

Date: June 23rd, 2023  
To: Dr. TerBush  
From: Jacob A. Christensen  
Subject: Class Expectation Memo

This letter's purpose is to present my personal interests and expectations for the Engineering Communication course to the class instructor for Summer 2023.

Whether it is academia or industry, communication and writing skills are integral to an engineer's effectiveness. Although I have had writing-centric classes in the past, I desire an experience which is tailored and focused on my career's specific future needs and success. This is why I am interested in this course. I want to learn how to communicate with my colleagues, superiors, and the general public about engineering concepts and concerns. Additionally, I would like to learn how to work cohesively with a team on documents, revising and receiving feedback.

Many of my previous writing experiences involved writing only for a class instructor to read and grade. This differs from the purpose of writing in the engineering workplace, where we emphasize clear communication based on a wide range of intended audiences. I want to learn how to adjust style, content, and depth based on who will be reading the document I write. Recently I have struggled multiple times to clearly explain concepts to my REU student mentee who does not have a solid materials engineering background yet, both written and verbal. I hope this course will help me develop strategies to be a more effective mentor over time. The instructor could help me succeed through assigning exercises which cover a broad range of audiences, along with sharing strategies for simplifying concepts without losing meaning.

Working on a team in engineering is inevitable, so I want to develop my teamwork skills. A past engineering course team writing assignment had us working individually on different sections of a scientific report. At the beginning of the assignment, divvying out responsibilities took a significant amount of time; additionally, we did not discuss in enough detail the style and expectations we had for the paper. Therefore, near the end of the assignment we struggled as a team to choose a uniform style, along with making our sections cohesive with one another. I hope this class can help me become more mindful of the strategies we can use to alleviate these roadblocks in the creative process. The instructor can help me by creating exercises which require team writing, along with explaining proven strategies for team coordination.

With the training provided from this class in these topics and others, I can be a more productive and influential engineer in my chosen field, effectively communicating and receiving information. I look forward to what you have planned in this class for us throughout the summer.

Jacob A. Christensen