). You will need to have Teams downloaded on your computer.

Important course content (announcements, assignment descriptions, some readings and activities) and course procedures (turning in assignments, taking exams, etc.) will be done on Canvas. 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 account so that you don't miss anything.

Late work: As with the real-world work environment, you are expected to organize your time and meet deadlines. **I generally do not accept late work.** I know that we're all busy, but by signing up for this course, you are committing to make time for it. Jobs, vacations, family commitments, etc. are not reasonable excuses to turn in work late. With the amount of teamwork happening over the course of the semester, you will also potentially affect your team's score if your materials are not complete on time. That said, if you have extenuating circumstances, reach out to me as soon as possible and we can discuss the possibility of exceptions.

Contacting the Instructor: For fastest response, 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 you reach out to me through Canvas, there may be a delay in my getting back to you.

My office hours are Wednesdays from 9:00am-1:00pm, 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.

Artificial Intelligence: You've probably heard it all. "Using AI is plagiarism." "Using AI is necessary to be an effective writer." In this course, because we're looking at how individuals write collaboratively in the workplace, we're going to include AI as an important collaborator. You are allowed to use AI in all of your writing assignments in this course, but **when you do, you must indicate in any introductory memo or reflection document where you used it, how you used it, and how you adapted the AI writing to make it "yours."** We'll talk more about writing with AI early in the semester.

UVU Policies

Student Rights and Accountabilities: At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: Student Code of Conduct](#).

Plagiarism: The Student Rights and Accountabilities

(<https://www.uvu.edu/studentconduct/students.html>) also discuss 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.

The Department of English's Policies and Procedures (<https://www.uvu.edu/english/resources/policies-procedures.html>) page 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.

Equity and Title IX: Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

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 needing accommodations 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. Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers should contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at DHHservices@uvu.edu. DHH is located on the Orem Campus in LC 312.

English 3300 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: Collaboration in the Workplace		
Week 1 Aug 22	Th: Intro to Course	Th: No reading
Week 2 Aug 27, 29	T: Why work in teams? Th: Collaboration in the Workplace	T: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing to Learn in Teams: Chapter 1 Th: Reading TBD
Week 3 Sep 3, 5	T: What Is Good Writing? Th: AI as a Collaborator	T: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing to Learn in Teams: Chapter 2 Wolfe, <i>Team Writing</i>, Chapter 1 Th: Reading on AI TBD
UNIT 2: Collaboration with Technology		
Week 4 Sep 10, 12	T: Project 2, Introduction to Usability Testing Th: Team Charters	T: Reading on usability testing TBD Th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing to Learn in Teams: Chapter 3 Wolfe, <i>Team Writing</i>, Chapters 2-3 Interview and Reflection due September 15 by 11:59pm
Week 5 Sep 17, 19	T: Writing for Technical Audiences (Genres: Instructions, Troubleshooting, FAQs) Th: Project Management	T: Reading TBD Th: Writing to Learn in Teams: Chapter 5 Project 2 Team Charter due September 22 by 11:59pm
Week 6 Sep 24, 26	T: Project Management Tools Th: Resolving Team Conflict	T: Reading TBD Th: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing to Learn in Teams: Chapter 4 Wolfe, Chapter 5 Project 2 Usability Testing Results due September 29 by 11:59pm

Week 7 Oct 1, 3	T: Information Design Principles Th: InDesign Tutorial	T: Reading TBD Th: Reading TBD
Week 8 Oct 8, 10	T: Revision Th: Peer Workshop	T: Reading TBD Th: Peer Workshop Project 2 due Sunday October 13 11:59pm
UNIT 3: Collaborating for Clients		
Week 9 Oct 15, 17	T: Intro to Project 3 Th: Fall Break	T: Reading TBD Th: Fall Break
Week 10 Oct 22, 24	T: Asynchronous Class Th: Next-Level Collaboration	T: Asynchronous Class reading and assignment TBD Th: Writing to Learn in Teams: Chapter 6 Project 3 Team Charter Due Sunday Oct 27 11:59pm
Week 11 Oct 29, 31	T: Collaborative Secondary Research Th: Other types of primary research	T: Reading TBD Th: Reading TBD
Week 12 Nov 5, 7	T: Multiple audiences & Ethical Challenges Th: More about genres	T: Reading TBD Th: Reading TBD by YOU
Week 13 Nov 12, 14	T: Effective Presentations Th: Conferencing	T: Reading TBD Th: Conferencing Project 3 Research Memo due Sunday November 17 11:59pm
Week 14 Nov 19, 21	T: Studio Day Th: Studio Day	T: Studio Day Th: Studio Day
Week 15 Nov 26, 28	Thanksgiving Break	
Week 16 Dec 3, 5	T: Peer Workshop Th: Presentations	T: Peer Workshop Th: Presentations due in class
Finals Week: Dec 6-Dec 13		
Final Project Due by 11:59pm Dec 8		