

COM 313-002: TECHNICAL WRITING

TERM: Spring 2025

PROFESSOR: Kevin Hall

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LOCATION: FMH 307

CLASS MEETING: Tuesday/Thursday 1-220

Catalog Description: An advanced writing course combining theory with practice to prepare students as technical writers. Analyze complex communication situations and design appropriate responses through tasks that involve problem solving, rhetorical theory, document design, oral presentations, ethical considerations and gender equity issues.

Course Goals: Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Recognize and analyze the rhetorical dimensions in written documents by producing written and critical responses to course readings.
- Use writing as a tool for critical thinking, reflection and communication.
- Understand writing choices and how to make ethical writing decisions.
- Practice the writing process by using brainstorming, invention, and revision strategies.
- Construct clear, grammatical sentences and produce well-organized texts that exhibit an attention to audience, genre, and purpose.
- Learn how to apply basic principles of document design to clarify writing.

Prerequisites: ENGL 102 with a grade of C or higher, and one History and Humanities GER 200 level course with a grade of C or higher.

Office Hours: I am on campus Tuesdays and Thursdays, usually starting at 930am. Please email me to set up appointments on those days.

Required Texts: All readings and links will be provided before class starts on Tuesdays. Recommended texts will be provided as the course progresses.

Grade Breakdown:

Technical Assignments- 30%

Participation- 30%

In-Class Writing Assignments/Quizzes- 10%

Final Project- 30%

Participation is crucial for doing well in this course. Please come to class prepared and ready to discuss the material. More information on these assignments will be provided during the semester.

Class Rules:

- Please come to class on time. I will mark you absent if you are more than 25 minutes late.
- Keep your phones on silent and DO NOT answer them unless it is an emergency.
- Laptops are permitted *but only* for relevant coursework.
- Respect each other. We will be reviewing and critiquing each other's work A LOT during the semester. Do not name-call or use ad hominem attacks.

NJIT University Code on Academic Integrity: The New Jersey Institute of Technology is an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge through teaching and research. We expect our graduates to assume positions of leadership within their professions and communities. Honesty in your academic work will develop into professional integrity. The NJIT Code of Academic Integrity embodies a spirit of mutual trust and intellectual honesty that is central to the very nature of the university and represents the highest possible expression of shared values among the members of the university community. All assignments submitted shall be considered "graded work" and all aspects of your coursework are covered by the Code on Academic Integrity. All projects and homework assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise specified. The full text of the NJIT University Code on Academic Integrity can be found at www.njit.edu/education/pdf/academic-integrity-code-pdf.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: More than 3 *unexcused* absences will negatively impact your grade. Do not expect to do well in this class if you just do all the work without actually showing up to class. A significant portion of your grade is participation. If you don't show up, you cannot participate. Excused absences are reserved for documented professional commitments, illness, or religious observances; as with any other professional context, make requests for excused absences in courteous advance. When you miss class for something unforeseen, send me an email whenever you are able.

NOTE: If you need to miss class due to a religious holiday/observance, please consult with me ahead of time so I may accommodate you. You will not be penalized for missing class due to these obligations.

Special Needs: Every attempt will be made to accommodate qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability, please see me as early in the semester as possible to discuss the necessary accommodations, and/or contact Student Disability Services at 973-596-3420.

This semester should be challenging and fruitful. However, don't be embarrassed if you're having trouble. Ask for help. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone.

There are many helpful resources available on campus, including the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (C-CAPS). Here is a quote from their web page (<https://www.njit.edu/counseling/>):

A Note on Generative AI: AI tools will be a topic of discussion throughout the semester. The intersection of AI and technical writing is ever-evolving and requires further investigation. However, students will be expected to generate their own work without the use of AI assistance.

The Writing Center: (Central King Building G17)

The Writing Center is available for free 45-minute individual and group appointments with professional and peer writing consultants both onsite. This resource is intended to help you to improve your communication and writing skills. Tutors can help with planning assignments, improving your writing, refining an essay or multimedia project, or other communication-based needs. For more, check out [Center Hours & Tutoring Sessions | whatever stamp 7.69 2/4/2020 \(njit.edu\)](https://www.njit.edu/center-hours-tutoring-sessions)

COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: This is subject to change, assignment due dates will vary based on how the semester goes.

WEEK ONE-Course Introduction, The Three Cs of Tech Writing, Tech Writing Basics

WEEK TWO- ASSIGNMENT 1 INTRODUCED: “On The Job Hunt”

Resumes and CVs, “Selling Yourself to Businesses”

WEEK THREE- Research/Writing Days for Assignment #1, 1-on-1 conferences to be scheduled as needed

WEEK FOUR-ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE!

WEEK FIVE- Writing for Different Audiences, Introduction to Context and Perspectives in Technical Writing

WEEK SIX- Ethical Considerations- Automation vs. Humanity, Viewing of “The Brain Center at Whipple’s”

WEEK SEVEN-TAKE-HOME MIDTERM TO BE HANDED OUT Intro to T.O.A.D.S.

WEEK EIGHT- Following Directions: Instruction Sets and Guidelines, T.O.A.D.S Presentation

WEEK NINE-Technical Writing and the Environment, ESG, Climate Change, and Other Considerations

WEEK TEN- Technical Writing and the Law, Contracts, Violations, and More!

WEEK ELEVEN- FINAL PROJECT ANNOUNCED

REST OF SCHEDULE TO BE DETERMINED

NOTE: The syllabus is a working document, and will be modified based on student feedback and semester progression.