SYLLABUS

Technical Communication I- 1.5 Credit Hours

Fall Semester 2012

Course Meets: Thursday 10:45 – 12:05 (Section 1) or
Thursday 2:00 – 3:30 (Section 2)

Instructors

Section 1

Engineering:	Neil Cotter	Office: MEB 3104	necotter@ece.utah.edu
Presentation:	April Kedrowicz	Office: WEB 1704	a.kedrowicz@utah.edu
Writing:	Heather Stone	Office: WEB 1813	heather.stone@utah.edu

Section 2

Engineering:	Neil Cotter	Office: MEB 3104	necotter@ece.utah.edu
Presentation:	Veronica Dawson	Office: WEB 1813	veronica.r.dawson@utah.edu
Writing:	Heather Stone	Office: WEB 1813	heather.stone@utah.edu

Course Description and Objectives

Learning to communicate orally and in writing is an essential component of an undergraduate engineering education. This course addresses the fundamentals of writing and reviewing technical documents, presenting scientific information, and preparing technical presentations that are understandable by the target audience.

The goal of this course is to prepare you for the professional engineering workplace by introducing you to expectations from industry and developing your skills in creating professional-style documents and presentations. You will practice creating and revising documents that are standard in the engineering field as preparation for the later process of the senior project. The course is based on two key assumptions. First, communication is rhetorical—effective communicators plan, draft, and revise documents and presentations with respect to their specific audiences and purposes. Second, the conventions of communication change over time and differ between disciplines. The assumptions will be inherent and realized through this class.

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

1) Analyze a rhetorical situation and identify appropriate strategies based on the document or presentation's purpose, audience, and other factors.

2) Recognize the basic features of professional writing genres and adapt these features strategically.
3) Use critical thinking skills to organize your writing based on an analysis of model documents.
4) Analyze and perform professional presentation skills.
5) Be aware of ethical issues in engineering practice, especially regarding engineering reports.
6) Demonstrate library research skills for course reports, appropriate use of borrowed information, and correct citation of sources in documents and presentations.

Teaching and Learning Methods

This course has an Instructor Team with three members. For each assignment, one of the instructors will act as the "lead." This means he or she will introduce, collect, and evaluate the assignment. The grades recorded by the lead instructor may be informed by suggestions or recommendations by the other instructors, when appropriate. The lead instructor for each assignment is indicated on the "Course Schedule".

Course Requirements

You are expected to follow instructions given in class and on assignment sheets to complete several major assignments. All assignments due via Canvas are due by 10:00 a.m. day of, and hard copies are due by 5:00 p.m. day of.

The following are shortened descriptions of assignments. Complete, current, and definitive assignment descriptions will be available on the course website. The descriptions on the course website are thus to be used when working on assignments. Also, the separate Course Schedule, and information available on the course website and on Canvas will supercede the dates listed here.

1) <u>Professionalism</u>

A main function of this class is to help better prepare you for work and professional communication in industry. Part of this is the understanding and practice of how to communicate both verbally and non-verbally in a professional manner. Furthermore, even simple communication such as email often becomes a way of "first-impressions" as you are applying for grants or jobs, thus making professionalism in this forum extremely important. Your professionalism grade will be derived from your performance in many variations throughout the year. These include: email communication with each instructor, in-person/class communication with instructors, teamwork, presentation and written communication consultations, and overall performance in class. This grade will be determined through the input

of all three instructors. All of your communications in the course, even those beyond assignments, will factor into the professionalism grade.

Decorum is of particular importance in successful communications. At all times in class, students are expected to refrain from side discussions, use of laptops for any purpose other than taking notes, and entering or leaving class while a presentation is in progress. Permission to attend class sessions and participate in in-class assignments is contingent on the student's observation of these courtesies.

2) Email: Proposed ECE Current Topic Assignment

Compose a professional email that briefly describes a current topic in electrical and computer engineering that you would like to summarize in a short review paper and present to the class in a short oral presentation. The topic must come from a scholarly paper, and the email must include the citation for that paper. The engineering instructor must approve the topic and will grade the format and contents.

Assigned Date: Week 1

Due Date: Week 3

Instructor: Engineering Instructor

Format: Professional Email sent to both Engineering Instructor and Writing Instructor

3) Resume and Cover Letter

Write a resume and cover letter suitable as your actual response to an advertisement for an engineering position. Attach the job advertisement to your submission.

Assigned Date: Week 5

Due Date: Week 9 (First Version), Week 16 (Final Version)

Instructor: Writing Instructor

Format: Submit through Canvas (.doc or .docx file)

4) Research Paper, ECE Current Topic

The research paper summarizes your ECE current topic in 2.5 to 3 pages. It conveys the key idea from the paper, defining the contribution it makes and explaining how it works.

Assigned Date: Week 1

Due Date: 2 Weeks before PowerPoint presentation (First Version)
1 Week after PowerPoint presentation (Final Version)
Keep track of your due date

Instructor: Writing Instructor will grade and Engineering Instructor will evaluate draft for technical soundness and depth

Format: Submit through Canvas (.doc or .docx file) and hardcopy

5) PowerPoint, ECE Current Topic

You will give a short presentation in class on your ECE current topic using PowerPoint. Students in the class will fill out evaluation forms for your talk.

You will be required to complete the presentation planner and submit this the day you deliver your presentation in class. After you have delivered your presentation, you will be required to view your presentation and complete a one to two page self-assessment. This assessment will highlight your strengths, opportunities for improvement, and include a plan of action for your next presentation (which will occure in 3950). This reflection is due one week after your presentation in class.

Assigned Date: Week 5

Due Date: Presentation Plan – Day of presentation Self Assessment – One week after presentation

Instructor: Presentation Instructor (with access to Engineering Instructor's comments)

Format: Upload to Canvas by 10:00am day of presentation, if not the assignment is late

6) In-class Participation and Activities (Individual)

In addition to the major assignments listed above, you will be required to complete a variety of in-class exercises and activities designed to enhance your understanding of the communication process. This also includes being on time and respectful to guest speakers.

Grades and Evaluation

Each assignment is worth a specific number of points for a total of 100 points.

Grades will be posted on Canvas for most assignments.

Note: E Engineering Instructor, P Presentation Instructor, W Writing Instructor; refers to lead instructor

Assignment	Components	Points
1) Professionalism	Professional communication practices throughout the semester (E, P, W). 5 pts each instructor	15
2) Email, ECE Current Topic	On-time, professional, and complete (E) 5 pts Topic must be approved by (E) required	5
3) Resume and Cover Letter	Draft and update as needed (W) 1st version 7.5 pts, final version 7.5 pts	15
4) Research Paper, ECE Current Topic	Draft and update as needed (W) 1st version 15 pts, final version 15 pts	30
5) PowerPoint, ECE Current Topic	Presentation Plan (P) 5 pts Presentation in class (P) 15 pts Self Assessment (P) 10 pts	30
6) In-class Participation	Various (E, P, W)	5
	Total	**100**

A-level performances meet the following standards:

1. Has virtually no weaknesses—exceeds expectations
2. Fits the intended genre
3. Is aware of and appropriate for its audience
4. Knows and supports its point
5. Handles sources appropriately for the genre and readers' needs
6. Uses clear, correct, and direct grammar
7. Shows thoughtful document design and careful editing

B-level performances have minor weaknesses in some areas.

C-level performances have minor weaknesses in most or all areas or major weaknesses in some

D-level performances have major weaknesses in most or all areas.

E-level performances do not respond to the assignment or are plagiarized.

The total number of points will be converted to a percentage will determine the final course grade. The following grading scale will be used:

100 – 93% = A; 93 – 90% = A-; 90 – 87% = B+; 87 – 83% = B; 83 – 80% = B-; 80 – 77% = C+; 77 – 73% = C; 73 – 70% = C-; 70 – 67% = D+; 67 – 60% = D; below 60% = E

Course Policies and Procedures

1. All assignments must be submitted in class, as per the lead instructor's directions.
2. Canvas is available for class communication and assignment submission.
3. This course presumes you have basic knowledge of computers and navigating the Internet. If you don't have these skills, attend the free short courses at Marriott Library. For more information on these courses, please visit the Marriott Library's website.
4. All out-of-class work **must be typed.**
5. Late assignments will lose one letter grade, after one week you will receive no credit.
6. Keep all documentation for this class, including evaluated drafts and assignments, until final grades are posted. If an assignment is lost or missing, you must provide another copy no matter whose fault it is.
7. Your continued enrollment in this course constitutes your acceptance of the policies outlined in this syllabus.

ADA Statement

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. (www.hr.utah.edu/eoe/ada/guide/faculty) Also, see *College of Engineering Guidelines* handed out in class.

Faculty and Student Responsibilities

Plagiarism will result in an automatic *E* in the course (see sections II and V of the Student Code for details). You are *at all times* responsible for handling sources ethically and honestly by acknowledging the author and source of directly borrowed ideas and language in your writing. We will enforce professional, responsible classroom behaviors at all times.