ENGLISH 333

Technical Writing: Effectively Presenting Yourself and Your Ideas

Image Credit: detail from *The Murmuring Shell* by Enrique Martínez Celaya

Course Description

English 333, Technical Writing, prepares students to read, conduct research, and communicate more effectively in a range of academic, professional, and public settings. Specifically, you will complete a number of projects designed to acquaint you with the audiences and types of documents you are likely to use as you advance in your educational and professional careers. As successful communication in the 21st century requires writers to engage their audiences in a variety of media and formats, we'll study and produce both print and digital genres this semester.

Two values are key to our work this semester:

- Writing and speaking are rhetorical: effective communicators must carefully consider their audiences and their purposes as they plan, draft, and revise their communications.
- Academic, professional, and public audiences often differ in how they read and respond to communications: effective communicators must learn to recognize and negotiate such shifting demands in each new context they face.

English 333 is a GEC *writing-intensive course* (students must write a minimum of 5,000 words) designed to challenge you to think critically about visual design and analyze different rhetorical situations. In our class, we'll produce a group of documents that work together to present yourself and your ideas: a Researched Infographic, Professional Application Materials, a Website, and a Final Portfolio of revised work. Throughout the semester, we'll also complete introductions and memos that discuss your research, content, and design decisions. This course is semi-flipped, meaning that you'll do a good bit of your writing and revising in class and will be responsible for short textbook assignments outside of class.

Quick Information

ENG 333 - H004, Spring 2023

Tu/Th 11:00-12:15 in LAB 201

Dr. Rachael Fowler

Rachael.Fowler@usm.edu

Office: LAB 338A

Office Hours: Wed. 10:00-3:00 and also by appointment

Communication The easiest way to contact me is by email. I will do my best to answer within 48 hours on weekdays, but may take longer to reply over the weekend. While you are free to email any day at any time, I also reserve the right to not answer emails after 5:00 pm. To talk in person, my office hours are on Wednesdays from 10:00-3:00 in LAB 338A. If this time doesn't work for you, let me know. We can always schedule an alternative time to meet.

Required Materials

Practical Strategies for Technical Communication: A Brief Guide for frequent required readings and homework assignments (buy the e-text, 3rd edition, from the USM bookstore)

Consistent Laptop/Computer Access to find provided resources and produce/submit all homework and major assignments on Canvas

A Notebook In Class to take notes during class discussions, lessons, and workshops

Online Access to access the online components of this course you must first go to https://usm.instructure.com/login/canvas, then follow the log-in instructions. You will need to have your EMPLID and password (the same information you use to access SOAR and register for classes). If you have any questions or run into difficulty accessing the Canvas material for this course, please call the iTech Help Desk at 601-266-4357 or helpdesk@usm.edu. You can also get specific instructions on how to use components of Canvas by visiting www.usm.edu/lec.
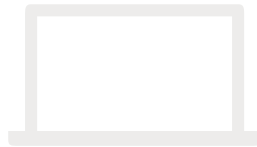
Our Goals

Student Learning Outcomes English 333 is a GEC course at USM, and students taking this course are expected to meet the following GEC learning outcomes:

- the student is able to develop a topic and present ideas through writing in an organized, logical, and coherent form and in a style that is appropriate for the discipline and the situation.
- the student can observe conventions of Standard English grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage.
- the student can find, use, and cite relevant information.

Composition Program Outcomes In addition, the Composition Program at USM has identified specific learning outcomes for each of its writing courses that are meant to complement our GEC outcomes. At the completion of English 333, students will be able to:

- Analyze a writing task and its rhetorical context, including the purpose of the document, its audience, its uses, and its constraints.
- Understand the basic features of several academic, professional, and public genres, and how to modify these features in response to new audiences and situations.
- Create usable, persuasive, clear, accurate, and readable documents.
- Understand the specific expectations of audiences in your chosen academic and professional field, and to adapt your communications to more effectively address these expectations.
- Develop a professional style of working in teams and managing group projects.
- Conduct more advanced research in a variety of contexts, and to more effectively incorporate this research in your writing.

Attendance (20%)

To create a collaborative space, we depend on each other to show up prepared and ready to participate. To be counted present, you must be on time to class, be prepared, actively participate, not be distracted by technology or others, and stay the whole class period. Your attendance grade for each class period will be available on Canvas. I will keep in mind that everyone has a different comfort level with types of participation, but if your participation is lacking overall, that will be reflected in your attendance grade. If you're ever unsure about or unhappy with your attendance evaluation, I'm happy to talk one-on-one about ways to help you improve.

Writing Process Assignments (15%)

We'll complete frequent assignments in-class and for homework which will help you to form an effective writing and learning process by referencing our textbook, brainstorming, drafting, workshopping, revising, and reflecting.

Researched Infographic and Memo (20%)

In this project, you'll produce an infographic about an organization you'd like to form. Your goal will be to inform your audience about this organization and present a call to action. This infographic will include appropriate research, visual design, and text. You will also complete a memo that details your research, design, and content decisions.

This infographic is the first document in the unified collection of work we're building this semester, meaning that it should coordinate with your Professional Application Materials and Professional Website (see below). Keep this in mind when choosing and pitching your organization as that choice, and your presentation of it, will become part of your professional brand. We'll complete this researched project early in the semester so that you can reference and utilize it when appropriate in your other documents and so that you have time to revise and resubmit if you decide to do so.

Professional Application Materials (15%)

In this project, you'll locate a position/opportunity you'd like to apply to (a job or internship). Then we'll complete your resume, cover letter, and a follow-up email. These materials are a part of the unified collection of documents we're building this semester, meaning they will lead you towards your Professional Website (see below) and may also reference your Researched Infographic (see above) if necessary. Keep this in mind when choosing the position you'd like to write your documents towards.

Professional Website and Memo (15%)

In this project, you'll appropriately transfer your professional documents content to a website format, adjusting your included information, register of writing, and design as appropriate. You may adapt your Researched Infographic to include if appropriate. You will also complete a memo that details your content and design choices.

Final Portfolio (15%)

In this project, you'll compile your *fully revised* Research Infographic and Memo and your *fully revised* Professional Application Materials. To introduce these documents to your audience, you'll write a reflective memo that explains the documents included and also references specifics from them appropriately to detail your revisions and the skills you've learned this semester.

For program assessment purposes, some portfolios may be randomly selected for institutional review at the conclusion of the semester. In such cases, portfolios will be collected randomly from among all available sections of English 333. This review is intended solely to improve the quality of the curriculum and will not affect your grade in any way.

Grade Breakdown

90-100%	= A
80-89.9%	= B
70-79.9%	= C
60-69.9%	= D
0-59.9%	= F

In order to receive at least a **C** grade in this course, you must satisfactorily complete all of the following:

- Consistently attend and participate in class sessions in a meaningful and respectful manner
- Submit all major assignments including the Researched Infographic and Memo, the Professional Application Materials, the Professional Website and Memo, and the Final Portfolio
- Consistently complete required Writing Process Assignments both in class and on Canvas
- Communicate with peers and instructor in a professional and respectful manner
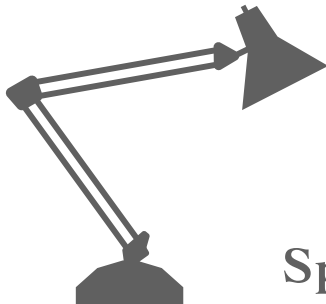
Spotlight on 3 Class Policies

1. Two Free Absences

You may miss 2 days of class with no penalty to your attendance grade (they'll be marked excused on Canvas). After those first 2 absences, each additional absence will be marked 0% on Canvas. If you are absent on a day when graded, in-class work is due, or when we're completing a workshop, you will not receive credit for that work.

2. Late Work

To promote effective student habits, a healthy writing/research process, and an efficient community of collaborators, late work will not be accepted this semester. Any work turned in late will receive a 0% grade.

3. Revisions

To promote writing progress, I allow revisions. To revise an assignment submitted to Canvas, you must email me within 48 hours of my feedback being posted on Canvas and request to revise. We will then discuss a deadline for the resubmission and any help you need to make revisions. Your assignment grade will be adjusted based on the quality of your revision. You can revise assignments as many times as you need to earn the grade you desire as long as you follow the revision policies outlined here.

The Final Portfolio (due 5/11) cannot be revised for a higher grade after submission. All other approved revisions are due 5/4.

Writing Center The Writing Center is a friendly space that provides free, individualized feedback and support to help Southern Miss students succeed with writing assignments for any class. The Center offers one-to-one consultations for any stage of the writing process, from understanding the assignment and brainstorming ideas to revising and editing. To make an appointment, visit usm.edu/writing-center. Select "Schedule an Appointment" and create a WC Online account. The Writing Center is located in Cook Library 112, between Starbucks and the Speaking Center. For more information, visit usm.edu/writing-center or call the center at (601) 266-4821.

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) Student Accessibility Services (SAS) is Southern Miss's designated office to assist the University in its commitment to protect the civil rights of students with disabilities. SAS protects students from discrimination and offers reasonable accommodations to give them equitable access to university courses and resources. Disabilities covered under the ADA may include but are not limited to ADHD, learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, physical disabilities, chronic health disorders, temporary injuries, and pregnancies. If a student feels that they need classroom or housing accommodations based on a disability they should contact SAS by phone at 601-266-5024, by email at sas@usm.edu, in person by visiting the SAS office located in Bond Hall Room 114, or online at www.usm.edu/sas.

Mental Wellbeing USM recognizes that students sometimes experience challenges that make learning difficult. If you find that life stressors such as academic workload, anxiety, depression, relationship problems, difficulty concentrating, alcohol/drug problems, or other stressful experiences are interfering with your academic or personal success, consider contacting Student Counseling Services on campus at 601-266-4829. More information is also available at https://www.usm.edu/student-counseling-services. All students are eligible for free, confidential individual or group counseling services. In the event of emergency, please call 911 or contact the counselor on call at 601-606-HELP (4357).

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create and maintain a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a faculty member. I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on USM's campus with certain University officials responsible for the investigation and remediation of sexual misconduct. The information will remain private and will only be shared with those officials necessary to resolve the matter. If you would like to speak in confidence, resources available to students include Confidential Advisors with the Shafer Center for Crisis Intervention, the Counseling Center, Student Health Services, and Clergy. More information on these resources and University Policies is available at https://www.usm.edu/sexual-misconduct.

Academic Integrity Statement Academic misconduct involves deception to improve a grade, earn course credit, complete a degree, or create an unfair academic advantage for oneself or disadvantage to another in the academic community. All students at the University of Southern Mississippi should familiarize themselves with the Student Academic Integrity Policy to become familiar with what actions constitute academic misconduct, a violation of that policy. Southern Miss values "an approach to academics, research, and personal conduct based on integrity and civility" and the Student Academic Integrity Policy supports that University value. Forms of academic misconduct may include, but are not limited to:

Cheating - Cheating is a broad category of academic misconduct characterized by an attempt to gain academic advantage through inappropriate means or impede the academic achievement of others.

Plagiarism - The use of another person's or source's words, creative works, or ideas without appropriate quotation or attribution; claiming or submitting for academic credit the work of another.

Lying - The misrepresentation of one's academic work, lying to an instructor to increase a grade, or lying to an instructor regarding an academic integrity violation.

Acquiring or Distributing Information Inappropriately - The act of distributing or obtaining course assignments or examination questions or answers from sources not approved by the instructor or proctor (includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized use of the Internet, test banks associated with course text and previous student work).

Fabrication or Falsification of Data - Any statement of untruth in any matters related to the academic experience, including but not limited to forgery; false claims of authorship; falsification of information, data, or results derived from or related to research or to laboratory experiments.

Stealing or Defacing - The act of intentionally taking, transferring, defacing, or destroying, without right or permission, any property related to the academic mission of the University, including an attempt to impede others.

Multiple Submissions - The submission, more than once, without authorization by any instructors involved, of substantial portions of the same work, including oral reports or work submitted for retaken courses.

Conspiracy - The act of agreeing or planning with any person to commit any violation of the Student Academic Integrity Policy.

If you commit an act of academic misconduct, sanctions ranging from resubmission of work to course failure may occur to the possibility of receiving a grade of "XF" for the course, which will be on the student's transcript with the notation "Failure due to academic misconduct." Should you be accused of academic misconduct, please visit the Academic Integrity Website or email integrity@usm.edu for any questions you may have about your rights and about the academic integrity process. Southern Miss provides many campus resources that are detailed in this syllabus and will be discussed by your professors; please utilize those to help you learn. At Southern Miss, we care about your personal work and learning journey.

Researched Infographic and Memo
Present Your Ideas in Print

Day	In Class	Due on Canvas by midnight
Thursday, 1/19	Discuss syllabus, discuss class and individual goals for this semester	
Tuesday, 1/24	Discuss the rhetorical situation, guided brainstorm to prepare for Researched Infographic and Memo	Short Assignment on "What is Technical Communication" in our textbook
Thursday, 1/26	Discuss prompt for Researched Infographic and Memo, sees sample infographics, personal plan for this unit's work and deadlines	
Tuesday, 1/31	Guided brainstorm to decide on type of organization to present, guided in-class research on similar organizations' communications (keep this for use in your Memo)	Short Assignment on "The Goals of Document Design" in our textbook
Thursday, 2/2	Discuss programs to use to produce your infographic, discuss types of infographic you can make (based on your organization), select organization to present and type of infographic and program to use	Short Assignment on "Understanding Design Principles" and "Designing Print Documents"
Tuesday, 2/7	In-class handout on the organization of the text you'll include in the infographic, the kind of research to include, and how to present that research	Short Assignment on "Creating Graphics" in our textbook
Thursday, 2/9	Discuss visual structure/design choices, in-class writing	
Tuesday, 2/14	Discuss Memo requirements with annotated sample, discuss types of research to include and how to include it in the Memo, in-class writing	
Thursday, 2/16	In-class writing on Researched Infographic and Memo	
Tuesday, 2/21	Mardi Gras Break — No Class	
Thursday, 2/23	In-class writing on Researched Infographic and Memo	Draft of Researched Infographic
Tuesday, 2/28	In-class writing on Researched Infographic and Memo	Draft of Memo
Thursday, 3/2	Peer workshop on Researched Infographic and Memo	
Sunday, 3/5		Researched Infographic and Memo

Professional Application Materials
Present Yourself in Print

Day	In Class	Due on Canvas by midnight
Tuesday, 3/7	Reflection, discuss prompt for Professional Application Materials, see samples	
Thursday, 3/9	Out-of-Class Writing Day	Short Assignment on "Writing Resumes," "Writing Job-Application Letters," and "Follow-Up Letters or Emails after an Interview" in our textbook, Short Assignment to check-in
Tuesday, 3/14	Spring Break — No Class	
Thursday, 3/16	Spring Break — No Class	
Tuesday, 3/21	In-class writing focused on resumes, see annotated sample	
Thursday, 3/23	In-class writing focused on Cover Letters, see annotated sample	
Tuesday, 3/28	In-class writing focused on Follow-Ups, see annotated sample	
Thursday, 3/30	Out-of-Class Writing/Revising Day	Draft of Professional Application Materials
Tuesday, 4/4	In-class work on Professional Application Materials, peer workshop on Professional Application Materials	Professional Application Materials

Professional Website and Memo
Adapt Your Materials to a Digital Genre

Day	In Class	Due on Canvas by midnight
Thursday, 4/6	Reflection, discuss prompt for Professional Website and Memo, see sample Website and Memo	
Tuesday, 4/11	In-class work on Website and Memo, guided handout on choosing/adapting content for the website, choose program to use for the website	Short Assignment on "Designing Online Documents" in our textbook
Thursday, 4/13	In-class work on Website and Memo, discuss design decisions for website	
Tuesday, 4/18	In-class work on Website and Memo, discuss Memo requirements	Website Draft
Thursday, 4/20	Peer workshop on Website	
Tuesday, 4/25	In-class work on Website and Memo, post-workshop collaborations	Professional Website and Memo

Final Portfolio
Revise and Reflect

Day	In Class	Due on Canvas by midnight
Thursday, 4/27	Reflect, discuss prompt for the Final Portfolio, see samples, pre-writing for Memo	
Tuesday, 5/2	In-class writing/conferences for the Final Portfolio	Final Portfolio Check-In
Thursday, 5/4	In-class writing/conferences for the Final Portfolio	All approved revisions
Thursday, 5/11	Final Exam Week — No Class Period	Final Portfolio

Note: The instructor reserves the right to modify course dates/assignments as necessary. All changes will be announced in class, communicated by email, and reflected on Canvas.