**ENGL 1033: Technical Composition– [section number]**

**[meeting time and place]**

**Term: Spring 2021**

Instructor: XXXXXXXXXX

Office: XXXXXXX

Office Hours: XXXXXX

Telephone: XXXXXX

E-mail: XXXXXXX

**Prerequisites:**

ENGL 1013: Composition I

**Required Texts:**

* *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*,3rd ed., by Mike Markel. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2019
* *Handbook of Technical Writing*, 12th ed., by Gerald J. Alred, Charles T. Brusaw, and Walter E. Oliu. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2019

**Purpose:**

The purpose of English 1033 is to teach architecture, business, and engineering students the principles of effective written communication.The specific goal of this course isto introduce you to the practice of technical composition by addressing the principles, procedures, and formats used in preparing some of the types of documents composed by academics and professionals in your fields.

**Course goals:**

By the end of this course, you will learn to

* analyze rhetorical situations;
* identify authoritative sources in your respective disciplines;
* draft documents according to common forms used for technical writing purposes;
* recognize the demands that particular audiences place on written communication;
* use electronic resources to support library research;
* generate a set of principles that guides your sense of effective writing practices; and
* practice academic integrity and ethical communicative aims.

**Procedure:**

Classes will involve:

* lectures,
* discussions,
* workshops,
* formal and informal analytical writing, and
* exercises and activities that promote metadiscursive awareness

The quality of writing will largely determine the final grade.

**Assignment Grade Distribution:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Major Writing Assignments | Other Assignments |
| Assignment 1: Business Correspondence 10% | Drafting & Peer Review 8% |
| Assignment 2: Extended Definition 15% | Discussion Board 12% |
| Assignment 3: Process Instructions 15% | Weekly Writing Assignments 20% |
| Assignment 4: Formal Proposal 20% |  |
|  | Total: 100% |

**Course Grade Scale:**

100-90% = A, 89-80% = B, 79-70% = C, 69-60% = D, and 59-0% = F

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# Course Policies

Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination 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 for reasonable accommodation of 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 (contact 479–575–3104 or visit [http://cea.uark.edu](http://cea.uark.edu/) for more information on registration procedures).

Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Anyone experiencing discrimination and/or sexual harassment while at the university may report it to a complaint officer appointed by the Chancellor. The complaint officer will discuss any situation or event that the complainant considers discriminatory or constitutive of sexual harassment. 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, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance, 346 N. West Avenue (West Avenue Annex), 479-575-4019 (voice) or 479-575-3646 (tdd).

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 <http://provost.uark.edu/academicintegrity/245.php>. 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

Inclement Weather

If you are affected by inclement weather or a natural disaster, please inform me as soon as you can. Your safety is the priority, and I’d like to know that you and your welfare are secure. If there’s anything that you need, please let me know as well. We can also communicate further on any missing assignments or work.

Attendance

“Student absences resulting from illness, family crisis, University-sponsored activities involving scholarship or leadership/participation responsibilities, jury duty or subpoena for court appearance, military duty, and religious observances are excusable according to university rules. The instructor has the right to require that the student provide appropriate documentation for any absence for which the student wishes to be excused. Moreover, during the first week of the semester, students must give to the instructor a list of the religious observances that will affect their attendance.”

—Academic Regulations University of Arkansas Catalog of Studies

Participation is critical in this course. Since I cannot take "attendance," our weekly writing assignments and discussion board will serve in place of attendance. For this reason, no more than five (5) "absences" are allowed in this course before you will lose a letter grade, with a consequent letter grade lost for every 5 absences following. Our definition of absence here, of course, means not submitting a weekly writing assignment or your lack of participation in our weekly discussion posts. For discussion boards, full participation means one response of at least 150 words by THURSDAY of each week, and a response to at least 2 of your peers by the typical Sunday deadline. Depending on the circumstances of your absence, 3 of these 5 "absences" may be “made up” by scheduling a 1:1 appointment with your instructor.

Communications Policy

Because we do not have built-in time in which we can see each other in person, I am committed to responding to you as quickly as possible. If you email me during the week, please expect a response within 24 hours. If you don't hear from me by then, feel free to "nudge" me to remind me to respond. Though I do check my email on the weekends, I will not respond after 8 pm, and please expect about 48 hours before you will hear back. With that and your Sunday deadline in mind, it might be important to consider questions you have about assignments before the weekend begins.

Diverse Perspectives

In this course, we’re going to open ourselves up to new ways of seeing the world and its people. Each unit will open up with a reading that we will use as an example for the skill that we will practice (summarizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and proposing/advocating). We want to encourage you to think outside of your normal approach to problems, issues, and culture, and to help us all understand the value that diversity and diverse perspectives bring to our work and lives.

Fostering a Welcoming Learning Environment

Participation is a critical element of this course because your growth as a learner and a writer requires you being open and willing to embrace the work of Composition I. The writing process can be messy and often unpleasant, but students are encouraged to approach all writing assignments, course discussions, major assignments and peer feedback with respect and compassion. Part of this vulnerability includes being fully present. Even though we will not physically meet as a class, our classroom space should be a space of learning, vulnerability, and growth. Students are to create not only a safe, but a brave space to connect and grow as learners, writers, and students.

As a faculty member, I am committed to using your preferred name and pronouns. We will take time in our first discussion board to do introductions, at which point you can share with all members of our learning community what name and pronouns you use, as you are comfortable. Additionally, if these change at any point during the semester, please let me know and we can develop a plan to share this information with others in a way that is safe for you.

Assignment Submissions

Drafting & Peer Review

Writing is rarely the straightforward process we wish it to be, and quality writing often involves drafts and peer reviews. Therefore, with every major assignment, you are required to turn in a draft for peer review on BlackBoard and to complete a review of another classmate’s draft through Microsoft Office online. Your instructor will provide a peer review sheet with instructions and assign you your partner a week prior, and you will have 3-5 days to complete the peer review.

After your peer has evaluated your paper, you can download a version that shows the comments and turn it into me with a brief paragraph highlighting if you found the peer feedback helpful. If you rate the feedback as unhelpful, I will then review the feedback you received to determine if points need to be taken off from your peer’s assignment.

If you do not turn in a draft or a peer review on time, you will lose 10 points off your final assignment grade for each portion not completed. The most you can lose from not completing a draft of peer review is 20 points.

Essay Formatting

All essays must be typed with black ink in Arial 11-point font and double-spaced. Refer to the assignment prompt for each assignment for specific formatting instructions.

Late Assignment Submission

You should aim to submit your assignment at least 30 minutes before the deadline to avoid the inevitable doom that is BlackBoard being slow when everyone submits their assignment at the same time. Note that I do not accept papers via email.

There is a 3-day grace period after the due date where you can *still* submit your assignment without it being counted late. After the third day, your assignment will not be accepted, and you will get a zero (0). If you have an incomplete assignment, you should still turn that in to get partial credit.

This does not apply to weekly writing assignments, drafts or peer review.

Sample Submission Timeline

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Thurs | Fri | Sat | Sun | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thurs |
| You can turn in the assignment early. | You can turn in the assignment early. | You can turn in the assignment early. | ASSIGNMENT  DUE DATE | Grace Period Day 1 | Grace Period Day 2 | Grace Period Day 3 | Assignment is late and not accepted. |

# Schedule of Graded Assignments at a Glance

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Assignments** | **Due Dates** | **Points** |
| 1  1/11-1/17  Unit 1 | * Weekly Writing Assignment 1 * Discussion Board 1 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Weekly Writing Assignment 2 | * 1/13 * 1/14/ & 1/17 * 1/16 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) |
| 2  1/18-1/24  Unit 1 | * Weekly Writing Assignment 3 * Discussion Board 2 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Weekly Writing Assignment 4 | * 1/20 * 1/21 & 1/24 * 1/23 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) |
| 3  1/25-1/31  Unit 1 | * Draft of Major Assignment 1 * Discussion Board 3 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Peer Review of Major Assignment 1 | * 1/27 * 1/28 & 1/30 * 1/31 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) |
| 4  2/1-2/7  Unit 2 | * Weekly Writing Assignment 5 * Discussion Board 4 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Weekly Writing Assignment 6 * **Major Assignment 1: Business Correspondence** | * 2/3 * 2/4 & 2/7 * 2/6 * 2/7 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 10% (100 pts) |
| 5  2/8-2/14  Unit 2 | * Weekly Writing Assignment 7 * Discussion Board 5 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Weekly Writing Assignment 8 | * 2/10 * 2/11 & 2/14 * 2/13 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) |
| 6  2/15-2/21  Unit 2 | * Draft of Major Assignment 2 * Discussion Board 6 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Peer Review of Major Assignment 2 | * 2/17 * 2/18 & 2/20 * 2/21 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) |
| 7  2/22-2/28  Unit 2 | * **Individualized "Conferences"**   No classwork, e.g. discussion boards, etc. Submit any questions you have for your instructor regarding the upcoming assignment and/or your performance in class. Watch your personalized feedback video and compose a **reflection letter/revision plan** for your instructor. This can also address any follow-up questions you may have about the assignment or your performance in class.   * Weekly Writing Assignment 9: “Conference” Video Reflection Letter & Revision Plan | * 2/28 | * 1% (10 pts) |
| 8  3/1-3/7  Unit 3 | * Weekly Writing Assignment 10 * Discussion Board 7 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Weekly Writing Assignment 11 * **Major Assignment 2: Extended Definition** | * 3/3 * 3/4 & 3/7 * 3/6 * 3/7 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 15% (150 pts) |
| **Week** | **Assignments** | **Due Dates** | **Points** |
| 9  3/8-3/14  Unit 3 | * Draft of Major Assignment 3 * Discussion Board 8 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Peer Review of Major Assignment 3 | * 3/10 * 3/11 & 3/14 * 3/14 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) |
| 10  3/15-3/21  Unit 4 | * Weekly Writing Assignment 12 * Discussion Board 9 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Weekly Writing Assignment 13 * **Major Assignment 3: Process Instructions** | * 3/17 * 3/18 & 3/21 * 3/20 * 3/21 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 15% (150 pts) |
| 11  3/22-3/28 | Spring Break - No Classes! | | |
| 12  3/29-4/4  Unit 4 | * Draft of Major Assignment 4 * Discussion Board 10 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Weekly Writing Assignment 14 & 15 | * 3/31 * 4/1 & 4/4 * 4/3 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 2% (10 pts) |
| 13  4/5-4/11  Unit 4 | * Weekly Writing Assignment 16 * Discussion Board 11 Original Post (OP) & Peer Response * Weekly Writing Assignment 17 | * 4/7 * 4/8 & 4/11 * 4/10 | * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) |
| 14  4/12-4/18  Unit 4 | * Weekly Writing Assignment 18 & 19 * Peer Review of Major Assignment 4 | * 4/14 * 4/18 | * 2% (10 pts) * 1% (10 pts) |
| 15  4/19-4/25  Unit 4 | * **Individualized "Conferences"**   No classwork, e.g. discussion boards, etc. Submit any questions you have for your instructor regarding the upcoming assignment and/or your performance in class. Watch your personalized feedback video and compose a **reflection letter/revision plan** for your instructor. This can also address any follow-up questions you may have about the assignment or your performance in class.   * Weekly Writing Assignment 20: “Conference” Video Reflection Letter & Revision Plan | * 4/25 | * 1% (10 pts) |
| 16  4/26-5/2  Unit 4 | * Discussion Board 12 Original Post (OP) - No Peer Response Needed * **Major Assignment 4: Formal Proposal** | * 4/28 * 5/2 | * 1% (10 pts) * 20% (200 pts) |

# Detailed Course Schedule

*PSTC = Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*

*HTW = Handbook of Technical Writing*

Unit One: Introduction to Technical Writing

### Week 1—Jan 11-17

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* identify where to find important information in the syllabus;
* describe the purpose and parameters of Major Assignment 1;
* explain the genre expectations of technical writing;
* differentiate between letters and memos; and
* justify decisions that you make for composing successful letters.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Participate in Discussion Board: Introduce Yourself
* Watch videos on course introduction, syllabus, course schedule, how to use your textbooks in VitalSource, and how to navigate BlackBoard in the “Start Here” section
* Watch video lecture on Technical Communication and Writing Style
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 1, “Introduction to Technical Communication,” pp. 2-15 and *HTW* pp. 511-512, “Technical Writing Style.”
* Discussion Board 1 (due OP 1/14 & Response 1/17)
  + Homework: Read PSTC chapter 9, “Writing Correspondence,” pp. 239-264 and HTW “Letters” pp. 304-309 and “Memos” pp. 331-332.
* Watch video overview of Major Assignment 1: Business Correspondence

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignment 1 (due 1/13)
2. Assignment 2 (due 1/16)

### Week 2—Jan 18-24 (Monday is Martin Luther King day, no class)

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* identify who potential audiences are in technical communication;
* rewrite a technical composition for a general audience;
* explain the rhetorical situation of writing a memo with regard to audience and purpose; and
* revise an email memo so that it more effectively communicates the message’s purpose to its intended audience.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Watch video lecture on Audience and Purpose in Technical Communication and an Introduction to Memo Writing and why it matters
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 4, “Analyzing Your Audience and Purpose,” pp. 50-73, and *HTW* “Purpose” pp. 427-428 and “Audience” pp. 40-41.
* Discussion Board 2 (due OP 1/21 & Response 1/24)

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignment 3 (due 1/20)
2. Assignment 4 (due 1/23)

### Week 3—Jan 25-Jan 31

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* explain why organization and coherence matter when writing for your audience;
* provide useful feedback for your peers’ drafts via asynchronous peer review; and
* describe the purpose and parameters of Major Assignment 2.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Watch video lecture on Organization and Coherence
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 6, “Writing For Your Readers,” pp. 102-116.
* Discussion Board 3 (due OP 1/28 & Response 1/30)
* Watch video lecture on the drafting and peer review process for this course
  + Review Drafting & Peer Review Policy on p. 6 of this syllabus.
  + Complete a draft of Major Assignment 1 and upload an electronic copy to the folder/link as designated by your instructor.
  + Complete asynchronous peer review of drafts of Major Assignment 1. Follow the instructions on the peer review worksheet as distributed by your instructor.
* Watch video overview on Major Assignment 2: Extended Definition

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Draft of Major Assignment 1 (due 1/27)
2. Peer Review of Major Assignment 1 (due 1/31)

Unit Two: Definitions and Descriptions

### Week 4—Feb 1-Feb 7

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* explain the importance of writing clear definitions and descriptions;
* develop criteria for writing clear definitions and descriptions;
* explain how different audiences affect the way we define and describe terms; and
* compose definitions and descriptions for varying levels of formality using clear, effective sentences.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Watch video lecture on Definitions and Descriptions
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 14, “Writing Definitions, Descriptions, and Instructions,” pp. 383-398, and *HTW* “Defining Terms,” “Definition Method of Development” and “Description,” pp. 111-116.
* Discussion Board 4 (due OP 2/4, no Response needed)
* Watch video Lecture on Clarity, Formality, and Writing Effective Sentences
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 6, “Writing For Your Readers,” pp. 116-149.

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignment 5 (due 2/3)
2. Assignment 6 (due 2/6)

**Major Assignment 1: Correspondence due 2/7**

### Week 5—Feb 8-Feb 14

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* evaluate technical writing for its coherence, sentence clarity, and word choice;
* revise convoluted technical description so that it conveys the technical aspects of the message with coherence and clarity in sentences and word choices; and
* compose definitions and descriptions for varying levels of formality using clear, effective sentences.

*Activities & Readings*

* Watch video lecture on Coherence, Sentence Construction, and Word Choice
  + Homework: Read *HTW* “Coherence,” p. 67, “Sentence Construction,” pp. 487-494, and “Word Choice,” pp. 551-552.
* Discussion Board 5 (due OP 2/11 & Response 2/14)
* Watch video lecture on Writing, Revising, and Proofreading Definitions
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* Appendix B, “Editing and Proofreading Your Documents,” p. 482-500.

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignment 7 (due 2/10)
2. Assignment 8 (due 2/13)

### Week 6—Feb 15-Feb 21

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* use principles of good editing and proofreading to edit a draft of Major Assignment 2; and
* provide useful feedback for your peers’ drafts via asynchronous peer review.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Discussion Board 6 (due OP 2/18 & Response 2/20)
* Watch video lecture on Editing and Proofreading
  + Complete a draft of Major Assignment 2 and upload an electronic copy to the folder/link as designated by your instructor.
  + Complete asynchronous peer review of drafts of Major Assignment 2. Follow the instructions on the peer review worksheet as distributed by your instructor.

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Draft of Major Assignment 2 (due 2/17)
2. Peer Review of Major Assignment 2 (due 2/21)

### Week 7— Feb 22-Feb 28

**INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES**

No classwork, e.g. discussion boards, etc. Submit any questions you have for your instructor regarding the upcoming assignment and/or your performance in class. Watch your personalized feedback video and compose a **reflection letter/revision plan** for your instructor. This can also address any follow-up questions you may have about the assignment or your performance in class.

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* use personalized feedback from the instructor to make changes to Major Assignment 2; and
* identify areas in your learning that have progressed and areas that need improvement.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Submit any questions you may have for the instructor regarding the assignment or course (Optional)
* Watch video feedback

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignment 9 (due 2/28)

Unit Three: Instructions

### Week 8—Mar 1-Mar 7

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* describe the purpose and parameters of Major Assignment 3;
* explain the importance of clarity in writing instructions;
* evaluate the clarity and usability of a set of instructions; and
* revise poorly written instructions for clarity and usability.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Watch video overview on Major Assignment 3: Process Instructions
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 14, “Writing Definitions, Descriptions, and Instructions,” pp. 398-422, and *HTW* “Instructions, pp. 252-256 and “Usability Testing,” pp. 531-533.
* Discussion Board 7 (due OP 3/4 & Response 3/7)
* Watch video lecture on Writing Instructions with a Focus on Clarity *(Have PSTC Ch. 6 ready for reference)*
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 7, “Designing Print and Online Documents,” pp. 152-187. [Read Process Discussions](https://www.prismnet.com/~hcexres/textbook/proc.html) webpage. Follow Major Assignment 3 instructions to email the instructor your proposed topic for Major Assignment 3.

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignment 10 (due 3/3)
2. Assignment 11 (due 3/6)

**Major Assignment 2: Extended Definition due 3/7**

### Week 9—Mar 8-Mar 14

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* identify strategies for appropriate and effective communication in global environments;
* identify your own strengths and weaknesses to see how you might relate to others in a global context; and
* explain what to avoid when composing for global purposes and audiences.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Watch video lecture on Global Considerations in Technical Writing
  + Homework: Read *HTW* “Global Communication” & “Global Graphics,” pp. 214-220 and “Layout and Design,” pp. 298-304.
* Discussion Board 8 (due OP 3/11 & Response 3/13)
* Watch video lecture on Document Design and Layout with reference to Major Assignment 3
  + Complete a draft of Major Assignment 3 and upload an electronic copy to the folder/link as designated by your instructor.
  + Complete asynchronous peer review of drafts of Major Assignment 3. Follow the instructions on the peer review worksheet as distributed by your instructor.
* Request **optional** conferences for Major Assignment 3. Identify in your email whether you’d prefer an asynchronous or synchronous meeting.

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Draft of Major Assignment 3 (due 3/10)
2. Peer Review of Major Assignment 3 (due 3/14)

Unit Four: Proposals and Presentations

### Week 10—Mar 15-21

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* identify what ethical considerations should factor into technical writing;
* explain what obligations your message may have towards stakeholders, e.g., your employer, the public, the environment, and copyright holders;
* evaluate the ethical nature of sample corporate social media policies;
* identify the differences between academic and workplace research;
* explain the format, purpose, and development of a proposal; and
* compose a plan for researching/developing a proposal idea for Major Assignment 4.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Watch lecture on Ethical and Legal considerations.
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 2, “Understanding Ethical and Legal Obligations,” pp. 16-32, and *HTW* “Ethics in Writing,” pp 166-168.
* Watch video lecture on Research and Documentation.
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 5, “Researching Your Subject,” pp. 74-101, and *HTW* “Research,” pp. 451-457, “Documenting Sources,” pp. 123-144, and “Note-Taking,” pp. 347-348.
* Watch video overview on Major Assignment 4: Formal Proposal
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 11, “Writing Proposals,” pp. 291-316, and *HTW* “Proposals,” pp. 409-426.
* Discussion Board 9 (due OP 3/18 & Response 3/21)
* Watch video lecture on Developing a Proposal.
  + Homework: Read *PSTC* chapter 7, “Designing Print and Online Documents,” pp. 171-192.

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignment 12 (3/17)
2. Assignment 13 (3/20)

### 

**Major Assignment 3: Process Instructions due 3/21**

### Week 11—Mar 22-Mar 28

**Spring Break, No classes**

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### Week 12—Mar 29-Apr 4

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* identify strategies for choosing visuals for purpose and audience;
* identify best practices for integrating visuals with text;
* explain which graphs and tables to use for a particular data set, audience, and purpose; and
* list several strategies for creating effective content for the web.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Watch video feedback on Weekly Writing Assignment 13
  + Homework: Based on this feedback, complete a draft of Major Assignment 4 and upload an electronic copy to the folder/link as designated by your instructor.
* Watch video lecture on Web Design and Visual Elements of Technical Writing.
  + Homework: Read *HTW* “ Visuals,” pp. 539-544, “Graphs,” pp. 226-233, “Tables,” pp. 509-511, and “Writing for the Web,” pp. 553-556.
* Discussion Board 10 (due OP 4/1 & Response 4/4)

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Draft of Major Assignment 4 (3/31)
2. Assignments 14 & 15 (4/3)

*Correcting Poor Visuals & Creating Your Own Graphs Worksheet*

*(Adapted from PSTC, Ch. 8, p. 232, Exercises 3-7)*

### Week 13—Apr 5-Apr 11

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* develop a set of guidelines for preparing and delivering persuasive presentations.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Read *PSTC* chapter 15, “Making Oral Presentations,” pp. 423-446and *HTW* “Presentations,” pp. 391-399, and “Persuasion,” pp. 376.
* Discussion Board 11 (due OP 4/8 & 4/11)
* Record your own proposal presentation and upload the file to the folder/link as designated by your instructor.

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignment 16 (due 4/7)

Review the “Speaker’s Checklist” in *PSTC, Ch. 15, p. 446.* Do your slides follow the five characteristics? Have you practiced and timed yourself? Are you ready to record?

1. Assignment 17 (due 4/10)

*Assessing Peer Presentations* *Worksheet*

### Week 14—Apr 12-Apr 18

*Weekly Objectives:*

By the end of the week, you will be able to:

* define what it means to “polish” a proposal;
* use principles of good proofreading and polishing to revise Major Assignment 4; and
* provide useful feedback to peers’ proposals via asynchronous peer review.

*Activities & Readings:*

* Watch video lecture on “Polishing,” proofreading, and working with feedback during revision.
* Complete asynchronous peer review of drafts of Major Assignment 4. Follow the instructions on the peer review worksheet as distributed by your instructor.

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignments 18 & 19 (due 4/14)
2. Peer Review of Major Assignment 4 (due 4/18)

### Week 15—Apr 19-Apr 25

**INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES**

No classwork, e.g. discussion boards, etc. Submit any questions you have for your instructor regarding the upcoming assignment and/or your performance in class. Watch your personalized feedback video and compose a **reflection letter/revision plan** for your instructor. This can also address any follow-up questions you may have about the assignment or your performance in class.

*Weekly Writing Assignments:*

1. Assignment 20 (due 4/25)

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### Week 16—Apr 26-Apr 29

*Activities:*

* Discussion Board 12 (due OP 4/29, no Response needed)

*Important Dates:*

* **Major Assignment 4: Proposal due 4/29**
* Last day of class: Apr 29
* Dead Day: Apr 30

# Course Assignments

Major Assignment 1: Business Correspondence

For your first assignment, you will prepare two documents, a **business letter** and a **memo**. Review *PSTC* pp. 241-254 for a thorough explanation of the major aspects of form regarding letters and memos. See *HTW* “Memos,” pp. 343-345, and “Letters,” pp. 316-321 to further review the formal specifics of these types of documents.

**Business Letter**

First, conduct some research about your department’s freshman orientation. Then, write a business letter to the chair of your department regarding the orientation. You may write an “Inquiry Letter,” asking for more information about a certain aspect of orientation; a “Claim Letter,” making a polite complaint or suggestion about the orientation; or an “Adjustment Letter,” explaining how one aspect of orientation might be improved (see *PSTC* p. 247-254). You will also need to do some research to find the name of your department chair and the mailing address for your letter. In addition to chapter 9 from *PSTC*, review *HTW* pp. 316-321 on the formal specifics of business letters.

**Memo**

Next, draft a memo to your instructor explaining the rhetorical choices you made while writing your business letter. Discuss the tone, content, audience, and purpose of the letter. To draft your memo, you will need to follow the formatting guidelines discussed in class. In addition to reviewing your rhetorical choices, you should provide some background, describe briefly your research methods, and summarize the findings that prompted you to write the letter.

**Formatting, Revision, and Editing**

Format your letter and memo in the “full-block” style as discussed in your textbook and in class. Remember, you are addressing your department chair. You want to demonstrate your respect for his or her position and your dedication as a student in your department and field. Carefully revise and then proofread both documents for proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

**Minimum page length**:

* The business letter should be roughly one page in length.
* The memo should be one to two pages in length.

**Due Dates**

Wed, Jan 27 Draft

Sun, Jan 31 Peer Review

Sun, Feb 7 Final Paper

**Grade value**: 10%

Major Assignment 2: Extended Definition

For your second assignment, you will write an **extended definition**. An extended definition is a detailed clarification of an object, mechanism, process, or concept. As discussed in your text, there is no one way to extend a definition. The analysis of both the purpose of the larger document to which the definition belongs and the audience to whom it is addressed will determine the direction you take in elaboration.

**Planning**

To begin, you will need to select the subject to be defined. Try to select a subject with which you have some interest or familiarity. Some examples might be anti-lock brakes, pliers, banjo, chop sticks (food utensils), food pyramid, radiation therapy (cancer treatment), Montessori method, yoga, integrated circuit, YouTube, sustainable farming, or Amendment IV to the United States Constitution. There are of course other options available. The primary consideration is how to define your chosen object or process to suit your intended audience (review *PSTC* chapter 4 to help conceive your audience).

Next, you will need to identify a context for your definition, which will involve a bit of creative thinking. You should imagine a larger document that needs a definition of the term you have selected. For example, if you select “anti-lock brakes,” you might imagine that your definition will appear in the operator’s manual for a new car. The targeted audience member would be a new car owner, who is potentially unfamiliar with what an anti-lock braking system is, how it operates, and what it is designed to protect against.

**Drafting**

After you have identified the larger document and the audience, you will be ready to decide how to extend your definition. Consult your notes from class and the readings from your text to decide which techniques (examples, partition, process description, analogy, etc.) you will employ in your definition (see *PSTC* pp. 390-394).

Attached to the front of your completed definition paper you will need to write **a brief memo to your instructor** indicating the document to which the definition belongs, the audience for the definition, and how your assessment of the audience affected your definition strategy.

If your definition will be improved by the use of a graphic or photo, include one. Be sure to cite the source of the graphic directly below its insertion in the text with a simple “Courtesy of (web address).”

**Documentation**

You will need to consult at least three sources to write a good definition. See *PSTC* Appendix A, “Documenting Your Sources,” pp. 405-484. Choose one documentation style and apply it to your definition. IEEE is the most conventional documentation style for technical writing; however, you may use MLA or APA style if you choose.

**Minimum page length**: 1-2 pages

**Due Dates**

Wed, Feb 17 Draft

Sun, Feb 21 Peer Review

Sun, Mar 7 Final Paper

**Grade value**: 15%

Major Assignment 3: Process Instructions

For your third assignment, you will write **process instructions**. Process instructions tell a reader how to perform a task. As discussed in Chapter 14 of *PSTC*, writing good process instructions requires careful consideration of your audience and a clearly organized set of steps to be performed.

**Planning**

To begin this assignment, you will need to identify some process or task here on the university campus that would benefit from instructions. For example, you might identify an appliance in the chemistry lab or a machine in the fitness center that needs good instructions. You will need to clear your topic with me via a properly formatted email before proceeding (this e-mail will count for part of your assignment grade; see *PSTC* pp. 255-258 for guidance in formatting your e-mail). If the process you choose already has instructions, you will need to submit the existing instructions along with your rewrite.

**Drafting**

To write your process instructions, you will need to follow the format discussed in class and outlined in your text (see *PSTC* pp. 402-415, and *HTW* pp. 266-271). Make sure your introduction identifies the purpose of the task, the tools and materials needed, and the safety warnings or precautions to be observed. Your steps should be written in the imperative mood and should each clearly identify what portion of the larger task is to be performed. Remember to number your steps. If needed, include feedback statements as part of each step. Your conclusion should provide the reader with any necessary troubleshooting, follow-up, or maintenance required.

If your instructions include any technical terms potentially unfamiliar to your audience, take care to include sentence or parenthetical definitions.

**Visuals**

Clear instructions often contain visuals to aid your reader. Consider the process or task your instructions describe, and whether visuals would aid your reader in completing them. Review *PSTC* chapter 8, pp. 224-235, to consider how best to use visuals to suit your audience and purpose.

To complete the assignment, you will need to prepare one more document. Write a brief description (1-2 pages) of a **proposed usability test** for your process instructions. Describe how you would test the instructions, and how your findings might lead to changes in your instructions. Review *HTW* pp. 558-560 for this portion of the assignment.

**Formatting**

You are free to select the font and point size for your **instructions**. All decisions should be based upon organization and readability. If graphics will improve your document, include them. If bold-faced type is needed for headings or safety instructions, use it.

For your **usability test proposal**, please refer to the Assignment Submission policy.

**Minimum page length**: 2 pages

**Due Dates**

Wed, Mar 10 Draft

Sun, Mar 14 Peer Review

Sun, Mar 21 Final

**Grade value**: 15%

Major Assignment 4: Formal Proposal

Your final assignment requires you to select a topic for which you will identify a problem, opportunity, or need for which you will offer a solution. You can investigate a topic in your discourse community (i.e. major/ field of study), but are also free to research a university or hometown problem, or other topic. You are to treat this proposal as **unsolicited** (*PSTC* pp. 276-278). For a fuller discussion of proposals, see *PSTC* pp. 274-297.

**Front Matter**

You are free to use a cover page; however, your title page should include all pertinent information (indicated purpose, suggested audience, and date). You should also include a brief summary page located at the front of the proposal. This summary should cover the proposal’s major elements, identify and define the problem, and then describe the proposed program and briefly provide your qualifications and experience (see *PSTC* pp. 282-283).

**Body**

This portion should contain an informative Introduction and a detailed Proposed Program section. The Introduction will provide a detailed discussion of the problem and its background, the purpose of the proposal, your sources of information, and the purpose, scope, and organization of the proposal. From the introduction, you should shift to the Proposed Program section that provides detailed descriptions of the processes, materials, etc. This portion may contain necessary graphics for your audience (*PSTC* pp. 283-286).

**Back Matter**

This portion should include pertinent information such as the budget, schedule, qualifications/ experience, references, appendices, and any works referenced. The schedule should be organized into the same tasks described in the body; the budget will list the requested funds, and how they will be spent; the qualifications will highlight the writer’s ability and experience. You may use graphics in this portion.

**Criteria**

You may use the structure presented in *PSTC*, Ch. 11: “The Structure of the Proposal” (pp. 282-289); if you find a different format that you wish to use, see your instructor for approval. Follow all submission requirements set forth in the “Policies and Procedures” handout. You will be held accountable for proper focus, development, organization, syntax and grammar, and correctness.

**Minimum page length**: 4-5 pages

**Due Dates**

Wed, Mar 31 Draft

Sun, Apr 18 Peer Review

Sun, May 2 Final

**Grade value**: 20%