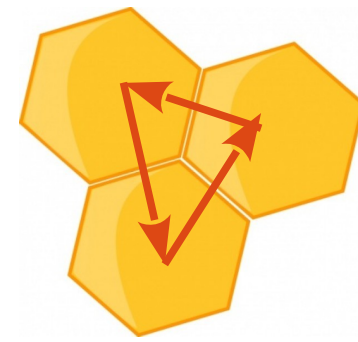


BLG 374E

Technical Communication for
Computer Engineers

Course Intro



- What and why technical communication.
- Course structure.
- Assessment.
- Intro to technical communication.

Factors to consider

(Beer & McMurrey)

1. Engineers write/present a lot.
2. Many kinds of documents/presentations.
3. Writing/presenting skills → career.
4. Can be learnt.

Why **not** study communication?

"I'm just going to be a programmer".

Then you will be doing: Stakeholder management, client training, customer contact, functional specs, technical specs, negotiation, staff training, system design documents, user documentation, progress reports, briefings, project coordination, etc...

Why **not** study communication?

"I'm just going to be an academic".

Then you will be doing: Paper writing, project proposals, project presentations, seminars, lecturing and training, tutorial documents, mentoring, publicising, poster design, collaboration, etc...

Why **not** study communication?

"I'm going to make my own business".

Then you will be doing: Marketing material preparation, applications for credit, advertising for employees, liaising with customers, documentation, image management, stakeholder briefings, project management, specification documentation, constant email and letter communication, etc.

Why **not** study communication?

"I am already very good at it".

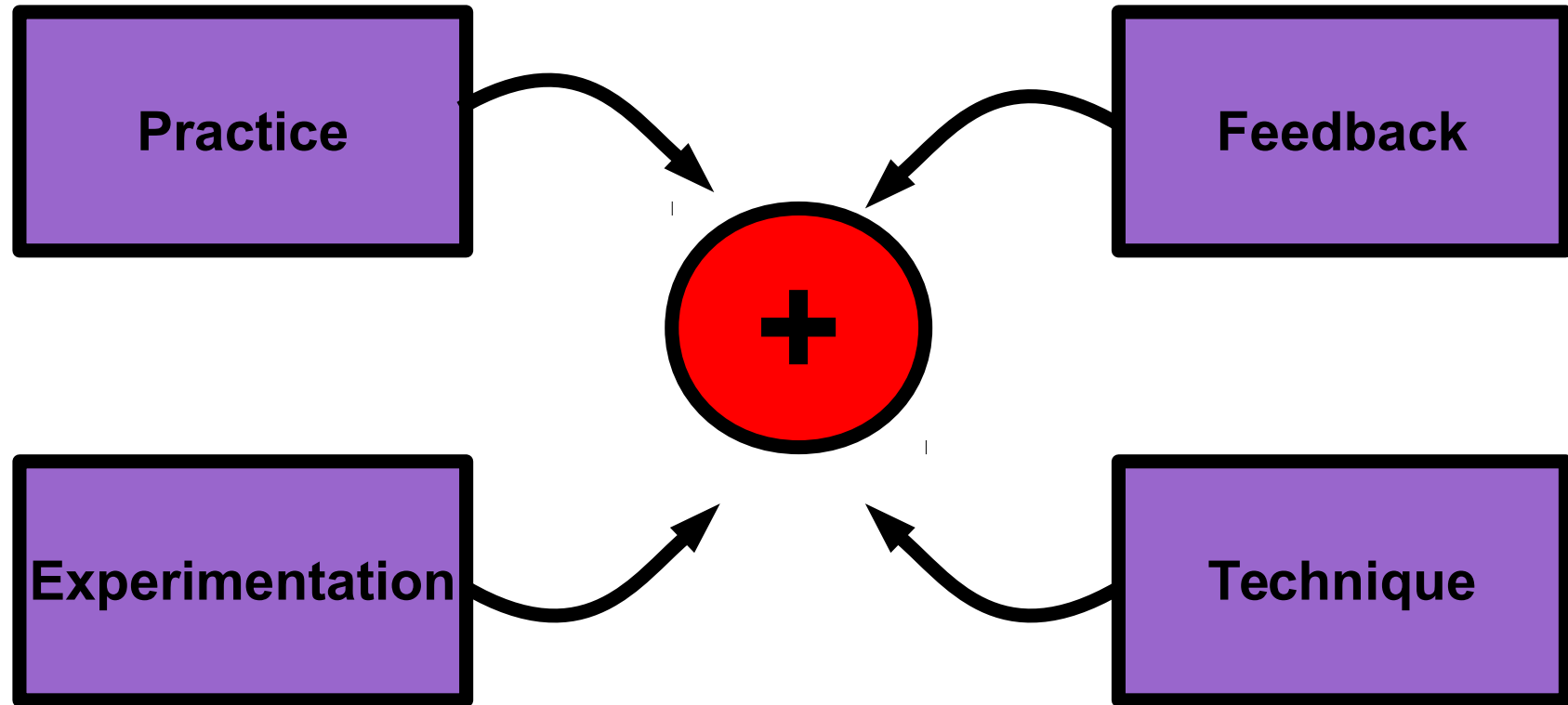
Why **not** study communication?

"It wouldn't help me".

Skills → can be developed.

Like football

A blueprint for improving communication skills



The value of **practice**

- Awareness.
- Freeing high-level capabilities.
- Fluency.

The value of **experimentation**

- Learn what works/doesn't.
- Discover new techniques.
- Develop personal style.
- Add fun.

The value of learning **technique**

- Incorporate new ideas.
- Learn from others.
- Accelerate experimentation.
- Accelerate practice.

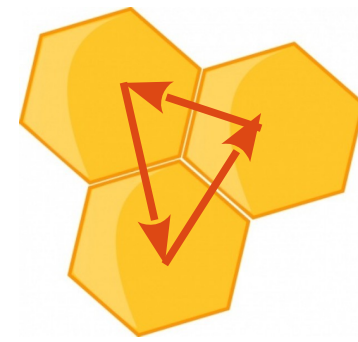
The value of **feedback**

- Learn to evaluate your work.
- See yourself from another perspective.
- Focus on the audience.

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Scope of course

- Written communication.
 - Common Document Types.
 - Format and Detail.
 - Style and Voice.
- Spoken communication.
 - Presentation skills.

Workshopping concept

- Each week in-class:
 - Some lecturing.
 - Some workshopping.

Workshopping concept

- Bring draft work.
- Peer evaluation.
 - Giving feedback well.
 - Taking feedback well.
- Discussions.

Textbook

David Beer, David McMurrey (2009) .

A Guide to Writing as an Engineer.

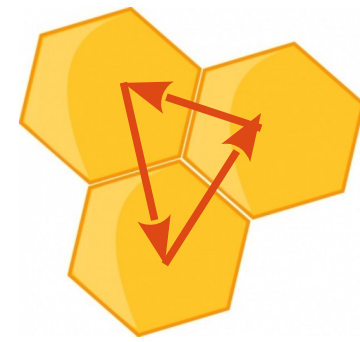
3rd Ed. Wiley: New Jersey, USA.

Also In library.

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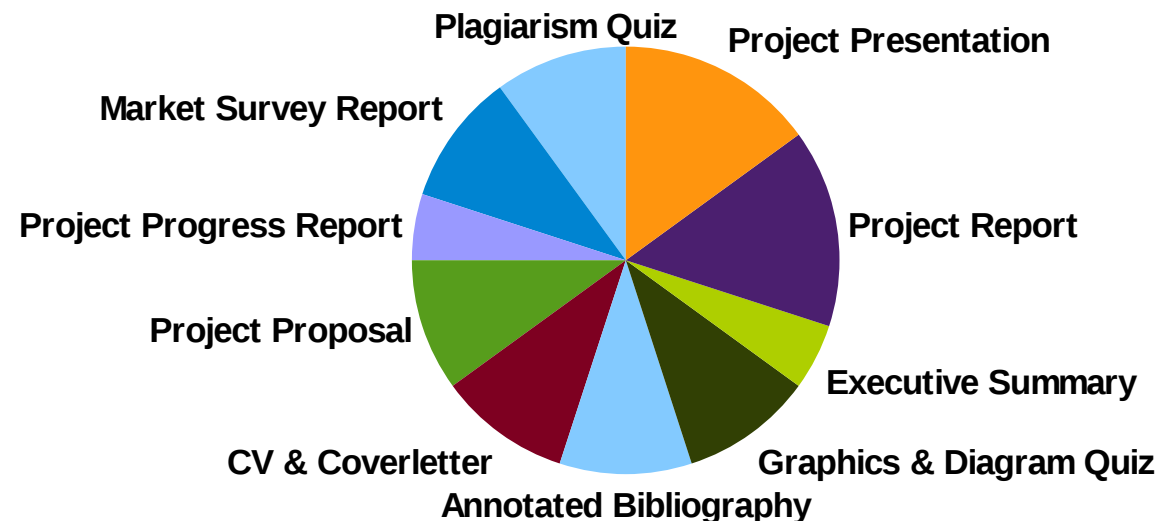


- What and why technical communication.
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Assessment

- Attendance:
 - Participation important.
 - 10% assignment penalty for not bringing a **good first draft** to peer-review.

- Weightings:



Assessment

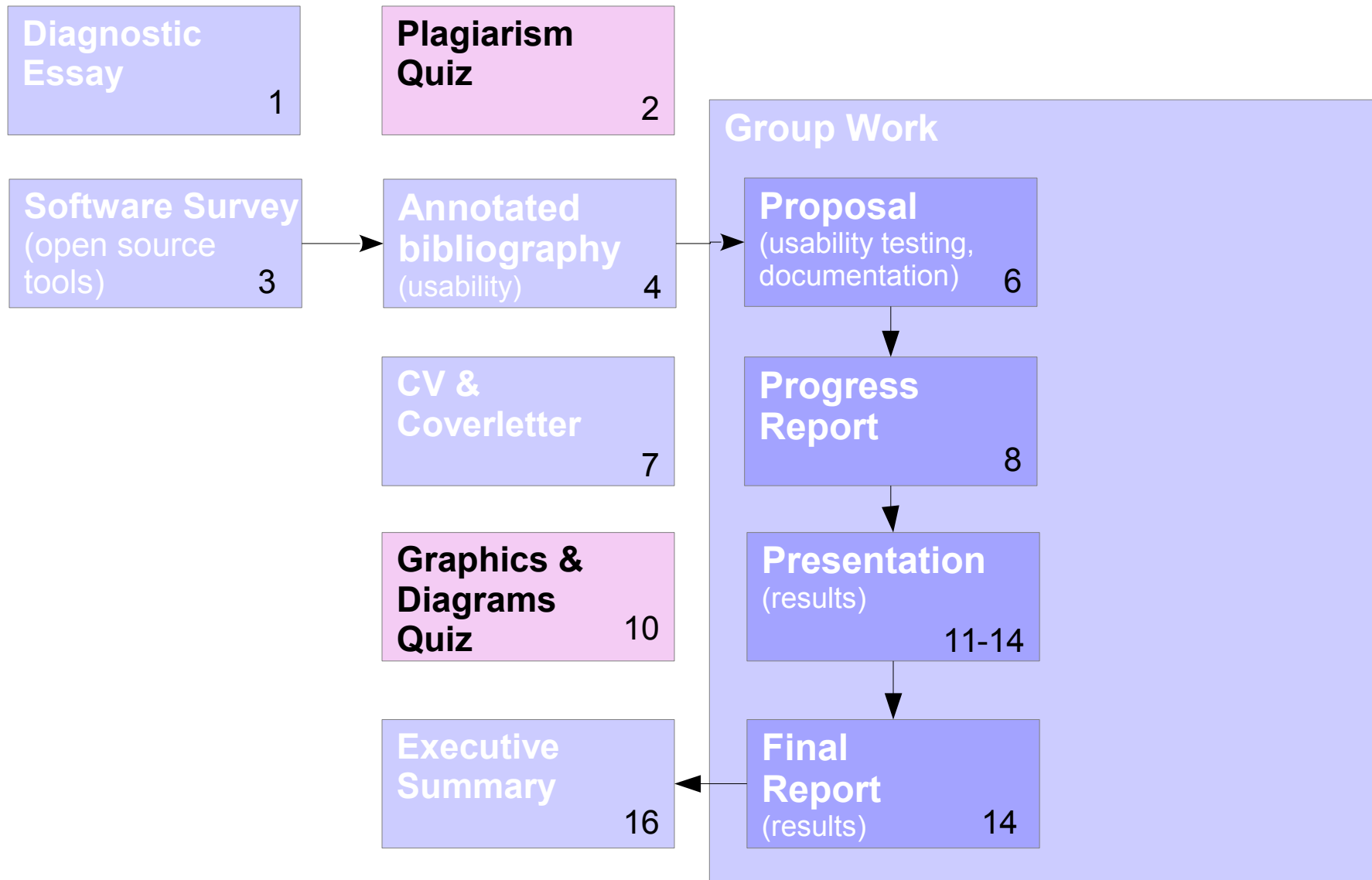
(with suggested topics
& week of submission)

BLG374E

Tech.

Comm.

Eng.



Workload

- ECTS Credits: **3**

- Total workload:

$$3 \times 25.5 = 76.5 \text{ hours}$$

- Weekly workload (13 weeks) :

$$76.5 / 13 = 5.9 \text{ hours.}$$

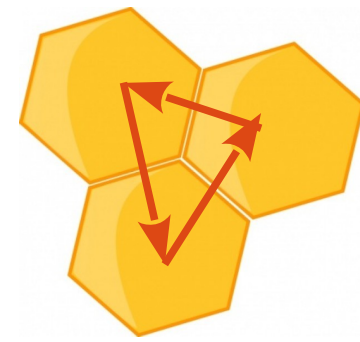
$$= 2 \text{ hours in-class} +$$

$$3.9 \text{ hours preparing documents} \\ \text{or presentations.}$$

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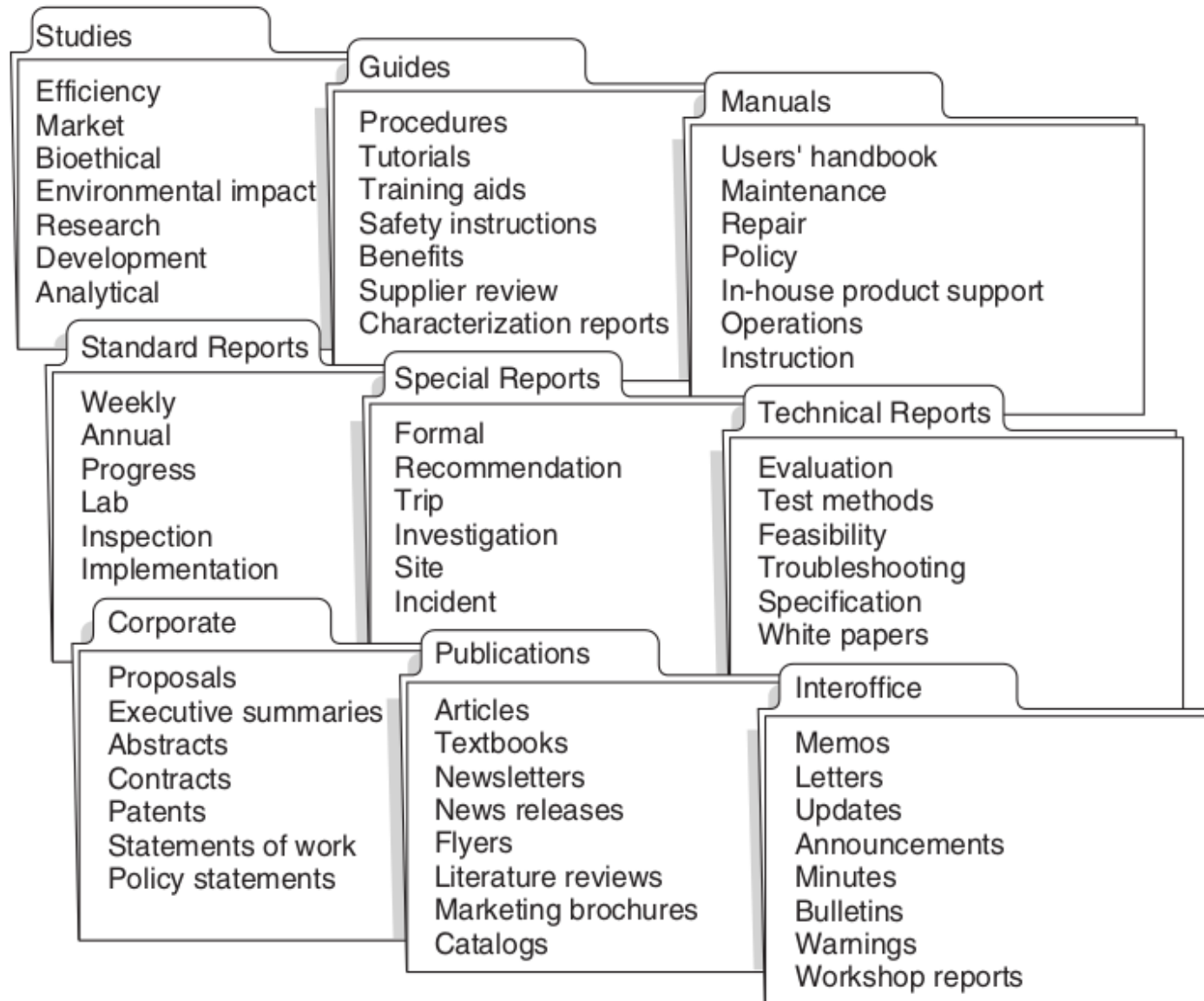


- What and why technical communication.
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Kinds of technical communication

- Written:
 - Formal.
 - Informal.
- Spoken:
 - Formal.
 - Informal.

Kinds of writing



Communication for engineers:

The aims

- Communicate message.
 - Eliminate barriers.
 - Ambiguity.
 - Confusion.
 - Loss of meaning.
 - Imagine you are the reader.
 - A skill to learn.
- Manage impressions.