# **Project #1, Part 1: Course Goals Memo (Week 1)**

The purpose of this assignment is to set personal goals for your semester in Professional and Technical Writing and to practice a common technical writing genre, the memo. To do this, you will use course documents (like the syllabus, grading contract, and textbooks) to brainstorm about what you want to accomplish this semester and how you might do it. You will introduce yourself and your reasons for taking ENGL 30503, set 3-4 goals for this semester in writing, and briefly discuss your plan for meeting each goal. **Your Course Goals Memo should be 500-750 words.**

**To get started**, you should brainstorm about goals you can accomplish in the next 15 weeks. You should start by reviewing the course goals and objectives in the syllabus and deciding how these might reflect personal goals in the course.

You should also think beyond the course materials. You might, for example, think about why you are taking this course, how it relates to your major or your chosen career field, and which of your writing skills could use improvement.

Once you’ve created a list of potential goals, decide which 3-4 goals are most important and accomplishable to you**.**

**When you’re ready to begin** the writing process, think about the following:

* After reading the goals and objectives listed in the course syllabus, which ones most closely match your own goals for the semester?
* What do you know about how your major or chosen career path uses writing? How could you use this class to focus on those skills?
* What are your weaknesses as a writer? Where do you struggle? How could you use this class to improve your skills?
* What specific actions will you take to accomplish each goal?
* How could your instructor or peers help you accomplish your goals? For instance, what type of feedback is most helpful to you? Where in the writing process do you struggle the most?

Think beyond grammar! Most of us have grammar and mechanical skills we could improve, but professional and technical writing encompasses many more skills than those. For example, do you know how to use a text editor to design a document—to add headings? To caption images? To create a table of contents? Are you a wordy writer who could use practice with plain language? Have you ever been required to write a specific type of document (for example, a proposal or report) and not known how to do it, or where to start?

## Format & Layout

For this assignment, you should follow memo formatting. You can find explanations and models of this format in both of your textbooks in the following locations:

* *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*, Chapter 9: Corresponding in Print and Online, “Writing Memos.”
* *Handbook of Technical Writing*, “Memos.”

[Insert any additional information about how you want students to format their paper. As the instructor, you can add more specificity to the prompt but do not change the scope or rigor of the assignment.]

Final submission should be **uploaded on Blackboard** as an Adobe PDF or Word file.

## Sample Assignment Outline

* Header
  + To: line
  + From: line
  + Date
  + Subject: line
* Introduction
  + Introduce yourself.
  + Explain your reasons for taking English 30503.
  + Give a brief, general preview of your goals.
* Goal #1
  + Explain your most important goal in clear, precise language.
  + List practical steps you can take to accomplish your goal.
* Goal #2
  + Explain your goal in clear, precise language.
  + List practical steps you can take to accomplish your goal.
* Goal #3
  + Explain your goal in clear, precise language.
  + List practical steps you can take to accomplish your goal.
* Closing
  + Talk briefly about the type of help you might receive from others in the course (for example, during peer review with your classmates or conferences with your instructor).
  + Closing line (“Sincerely” or “Cordially” are good choices for formal memos, though depending on how you know your reader, you could also choose “All the best,” or “Thanks.”)
  + Your name or initials

## Due Dates

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project Stage** | **Due** |
| Final Draft | [MM-DD] |

## Final Submission Checklist

* I have introduced myself and explained my reasons for taking ENGL 30503.
* I have stated 3-4 goals I hope to accomplish this semester and listed practical steps I will take to work towards them.
* I have used memo formatting.
* I have formatted my assignment [as my instructor has described.]
* I have saved the document as a .pdf or .docx file for submission.