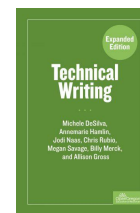


COM 313-005 - Technical and Professional Communications - Fall 2023

Instructor: Dr. Davida Scharf
E-mail: scharf@njit.edu
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays before and after class. [book an appointment online](#)
Class Time: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:00-2:30 pm
Room: CKB 341
Mode of Instruction: Face-to-face
Course Website: canvas.njit.edu
Required eTextbook: [Technical Writing](#) by Allison Gross, et al. Open Oregon via Pressbooks. (free, open etextbook).
Other reading: [The Essentials of Technical Communication](#) by Elizabeth Tebeaux and Sam Dragga. Any edition. Available for consultation in the NJIT Library.
[Style and ethics of communication in science and engineering](#) by Humphrey, & Holmes, J. W. (2009).. Morgan & Claypool Publishers. Ebook available at the NJIT Library.



[Technical Writing Essentials: Introduction to Professional Communications in the Technical Fields](#) by Suzan Last. (free, open etextbook).

[The Elements of Style](#) by Strunk & White. (original edition by Strunk is free ebook)

Course Overview

Successful completion of COM313 satisfies a 300-level GER and is a requirement for many majors. For all of your professional career, you will be communicating who you are and what you know by writing and speaking. The goal of this course is simply to give you as much practice as possible in professional modes of communication so that you are able to present yourself well and feel confident and at ease doing so. Prerequisites: HUM 102 with a grade of C or higher, and one History and Humanities GER 200 level course with a grade of C or higher.

Learning Outcomes (LOs)

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

1. WRITE: Write and revise various types of professional technical communications to produce a set of documents demonstrating your ability to write clearly and accurately in a concise professional style.
2. EXPLAIN: Read and interpret material on technology and explain the ideas, issues, and problems involved in writing about technology and in workplace writing.
3. RESEARCH: Demonstrate information literacy: the ability to formulate appropriate questions, find, select, assess, and analyze information sources, both print and electronic, from the open web and the NJIT Library, and to credit, integrate, and synthesize those sources in your own work.

4. COLLABORATE: Develop collaborative work habits, including those necessary for effective cooperation with other students, instructors, and support tools.

5. SELF-CORRECT: Identify your own strengths and weaknesses in writing.

[See which assignments are associated with each learning outcome.](#)

About Our Course Technology

We will use Canvas and Zoom (if necessary) for class communications and meetings. We will be using small groups within Canvas to facilitate discussions, using Canvas Discussions, Conferences, and Google Docs within Canvas for collaboration. You are expected to be fluent with the technologies used in this course, Canvas, the Online NJIT Library, or any other technologies, we may use. If you are having trouble, first seek help using self-tutorials, classmates or peers, [helpdesk](#), [askalibrarian](#), etc. Let me know if you cannot get your questions answered on your own and I will be happy to help you.

Class Rules

Attendance and participation are important for success in all jobs, courses, social situations, and meetings. Writing courses are designed to be process-oriented, which makes regular participation essential to academic growth. **In-class activities will be worth 30% of your final grade.**

In-class Writing will be frequent, both graded and ungraded, to help you develop your skills as a writer.

Always bring a device to class on which you can easily write and share your work. **Email and Gdrive** I will be using your official NJIT email address only. Please check it frequently. To access Google Drive you must be signed in to your NJIT Google account.

Late Submission of Work All work must be submitted by the deadline posted on Canvas. All in-class work must be submitted by the end of class. If the dates are missing or seem wrong, email me.

NJIT Honor Code The [NJIT Honor Code](#) will be strictly upheld. **Students with Disabilities** Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids, and services to ensure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of their disability. Any student who feels they may need an accommodation should contact [The Office of Accessibility Resources and Services](#).

Assignments, Grading, and Weighting (dates subject to change)

All graded assignments will be worth 100 points and be converted to letter grades at the end of the term. The points for each assignment will be posted in Canvas.

Grade	Final Percentage	Significance
A	90.1-100	Superior
B+	86.7-90.0	Excellent
B	80.1-86.6	Very Good
C+	76.7-80.0	Good
C	70.1-76.6	Acceptable
D	60.1-70.0	Minimum
F	00.0-60.0	Inadequate

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Assignments will be weighted as indicated in the Assignments table below.

Due dates may change--Consult canvas for definitive dates.

	MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS (dates subject to change) Name and Description See also details Learning Outcomes Matrix	% of Grade	Approximate Due Dates D=draft; R=revision
	Class participation and low-stakes assignments. You will be writing during almost every class. You will submit your work in Word (.doc or .docx files or Google docs) via Canvas. In-class writing will generally be graded for completion. You must be on time, physically present, and participate actively. LOs: 1,2,3,4,5	30%	ongoing
#1	Employment Materials LOs: 1,2,4,5 (Major Assignment)	15%	Sep 13 (D); Sept. 24(R)
#2	Researched Writing (3 parts) LOs: 1,2,3,5 (Major Assignment)	15%	Sept 24 (PT 2A); Oct 1 (2b) Oct 8 (2C); Oct 15 (draft); Oct 29 (FINAL)
#3	Lab Report (Short Assignment) LOs: 1,2,3,4,5	25%	Nov 5 (D); Nov 19 (R)
#4	Proposal LOs: 1,2,3,4,5 (Short Assignment)		Nov 29(D); Dec 10 R)
#5	Progress Report LOs: 1,2,3,4,5 (Major Assignment) (In lieu of final exam)	15%	Dec 15 (Reading Day)
	Last date for any revised assignments NO KIDDING		Dec 15 (Reading Day)

The best method I know to improve writing is through repeated revisions. Assignments must be submitted on time so I can provide timely feedback, and you can edit your work. Turning in any assignments for the first time at the end of the semester fails to demonstrate the progress expected and will result in a lowered grade or failure in the course. You must keep all your assignments, drafts, and other coursework throughout the semester in case there is a technical or another issue and because you will need to refer to your own work to write your Final Progress Report. Unless stated otherwise, major and short assignments are due by 11:59 pm on Sunday nights.

GRADING OF DRAFTS AND REVISIONS: For assignments labeled *Draft* please turn in the best you can do, a serious attempt. This should not be your first draft, but the first draft you show me for feedback. Put it aside for a day, then come back to it and edit it before submitting it. This draft will receive comments. that will NOT count. However, if you don't turn in a substantial draft in time, then the grade

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for the final version will drop by a full letter grade. There isn't time for me to comment on every item that could be improved. So in addition to my feedback, please make all revisions YOU feel will improve your writing. Only making the revisions I suggest may not significantly improve your grade, even if you are already a decent writer. All writing can be improved! Use the grading rubrics to guide your work.

YOU WILL IMPROVE YOUR WRITING AND YOUR GRADE ONLY IF YOU TAKE THE TIME TO UNDERSTAND YOUR OWN WRITING ISSUES, TO CRITICALLY REVIEW YOUR OWN WORK, AND MAKE MANY SUBSTANTIVE REVISIONS TO IMPROVE YOUR TEXT.

ChatGPT and other writing and research support tools: Use of Grammarly, word processing spell and grammar checking software, outside human readers, ChatGPT and related tools are allowed in this class. An explanation of how, and how extensively you used such aids must be noted at the end of your submission in a separate paragraph entitled Support Tools Used. Any additional requirements regarding these tools will be specified in individual assignments.