

# Memo

**To:** Dr. Derek Ross, Dr. Leigh Gruwell, Dr. Stewart Whittemore  
**From:** Carolina Bell  
**Re:** AI, Disability, and TPC Research Paper Meta-Analysis  
**Date:** April 7, 2025

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This memo describes the goals and development for the AI, Disability, and TPC research paper titled *AI Implications in TPC: Disabled Knowledge for the Social Justice Turn*.

## Audience and Purpose

This document was produced for ENGL 7050: Automating Writing with Dr. Leigh Gruwell. The purpose of the research paper was to synthesize research across technical communication, disability studies, and science, technology & society (STS) about Artificial Intelligence (AI) for an audience of technical communication scholars, students, and practitioners. The paper was designed to be an article length paper that could be published in a technical communication journal.

## Significance

With the rise of generative AI use in industry, technical communication practitioners will be faced with ethical considerations of AI usage in their day-to-day work. AI companies are also employing technical writers to document AI tools.

I also anticipate the need for clear explanations of how AI tools work and their ethical implications. This paper focuses on the education of technical communicators, with the understanding that they will have opportunities to influence communication to the public. Computer science falls under science communication and is another clear opportunity for visibility given the access to generative AI and impacts facing the public.

I used the lens of disability justice and technoableism to generate the following findings and implications in the field:

- TPC needs to create clear commitments to anti-ableism beyond accessible design and increase representation of disabled TPC scholars
- TPC scholars and practitioners can help position disabled people as experts of their own experience
- TPC pedagogy should consider that students in TPC may go on to train, design, and document AI technologies
- AI technologies amplify existing biases and TPC must reckon with technology as systems of domination

## Goals and Theories

Through my work in ENGL 7050, I found that there was a need to understand AI technologies in context of the social justice turn in TPC. Using the concept of technoableism (Shew, 2020), I

worked to emphasize the need for AI ethics for an audience of TPC students, scholars, and practitioners.

My research builds upon previous scholarship in TPC, including bias in algorithms (Carradini, 2024; Graham & Hopkins, 2022), calls for commitment to disability studies (Meloncon, 2014), and intersectional work (Walton et al., 2019; Shelton & Warren-Riley, 2023). This research is needed, especially given the implications for technical communication practitioners in industry.

## Research Development

Given the interdisciplinary topic, this paper required substantive research and careful scoping. The document development process included initial research, literature review, drafting, peer review, professor feedback, and final revision based on feedback.

### *Initial Research Questions*

I identified the following questions in the early stages of research:

- How can technical communicators incorporate disability-informed narratives of AI technologies?
- What responsibilities do technical communicators have in the understanding of AI and disability?
- What power do technical communicators hold in countering ableist narratives in technology?

### *Revision*

Based on peer and professor feedback, I worked to clarify the connections to my audience. I further developed tangible examples in TPC.

## References

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