# **English 30503 – Professional Writing [SECTION #]**

## Course Information

### Meetings

Semester: [Spring/Fall/Summer/Intersession] [year]

Day/Time: [meeting pattern] [time]

Location: [Please list your assigned classroom.]

### Contact Your Instructor

Instructor: [What would you like students to call you?]

Email: [Please list your official UArk email address.]

Office Location: [Please list your assigned office.]

Office Hours: [You are required to list **three** office hours per week.]

## Prerequisites

In order to take ENGL 30503, you must pass ENGL 10103 and **either** ENGL 10203 or ENGL 10303 with a grade of C or better.

## Course Materials

Alred, G. J., C. T. Brusaw, and W.E. Oliu. (2019). *Handbook of Technical Writing*, twelfth edition. Bedford/St. Martin’s, New York.

Markel, M. and S. A. Selber. (2019). *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*, third edition. Bedford/St. Martin’s, New York.

Both books are available to you via Blackbord using Inclusive Access. You can find the course textbooks by clicking on the FirstDay Materials link in your Blackboard course. If you do not want to use Inclusive Access, please remember to opt out by the deadline.

## Course Description

In this course, you will build on the writing and rhetorical skills you developed in Composition 1 and 2 to explore writing tasks in career-focused projects. You will learn strategies for professional writing in various circumstances, including document design, usability testing, communication ethics, and cooperative writing. You will also learn about tools for drafting, revision, editing, and proofreading.

You will complete five projects for this course. Over the course of the semester, you will be required to write **two reflective memos**. The first reflective memo is the **Course Goals Memo**, written in the first week of the semester, in which you set goals for yourself in the course. The second reflective memo is the **Self-Assessment Memo**, written in the last week of the semester, in which you assess your progress towards those goals. In the second project, you will create **career documents**—a resume and a cover letter—responding to a specific job ad. In the **correspondence** major project, you will write an inquiry letter to an organization, then respond to a partner’s inquiry letter. Next, you will learn about problem statements in an area of interest and write a **proposal** in response to a problem you and your groupmates define. The fourth and final major project is a **report**, in which you will work collaboratively to summarize your research on a major problem.

## Course Objectives

English 3053 – Professional Writing is a course designed to explore workplace genres and to develop and utilize strategies for designing, drafting, and revising effective professional communication documents. All projects and group work will be oriented towards refining communication skills in professional discourses.

By the end of this course, you will learn to:

1. Utilize principles of ethical professional communication in both formal and informal workplace genres;
2. Apply professional communication strategies to a variety of workplace situations;
3. Analyze audiences and purposes for various professional documents;
4. Conduct effective research, integrate evidence, and cite sources;
5. Plan, draft, and revise professional documents such as memos, resumes, correspondence, proposals, pitches, reports, and presentations;
6. Determine document organization, design, and style that considers both genre conventions and audience expectations and needs.

## Thinking Rhetorically about Audiences, Cultures, and Experiences

Technical writers write for audiences, and those audiences are almost never made up of people who think in the exact same ways as the writer(s). Part of being an effective technical communicator is understanding who your audience is, knowing their level of knowledge about your topic, and figuring out what they hope to gain from consulting your document. As the semester progresses, you will write in a range of technical genres for several different audiences. To help you learn how to do so effectively, we will center and practice principles of ethical technical communication and user-centered design.

We will begin each major assignment with a reading that allows us to examine a technical genre in detail while also learning about how technical writers adapt their texts based on the cultures, experiences, and needs of their audiences. For each example text, we’ll consider how the writer’s own experience and their audiences’ expectations shape the decisions they make as technical writers and document designers. During each project, we will choose and then research a specific audience so that you may design your documents to suit your audience’s needs. These practices will help us better understand how all writing is grounded in lived experiences of the cultures we come from and how those things impact our ability to communicate ethically with our audiences.

## Projects

In this course, you will complete four major projects, which make up the majority of your grade in the course. Each major project grade includes a proposal, a rough draft, and a final draft. Each project grade also reflects participation in peer review, conferences, and revision. Additionally, you will complete two mini-projects, which make up the remainder of your grade; these projects are short, and generally completed in a week’s time.

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| --- | --- |
| **Project Name** | **Project Weight** |
| Mini-Project: Course Goals Memo | 10% |
| Project #1: Career Documents | 20% |
| Project #2: Correspondence | 20% |
| Project #3: Proposal | 20% |
| Project #4: Report | 20% |
| Mini-Project: Reflective Memo | 10% |
| **Total Course Points** | 100% |

### Project #1: Reflective Memos (20%)

#### Course Goals Memo (10%) (Week 1)

The purpose of this project is twofold: **to set goals for the course** and **to practice a common workplace genre**, the memo. First, you will **learn** about professional writing and communication, the structure and organization of the course, and the grading contract. You’ll use that information to **create 3-4 goals for yourself** over the semester and **write them in memo format** for your instructor.

#### Reflective Memo (10%) (Week 15)

The purpose of this project is **to review your work from the semester** and **to evaluate how you worked towards the goals you set in the beginning of the semester.** First, you will review your Course Goals Memo from the beginning of the semester. Then, you’ll look over the projects you have completed for evidence of how you met those goals. You will **organize your findings in memo format** for your instructor.

### Project #2: Career Documents (20%)

The purpose of this project is to **create a set of career documents** (resume and cover letter) for a specific job ad of your choosing. With your instructor’s help, you’ll **find and analyze** an ad for a job in your field. Then, you’ll **create a resume and cover letter** geared specifically towards this position.

## Project #3: Correspondence (20%)

The purpose of this project is to **practice professional correspondence**. It is linked to Project #2, in that you will write correspondence about the same job ad. You’ll begin by **writing an inquiry or claim letter to an organization**. Then, you’ll exchange letters with a partner and **write a response or adjustment letter in response to your partner’s inquiry or claim**.

### Project #4: Proposal (20%)

The purpose of this project is to learn how the professional world uses documents to problem-solve by practicing another common genre: **the proposal**. First, you will **examine problem statements** to understand how problems and solutions are framed in writing. Then, with a group, you will **define a problem you want to solve** and **research solutions**. Each group member will **write a proposal for a solution of their choice.** Your instructor will specify whether you write an **internal** or **external** proposal and whether you write a **solicited** or **unsolicited** proposal.

## Project #5: Report (20%)

The purpose of this project is to **create a collaboratively written report** in response to a group member’s proposal. Once you have completed Project #3, you’ll work with your group to **choose a proposal to turn into a report**, then **write the report as a group**. Reports are documents that inform a particular audience about information that is relevant to them. How you research, write, and design this report depends on your rhetorical situation and the style of report you are writing. Your instructor will specify whether you write an **informational report** or a **recommendation report**.

## Course Grading Scale

This course uses a grading contract, so for an in-depth explanation of the course grading scale, please see the Grading Contract document. If you complete your major assignments, including the portfolio, and the majority of your weekly assignments, you will receive an “A” in the course. Grades below “A” are a result of not completing all weekly assignments or failing to properly complete a major assignment. Absences may also affect your grade; please see below.

## Course Policies

All class members are expected to abide by the course policies listed below. If you do not understand the course policies, please contact your instructor.

[INSTRUCTOR NOTE: You may not remove or change information in the following sections: Course Code of Ethics, Accommodations, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment, Course Recording Policy, and the beginning of the Academic Integrity section.

You *should* modify the ChatGPT policy in the Academic Integrity section, along with the Attendance, Classroom Disruption, Inclement Weather, Emergency Procedures, Communication Policy, and Feedback Policy sections.]

### Course Code of Ethics

This course adheres to a code of ethics designed specifically for professional and technical writing courses at the University of Arkansas. The code defines ethics as “choices we make that affect others for good or ill” (*Handbook of Technical Writing*, p. 166).

The discipline of professional and technical writing (PTW) at large recognizes the centrality of ethics as an element of composition (Walton, Moore, and Jones, 2019; Haas and Eble, eds., 2018; Agboka and Matveeva, eds., 2018); technical writers must do research, make careful choices, and test their work to create successful technical and professional writing projects.

From the beginning of a writing project, technical writers must think about how to communicate clearly, honestly, and with the audience’s best interests in mind. To learn technical writing, then, requires not only learning and practicing technical communication genres, but learning and practicing how we speak ethically to and for ourselves, other people, and organizations.

In this course, we will adhere to the following code of ethics, derived from Markel and Selber’s *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*.

1. Abide by copyright laws.
2. Abide by the University’s [Academic Integrity Policy](https://honesty.uark.edu/policy/index.php) and [Code of Student Life](https://handbook.uark.edu/23-24_Code_of_Student_Life_9.15.23.pdf).
3. Use and design social media according to the policies listed above.
4. Know where to find campus ethics resources ([Student Accountability,](https://accountability.uark.edu/) [Research Integrity and Compliance](https://rsic.uark.edu/)).
5. Tell the truth in your work.
6. Don’t mislead your audience.
7. Use design to highlight important ethical and legal information.
8. Be clear.
9. Avoid language that discriminates.
10. Cite your sources and your collaborators.

### Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides reasonable accommodation for their disabilities. Moreover, the University of Arkansas Academic Policy Series 1520.10 requires that students with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content.

If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact me privately at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through the Center for Educational Access. Visit the [CEA’s website](http://cea.uark.edu) for information on how to register. You can also email <ada@uark.edu> or call 479-575-3104.

### Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Anyone experiencing discrimination and/or sexual harassment while at the university may report it to The Equal Opportunity, Compliance, and Title IX office. Reports may be made by the person experiencing the harassment or by a third party, such as a witness to the harassment or someone who is told of the harassment.

For more information and to report allegations of discrimination and/or sexual harassment, visit the [Office of Equal Opportunity, Compliance, and Title IX’s website](https://oeoc.uark.edu/reporting/index.php). You can visit the office at 346 N. West Avenue (West Avenue Annex) or phone 479-575-4019 (voice) or 479-575-3646 (tdd).

### Course Recording Policy

Tape-recording and/or any other form of electronic capturing of lectures is expressly forbidden without prior permission of the instructor.

Persons authorized to take notes for the Center for Educational Access, for the benefit of students registered with the Center, will be permitted to do so, but such use still is limited to personal, non-commercial use. Similarly, you are permitted to reproduce notes for a student in this class who has missed class due to authorized travel, absence due to illness, etc.

If class goes remote temporarily, due to an emergency, a copy of the Zoom recording of that meeting will be posted to Blackboard.

### Academic Integrity

“As a core part of its mission, the University of Arkansas provides students with the opportunity to further their educational goals through programs of study and research in an environment that promotes freedom of inquiry and academic responsibility. Accomplishing this mission is possible only when intellectual honesty and individual integrity prevail. Each University of Arkansas student is required to be familiar with, and abide by, the University’s ‘Academic Integrity Policy,’ which may be found at the [Academic Initiatives and Integrity](https://honesty.uark.edu/policy/index.php) website. Students with questions about how these policies apply to a particular course or assignment should immediately contact their instructor.”

— Office of the Provost and Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs

#### Policy Regarding Reusing Classwork

The University defines plagiarism as “offering as one’s own work, the words, ideas, or arguments of another person or using the work of another without appropriate attribution by quotation, reference, or footnote.” In addition, submitting work you have turned in to fulfill requirements for another course may still constitute plagiarism. Please obtain your instructor’s permission before turning in previously submitted work. Refer to the [sanction rubric](http://honesty.uark.edu/sanction-rubric) on the Academic Initiatives and Integrity website for a list of specific violations covered by the University’s Academic Integrity Policy.

[Instructors: Please **choose one** of the following policies (either “Use Prohibited” or “Use Permitted with Citation) for your syllabus. For more on ChatGPT, please see the TA and Instructor Handbook.]

(USE PROHIBITED)

#### Using ChatGPT for Your Work in This Class

This is a course that asks you to work through the writing process and develop your own strategies for how to tackle each step of the process, from idea generation to drafting to revision to reflection. For this reason, I ask that you do not use artificial chatbots like ChatGPT to complete assignments for this class.

(USE PERMITTED WITH CITATION)

#### Using ChatGPT for Your Work in This Class

This is a course that asks you to work through the writing process and develop your own strategies for how to tackle each step of the process, from idea generation to drafting to revision to reflection. However, writing and technology are inextricably connected to one another. For this reason, I ask that if you use ChatGPT or other artificial chatbots at any point in the process you identify the ways it was used and cite any chatbot-written content that you quote, paraphrase, or summarize.

[This section should be in all syllabi]

#### Providing Course Materials to Course Hero, ChatGPT, and Other Sites

Please do not provide my course materials or your peers’ work to ChatGPT, Course Hero, Chegg, or similar sites. I also strongly recommend that you not provide your own work to any of these sites.

### Absence Policy

Absences that are recognized by university policy as excusable do not count towards your final absence total, so long as you inform your instructor of the absence and reason for the absence within a week. Students who will be missing class due to university events should provide a schedule of all planned absences at the start of the semester when possible. All other missed class meetings will count as an absence when tabulating your final grade. The following are considered excusable by the University of Arkansas’s official policy:

1. Illness of the student
2. Serious illness or death of a member of the student’s immediate family or other family crisis
3. University-sponsored activities for which the students’ attendance is required by virtue of scholarship or leadership/participation responsibilities
4. Religious observations as defined by the Students’ Religious Observances policy included below.
5. Jury duty or subpoena for court appearance
6. Military duty

#### Students’ Religious Observances Policy

“Although Christian religious holidays are reflected to some extent in the academic calendar of the university, holidays of other religious groups are not. When members of other religions seek to be excused from class for religious reasons, they are expected to provide their instructors with a schedule of religious holidays that they intend to observe, in writing, before the completion of the first week of classes. The Schedule of Classes should inform students of the university calendar of events, including class meeting and final examination dates, so that before they enroll they can take into account their calendar of religious observances. Scheduling should be done with recognition of religious observances where possible. However, faculty members are expected to allow students to make up work scheduled for dates during which the student’s religious observances are scheduled, to the extent possible.” (University of Arkansas Faculty Handbook, Section 2)

### Classroom Disruption

### Class discussions are interactive and diverse opinions will be shared; please be thoughtful in sharing your perspectives and responses with one another. Abusive language directed towards others will not be tolerated in the classroom.

### Other behaviors that can be disruptive are chatting and whispering during class, the use of electronic equipment, reading the paper during class, preparing to leave before class is over, and consistently arriving late to class. Please keep these disruptions to a minimum. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom may result in a request to leave the class and/or a referral to the Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct.

### Inclement Weather

**[For face-to-face classes only.]**

When the university is closed, all classes are also canceled. If a weather delay affects university operations, then class will be canceled if it is scheduled before the university resumes operations.

**[For online or remote classes only.]**

When the university is closed, all classes are also canceled. Since we are online, this may not affect us in terms of attendance, but weather can affect power and access to the internet or U of A resources. In this case, deadlines may be extended as appropriate. If power or internet outages affect your area but not the university, let me know as soon as you are able. Often there will still be cell phone connection so you can email.

**Emergency Procedures: [PLEASE DELETE THIS POLICY IF YOU ARE TEACHING AN ONLINE CLASSES.]**

Many types of emergencies can occur on campus, so it is crucial that we be prepared to respond appropriately in the event of severe weather, armed assailants, or fire alarms. In keeping with the detailed instructions found at **emergency.uark.edu**, if a weather emergency occurs during our class:

* Always follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel.
* If told to evacuate, do so immediately.
* If told to shelter-in-place, find a room, in the center of the building with no windows, on the lower level of the building.
* If you cannot get to the lowest floor, pick a hallway in the center of the building.

In the event of an armed assailant or physical attack (CADD):

* **C**ALL—9-1-1
* **A**VOID—If possible, self-evacuate to a safe area outside of the building.
* **D**ENY—Barricade doors with desks, chairs, bookcases or similar objects. Move to a place inside the room where you are not visible. Turn off the lights and remain quiet until police arrive.
* **D**EFEND- Use chairs, desks, cell phones or whatever is immediately available to distract

### Communications Policy

[Please consult the Course Guide and add your own!]

[At a minimum, your policy should answer these questions:

* How long should students expect to wait for an email response?
* When should students send a follow-up email or communication?
* What should students do if they cannot meet during your listed office hours?
* Are there any times (for example, during the weekend) when students should expect longer response times?

### Feedback Policy

[Please consult the Course Guide and add your own!]

[At a minimum, your policy should answer these questions:

* How quickly will you return feedback on major projects?
* How quickly will you return feedback on weekly assignments?
* What should students do if they have questions about your feedback?]

## Your Well-Being

I respect the fullness of your lives and responsibilities outside of this class. If you experience something that impedes your ability to learn in this class, I invite you to discuss this with me. You absolutely **do not**have to disclose the details of your circumstances, but you are welcome to approach me so we might locate resources or other guidance for you.

Here is a list of campus resources that you might find useful in your time here:

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| **Jane B. Gearhart Full Circle Food Pantry**  324 Stadium Drive | WAHR C204 | Bud Walton Hall  M 11am-3pm, W 3pm-5pm, Th 10am-2pm | 479-575-7693  Student-led food assistance program. They serve anyone with a U of A or a UAMS ID and their household, providing a three-day supply of groceries and personal care items, up to 2x/week.  <https://service.uark.edu/services/pantry/index.php> |
| **Center for Educational Access**  209 ARKU, University of Arkansas  479-575-3104  <https://cea.uark.edu/> |
| **RESPECT (Rape Education by Peers Encouraging Conscious Thought)**  Pat Walker Health Center, University of Arkansas  (479) 575-7252  <https://respect.uark.edu/resources/> |
| **STAR Central Web**  Location: Pat Walker Health Center | Second Floor - Room 2129 | M-F 8am-5pm  479-575-7252  The office of STAR Central offers Support, Training, Advocacy, & Resources on Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence. STAR Central serves the university community through education programs, professional consultations and victim advocacy services. STAR Central is located on the second floor of the new addition of the health center in room 2129. All contacts and survivor services are confidential. |
| **Center for Multicultural and Diversity Education**  ARKU 404  479-575-8405  <https://multicultural.uark.edu/about-us/index.php> |
| **Veteran and Military-Affiliated Student Center**  GACS Suites 115-116  640 N. Garland Avenue  Fayetteville, AR 72701  479-575-8742  <https://vmsc.uark.edu/> |
| **Women’s Clinic (serving patients of all genders)**  Pat Walker Health Center  525 N. Garland Ave.  479-575-4478  <https://health.uark.edu/medical-health/womensclinic.php> |
| **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**  Pat Walker Health Center  525 N. Garland Ave.  479-575-5276  <https://health.uark.edu/mental-health/index.php>    CAPS also offers drop-in, informal consultations. For updated hours see:<https://health.uark.edu/mental-health/letstalk.php> |
| **Office of International Students and Scholars**  104 Holcombe Hall  479-575-5003  <https://international-students.uark.edu/index.php> |
| **LGBTQIA+ Mentoring**  479-575-8405  Contact: Adrain Smith atsmith@uark.edu  <https://multicultural.uark.edu/diversity-and-inclusion/programs/lgbtqia.php> |
| **La Oficina Latina**  Contact: Magdalena Arroyo arroyo@uark.edu  <https://multicultural.uark.edu/diversity-and-inclusion/programs/la-oficina-latina.php> |
| **Academic Enrichment Program (AEP)**  Designed to enhance the college experience of first-generation, low-income and other underrepresented students by providing a combination of effective advisement and mentorship, student development opportunities, academic coaching, and different learning experiences.  (479) 575-5014  Contact: Brande Flack: bmflack@uark.edu |
| **Student Support Services Web**  Location: 008 Gregson Hall | 479-575-3546 | Monday-Friday 8am -5pm  Student Support Services provides a combination of programs and services to students who are first-generation, and/or modest-income, and/or individuals with disabilities.  <https://sss.uark.edu/index.php> |
| **College of Arts & Sciences Programs**  African and African American Studies | 230 Memorial Hall  [https://fulbright.uark.edu/area-studies/african-and-african-american-studies/](https://fulbright.uark.edu/area-studies/african-and-african-american-studies/about-the-program/index.php)  Asian Studies | Old Main 428  <https://fulbright.uark.edu/area-studies/asian-studies/>  Indigenous Studies Program | Kimpel Hall 714  <https://fulbright.uark.edu/area-studies/indigenous-studies/>  Latin American Studies Program | Kimpel Hall 723  <https://fulbright.uark.edu/area-studies/latin-american-and-latino-studies/> |
| Student Success (Tutoring Center for all subjects)  <https://success.uark.edu/> |

(updated July 2023)