ENC 3254: PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION
Summer B 2014, section 4C53
(web only, via UF e-Learning at https://elearning2.courses.ufl.edu)

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Virtual Office Hours: By appointment via Skype (crisruizpoveda)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Professional communication is the practice of conveying technical information to various audiences with different goals and levels of expertise. In this class students learn how to research, organize, and present technical information in effectively written documents, work in collaboration with other professionals, and use various technologies to support their communication efforts.

This course is designed to help students master a variety of communication strategies and genres of writing relevant to the professional environment, including everyday acts of communication, such as email, memos, letters, technical descriptions, and instructions. The course culminates with an academic research report and professional proposal that are group projects, in order to encourage collaboration and emulate the professional environment.

Students analyze writing situations in the professional workplace and develop strategies for addressing audiences, organizing information, using appropriate style, and presenting the work. The objective of this class is to learn to respond in writing to complex rhetorical situations, preparing students for the professional communities they will join.

OUTCOMES

In ENC 3246, students will learn to

- plan, draft, revise, and edit documents for use in professional settings
- adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts
- synthesize and report on the professional and technical literature in the field
- write in a clear, coherent, and direct style appropriate for applicable professions
- understand and employ the various forms of professional writing, including proposals, progress reports, research and lab reports, and professional correspondence
- avoid plagiarism
- establish professional relations through virtual platforms

REQUIRED TEXTS

Available through course e-Learning site or at: http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/techcomm10e
COURSE MODULES

The following is a general outline of the topics covered in this course by module. Each module can consist of readings, activities, quizzes, and assignments explained in the website calendar.

Module 1: The Rhetoric of Professional Communication
Module 2: Correspondence--E-mail, Memoranda, Letters
Module 3: Research for Professional Reports Process
Module 4: Technical Definitions and Descriptions
Module 5: Document Design and the Use of Graphics
Module 6: Instructions and Procedures
Module 7: Job Applications
Module 8: Working Collaboratively and Running Meetings
Module 9: Formal Analytical Reports
Module 10: Proposals

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

The following assignments include both individual and group projects. You must meet all minimum word counts in order to receive the credit for your work. Assignments that are significantly below work count will not receive a passing grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point value</th>
<th>Word count</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 25          | 300        | **Professional Introduction E-mail**  
Using a standard e-mail format and an effective professional style, you will send a message introducing yourself, your career goals, your areas of specialization, and your writing experiences. |
| 50          | 600        | **Job Application Packet (cover letter, résumé, follow-up letter)**  
In this multi-part assignment you will identify an internship or job you hope to have, research the field, and match the profile of the ideal candidate for this position (sell yourself). Finally, you will write a cover letter and a resume for this particular job, as well as a follow-up letter thanking your prospective employer for your interview which restates your interest.  
*Extra credit:* Having a professional identity on the Internet is a crucial part of the job seeking process. Students are encouraged to professionalize their online presence. Students will create a professional Linked-in profile and have a job interview via Skype with the instructor. |
| 100         | 800        | **Technical Definition**  
In this assignment you are required to choose a technical term in your professional field and write an expanded definition for a lay person using four expansion strategies and at least one visual or diagram. You must cite and document at least four outside sources in APA style. |
| 100         | 1200       | **Instruction Manual**  
You will construct an instruction manual for a product, process, or task. The manual will contain descriptions and specifications, product warnings, maintenance and troubleshooting advice, and any other information the user is likely to need to complete the task, use the product, or follow the process. The manual will be assessed on the quality and readability of the instructions, on the functionality of the instructional visuals, on the effectiveness of the design, and on the rhetorical style of the steps, sequencing, and transitions. |
| 50          | 700        | **Annotated Bibliography**  
This assignment will teach you how to explore professional sources. You will prepare a bibliography with annotations of at least five sources that might be useful for you Technical Definition. At least one of these sources must be an article from a peer-reviewed academic journal. |
### Progress Report
During your group projects, you will write an individual report evaluating your and your group’s progress. This will track activities, problems, and progress for both your individually assigned tasks and the group’s overall task. The focus will be on schedules, setbacks, problems solved, and the dates and stages of your progress. This is an individual assignment.

### Research Report
This is a group assignment. Derived from the scientific method, the research report is the most common type of report written in academia. It is the form taken by lab reports and other documents that are based on original data collected by the researcher or research team. Working in a small group, you will establish a research question, devise a method of gathering original data, and collect the data. In your group, you will write a research report that presents and analyzes the data that you collected. For group meetings, elearning has a tool called Big Blue Button (under the “Meetings” tab on the left side) that is available for students.

### Proposal
Your final group project will be a technical proposal for the campus, for an academic unit within UF, or for a local Gainesville problem. Your proposal will seek to persuade a target audience that something needs to be done, and offer a specific solution to a problem your group has identified. The assessment of this final project will be on the proposed course of action, your audience analysis, your rhetorical strategy, your document design, and the visual quality and effectiveness of your graphics. **For the final proposal project, a portion of the written work must be completed by each student. Grade for this project will be based on an individual grade for your portion of the work plus a group grade for the overall document.**

### Professionalism
This grade includes professionalism in all class communication (written and oral), punctuality, the effort you put into reviewing and commenting on each other’s work in four (4) peer reviews, and the quality of your collaboration with your group members on major projects. In order to receive full points you must complete all assignments on time, follow proper format in all email communications and memos, attend virtual group meetings, and log in at least once to my virtual office hours via skype.

### Quizzes
You will have weekly quizzes based on your class readings and presentations. Quizzes will be announced in advance, and they will cover the most important materials of the week. Please note that there is only one weekly quiz, covering the most important materials of the two modules. Don’t wait until the last minute to do the readings. **Missed quizzes cannot be made up.**

### Lesson Activities
These mini-projects are designed to help you complete major assignments.

### Grading
Grading for this course will be rigorous because the goal of the class is to gain professionalism. Do not rely on the instructor for copy-editing, even on drafts. To receive a passing grade, each paper **must** reach the minimum assigned word count.

#### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Range 1</th>
<th>Range 2</th>
<th>Range 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>930-1000</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>900-929</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>870-899</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>830-869</td>
<td>63-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
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<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<td>63-66</td>
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Revision of Assignments

During the course of the semester, you may rewrite any one individual assignment of your choosing (your new grade will replace the previous one). In addition to the revised project, you must also write a one-page memo addressed to the instructor in which you detail what, how, and why you’ve revised. Revised work is due one week from the day the assignment is first returned to the class and students are responsible for knowing the deadline. Students should let the instructor know that they will rewrite their assignments.

Assessment Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LETTER</th>
<th>SATISFACTORY (Y)</th>
<th>UNSATISFACTORY (N)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONTENT</td>
<td>Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.</td>
<td>Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off-topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE</td>
<td>Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.</td>
<td>Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT</td>
<td>Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.</td>
<td>Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STYLE</td>
<td>Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.</td>
<td>Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECHANICS</td>
<td>Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper’s argument or points.</td>
<td>Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader’s understanding or severely undermine the writer’s credibility.</td>
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Interaction with the instructor and Virtual Office Hours

Students are encouraged to contact the instructor with questions via email anytime they need. Please consider that the instructor might need up to 2 hours to answer during weekdays and that email might not be checked after hours, on weekends, or on holidays. Because this is an online course, office hours will be scheduled by
appointment via Skype. Office hours can take place using chat, audio, or video, so consider the technology and the location you need for the occasion. When using the webcam, remember this is a professional encounter so make sure to be dressed properly and have a presentable background. Make sure you find a quiet place.

**Course Policies and Procedures**

**Online Attendance and Participation**

Professional Communication is a skills-based class. Because we develop skills by practicing, participation and completing all of the assignments are vital—the more we write, the better writers we become. Consequently, participation in the online environment will be based on mandatory class activities. Since so much of professional writing is collaborative, students are expected to work with their peers in a professional manner. Peer reviews and group work will assess the collaborative skills. In an online class, success depends on students staying in contact with the instructor, communicating with their groups, and working to consistently meet deadlines.

*If you have any problem with using Sakai, contact the UF Computing Help Desk as soon as possible by calling (352) 392-HELP (4357) or visiting HUB 132. For more information, visit https://wiki.helpdesk.ufl.edu/FAQs/E-Learning.*

**Due Dates, Make-up Policy, and In-Class Work**

Papers and drafts are due online at the assigned deadline. Due dates are listed on the website calendar. **Late papers will not be accepted unless previously discussed with the instructor. Failure of technology is not an excuse.** If illness or injury prevents a student from turning in a paper on time, the student should consult with the instructor to turn in the work as soon as is feasible given the situation. Please be aware that some activities like peer reviews are due on particular times because they involve other students, so **your late submission may impact your peers.**

**Academic Honesty**

As a University of Florida student, your performance is governed by the UF Student Honor Code, (https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx). The Honor Code requires Florida students to neither give nor receive unauthorized aid in completing all assignments. Violations include cheating, plagiarism, bribery, and misrepresentation, all defined in detail at the above site.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

- Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student’s own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

  1. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

  2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8, October, 2013)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire Student Honor Code. The University Writing Program takes plagiarism very seriously, and treats instances of
plagiarism as dishonesty and as a failure to comply with the scholarly requirements of this course. You commit plagiarism when you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own.

*Important tip:* There should never be a time when you copy and paste something from the Internet and don't provide the exact location and citation information for the source.

If a student plagiarizes all or any part of any assignment, he or she will be awarded a failing grade on the assignment. Additionally, instructors may impose a course grade penalty and report any incident of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. Each student's work may be tested for its originality against a wide variety of databases by anti-plagiarism sites to which the University subscribes, and negative reports from such sites may constitute proof of plagiarism. Other forms of academic dishonesty will also result in a failing grade on the assignment as a minimum penalty. Examples include cheating on a quiz or citing phony sources or quotations.

**General Education Learning Outcomes**

Students must pass this course with a “C” or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C). Earning general education composition credit, students will

- Demonstrate forms of effective writing (focusing on analyses, arguments, and proposals)
- Learn different writing styles, approaches, and formats and successfully adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts; effectively revise and edit their own writing and the writing of others
- Organize complex arguments in writing, using thesis statements, claims, and evidence
- Employ logic in arguments and analyze their own writing and the writing of others for errors in logic
- Write clearly and concisely consistent with the conventions of standard written English
- Use thesis sentences, claims, evidence, and logic in arguments

The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Course grades now have two components. To receive University Writing Requirement (WR) credit (E6), a student must earn a course grade of C or higher and papers must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Conferring credit for the University Writing Requirement, this course requires that papers conform to the following assessment rubric. More specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments may be delivered during the course of the semester.

**Diversity and Class Conduct**

As a Professional Communication class, it is vital that students show respect for each other's views. It is also important to respect time. As many of the assignments include group work, students should be prompt in both responses and submitting work to the group. Failure to do so can result in failure of the group to function and complete assignments in a timely manner.

**Conferences and Writing Studio**

Students are encouraged to make an appointment to consult with the instructor for virtual office hours if there are questions about progress in the course, work underway, or any other course-related concerns. Having conferences on assignments is often the best way to improve the quality of final drafts. The *Writing Studio* also offers one-on-one assistance on writing projects and is available online to students of all levels.

**Evaluations**
Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last week of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu.

**Students with Disabilities**

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.