Humanities Syllabi NJIT Syllabi

Fall 2019

ENG 352-001: Technical Writing

Jake Slovis

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.njit.edu/hum-syllabi

Jake Slovis
ENG 352-001: Technical Writing
Fall 2019

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 2:30-3:50
Room: MALL PC37
Email: Slovis@njit.edu
Office: Cullimore 312
Office Hours: Tuesday 4:00-6:00 or by appointment

Catalog Description: An advanced writing course. Combines current theory with actual 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, writing teams, audience awareness, ethical considerations, and gender equity issues.

Course Description: In this section of English 352, you will learn to create, adapt and revise technical documents for both expert and non-expert audiences. Since many of you have different professional goals and interests, this course will focus on transferable analytical and writing skills rather than addressing every convention and genre that you might encounter in your professional lives. This means that we will spend much of our time investigating the social context surrounding pieces of writing, and consider how authors use deliberate rhetorical strategies to communicate meaning within these texts. The course will also focus on the writing process, asking you to brainstorm topics, write drafts, and revise based on instructor or peer feedback.

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.
- Find, select, assess, and analyze information sources, both print and electronic, and to credit, integrate, and synthesize these sources in your own work.

Required Texts: Articles and links available on Canvas. These materials will generally be posted at the beginning of the week (Sunday), although on some occasions I will post course materials up to a week ahead of time. If you have any questions about these materials, feel free to reach out to me.

Online Essay Submission – All final projects need to be turned in through Canvas. I also require that students submit a printed copy in class. I will not accept an electronic copy in place of a hard copy. Both copies must be submitted in order for you to receive a grade.

In-class Writings – In-class writings, both graded and ungraded, will be used to help you develop your skills as a writer throughout the various stages of the writing process. There will be frequent in-class writing assignments designed to help you develop skills in constructing clear and effective deliverables.

Attendance – Attendance is critical to your success in this class. Participation in in-class activities, discussions, and workshops will contribute to your knowledge, ability, and performance. Participation cannot be demonstrated by chronic absences or sickness, similar to the professional world. At a minimum, this means showing up on time, being prepared, and contributing to class discussions. Your level of engagement with the material will subsequently impact how much you get from the class.

You may miss up to one week of class without penalty. Every subsequent unexcused absence will result in the deduction of participation points. If you are absent for legitimate reasons (family emergency, illness) you must provide a doctor's note or a note from your dean. Six or more absences may result in a failing grade. Two late arrivals (more than ten minutes) will be marked as an absence. Late arrivals after twenty minutes will be documented as an absence.

Attendance on workshop days is mandatory. If you know in advance that you will miss one of these days, please meet with me to arrange an alternative solution.

Canvas – We'll also be using the web-based Canvas course software. I will post the syllabus and syllabus updates there, and I'll also post course documents and assignments. Be sure that you have created a Net ID; you'll need it to access the site.

Cell Phones must be turned off or switched to silent mode at all times. Please respect the learning environment.

Formal Projects: You will have three formal projects. These assignments will be evaluated according to project rubrics, which will also be posted on Canvas, and will be given a letter grade. Full details on these projects will be uploaded to Canvas.

Grade Breakdown: The three formal projects will combined to make up 75% of your grade. Each one of these projects will focus on the components of technical writing that we will discuss in the course. The grade breakdown is as follows:

Project 1— Website Analysis 20%
Project 2— Instruction Set 15%
Project 3— Analytical Report 40%
Research Poster and Presentation 10%
Low-Stakes Assignments and Participation— 15%

Please Note: On occasion, examples of student work will be presented anonymously in class. Student writing is an invaluable resource that is used to illustrate writing strategies. Authors' names are never included on the distributed copies

Grading Rubric for Formal Projects:

A/A-
The project responds to all parts of the assignment with depth and demonstrates a nuanced understanding of audience awareness and organization. At the sentence level, the project demonstrates strong facility with language, uses effective vocabulary, and demonstrates a strong control of the mechanics of Standard English. Finally, the project is well developed, and incorporates outsides sources (if needed) in an effective manner.

B+/B/B-
The project addresses all parts of the assignment, and demonstrates a solid understanding of audience awareness. While organized, the assignment shows less development and insight than an A paper, particularly in its attention to detail. The project shows good control of the mechanics of Standard English, and incorporates outside sources (if needed) with success, and demonstrates good sentence variety and sentence clarity.

C+/C/C-
The project responds to most of the assignment adequately, but may be somewhat limited. The project shows a competent understanding of audience awareness and organization; however, it may be somewhat superficial. The project is thinly developed and inconsistent. While the project shows satisfactory facility with language, it may demonstrate limited control of grammar, syntax and sentence variety.

D+/D/D-
The project does not respond to all parts of the assignment and is underdeveloped. The project lacks an understanding of audience awareness and is disorganized at the paragraph level. The project demonstrates weak facility with language, and is unclear at the sentence level to the point where it interferes with meaning and sentence sense.

F
The project fails to accomplish its designated task, adapt to its audience, or develop key ideas. The project is unfinished, and missing several parts of the assignment.

Please Note: I do not give extra credit, particularly for those who have failed to fulfill the participation aspect of this course. Writing courses are designed to be process oriented, which makes regular participation essential to academic growth.

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 out 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.

Student Accommodations: 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.

The Writing Center – The Writing Center (G17 Central King) is available for 45-minute individual and group appointments with professional writing tutors both onsite and online. This resource is intended to help you 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. To make an appointment, please visit https://njit.mywconline.com

Course Schedule

Please note: All readings and low-stakes writing assignments will be posted to Canvas. This schedule is tentative and subject to change.

Week	Topic/Readings/Assignments
Week 1 **9/3 - 9/5**	Introductions/ The Writing Process Readings: 9/5 "Shitty First Drafts" and "About Technical Writing"
Week 2 **9/10 - 9/12**	The Writing Process Readings: 9/10 "The Writing Process" 9/12 "Men's Men and Women's Women" Assignments: **Website Analysis Project Introduced**
Week 3 **9/17 - 9/19**	The Rhetorical Situation Readings: 9/17 "Reflecting the Style of Discourse Community" 9/19 "Sample Letters" (in-class reading)
Week 4 **9/24 - 9/26**	How Situation Defines Objectives Readings: 9/24 "10 Best" readings (in-class reading) 9/26 TBD Assignments:

	9/26 Website Analysis Draft
Week 5 **10/1 - 10/3**	Communicating Across Different Contexts Readings: 10/1 "Speak Like a Leader" video (in-class assignment) 10/3 "Writing for Your Readers" Assignments: **10/3 Website Analysis Project Due**
Week 6 **10/8 - 10/10**	Writing Choices and Ethics Readings: 10/8 "Ethics of Style" 10/10 "Communicating Ethically" Assignments: **Instruction Set Project Introduced**
Week 7 **10/15 - 10/17**	Instruction Sets Readings: 10/15 Instruction Set Samples and Recipes 10/17 "The Philosophy of Recipe Writing:" Assignments: **Analytical Report Project Introduced**
Week 8 **10/22 - 10/24**	Clarity and Style Readings: 10/22 "Editing for Readable Style" 10/24 TBD Assignments: **Instruction Set Evaluation/Analysis**
Week 9 **10/29 - 10/31**	Document Arrangement Readings: 10/29 "Analytical Reports" 10/31 Sample Feasibility Reports Assignments: **10/31 Instruction Set Project Due**
Week 10 **11/5 - 11/7**	Recommendation Reports Readings: 11/5 Sample Recommendation Repots 11/7 "Citing Sources" Assignments:

	11/7 Recommendation Report Project Description Due
Week 11 **11/12 - 11/14**	Research Practices/ Library Session Readings: TBD Assignments: **11/14 Discourse Analysis Paper**
Week 12 **11/19 - 11/21**	Discourse Communities Readings: 11/21 "A Humanistic Rationale for Technical Writing" Please bring sources for final project Assignment: **11/19 Recommendation Report Draft**
Week 13 **11/26** **No Class 11/28** **Thanksgiving**	Power of Technical Writing 11/16 Presentations
Week 14 **12/3 - 12/5**	Presentations
Week 15 **12/10**	Presentations **12/10 Final Recommendation Report Project Due**