

MSE 6754 | Engineering Communication | Example Syllabus 2016
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Course Description

This course focuses on advanced skills in writing and editing; designing visuals; and creating and delivering presentations. Students will learn the fundamentals of writing clear and concise engineering prose and will produce professional documents based on their current research. Applying principles of effective editing, students will analyze documents and edit them for clarity and coherence. Another element of the course will be designing effective visuals to use in documents and electronic presentations. Finally, students will gain experience creating and delivering several presentations, both in electronic media and other forms, and will evaluate the presentations of others. Each presentation will have a specific purpose defined and the presentations will be recorded so that students can evaluate their own presentations and assess their progress.

Course Requirements

Overall, students will need to be active participants in the classroom: in-class discussion, editing, writing, peer reviewing, workshops, and presenting will be required. There will be quizzes; in-class writing and editing exercises, in-class peer review of writing, editing, and presentations; homework in the form of reading and short editing assignments; tests, a rough draft and final draft of a 15 page paper (a portion of a Ph.D. proposal); two formal presentations with slides—one focused for a non-technical audience (3 min. + Q & A) and another focused for a conference audience (10 min. + 5 min. Q & A); other shorter presentations; and written self-evaluations of oral presentations.

Each presentation will be recorded so that students can critique their own performance for their self-evaluation write-up. Students will be required to buy an SD card (of at least 4 GB and rated class 10) to record their presentations.

Students will be required to keep before and after versions of their presentations and send them to me when they submit their self-evaluation.

Reading assignments will be from the required textbook: Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace. 11th edition. Joseph M. Williams and Joseph Bizup.

Grading

Though peer evaluations will be done on many assignments, the peer review score will not be considered when assigning the grade. I will be the final determiner of the grades for any in-class work, quizzes, tests, presentations, and papers. Active participation is part of your grade, which includes all in-class activities or out of class assignments, including peer reviews, self-evaluations, and all formal assignments.

There will be no final.

50% of your grade will come from writing and editing assignments: 10% will come from quizzes, assignments, and in-class work and participation, including peer reviews; 10% from tests; 15% from the draft of your paper and 15% from the final version of your paper.

50% of your grade will come from oral presentation assignments, including visuals and slide design assessment: 10% will come from peer reviews, active Q & A, and participation (including any short talks); 10% from your written self-evaluations; 15% from your informative talk and 15% from your non-technical talk.

You may talk to me at any time during the semester about your current grade or any concerns you might have about your grade.

Attendance

Attendance is crucial and required for all classes. Missing class means you miss assignments that may or may not be able to be made-up. Students who know that they will miss a class to attend a conference or interview must inform me well before the date. Two unexcused absences will lower a student's final grade by one letter grade.

MSE 6754: Engineering Communication| Example Schedule | Amanda C. Gable, Ph.D.
MWF schedule | This example does not include school holidays or breaks.

(Schedule and some assignments may be modified during the semester)

Date	Topic	Assignment
	Part I: Writing and Editing	
WEEK 1	Introduction to the course: writing, editing, designing visuals, and oral presentation assignments	Reading in <u>Style</u> .
	Principles to guide writing and editing: Sentence Level Clarity: Actions	Revise sentences
	Sentence Level Clarity: Agents	Reading in <u>Style</u>
WEEK 2	Sentence Level Clarity: Agents	Revise sentences
	Quiz #1 (sentence revisions); Peer Review and Discussion; In-class editing.	
	Discussion of Writing Assignment: a Ph.D. Proposal draft (or article draft).	
WEEK 3	Consequences of Nominalizations: Ethics and Examples.	Edit short document
	Test #1: Editing for Sentence Level Clarity	
	Peer Review of Test and Discussion	Sample articles due.
WEEK 4	Discuss Edited Document; brief intro to Cohesion at Paragraph Level	Reading in <u>Style</u> ; Sample (past) Ph.D. Proposals due
	Cohesion & Coherence; In-class exercise	Reading in <u>Style</u>
	Cohesion & Coherence: Article analysis	

WEEK 5	Point of View; Quiz #2—Paragraph re-writes.	
	Peer Review of Quiz; Paragraph clarity	Reading in <u>Style</u>
	Intro to Concision: in-class exercises	
WEEK 6	Test #2: Paragraph Revisions	
	Document organization: Issues, Points, Discussion and Motivation	
	Document organization	
WEEK 7	Analyzing Documents: proposals	
	Analyzing Documents: articles	
	Grammar and Punctuation review	
WEEK 8	Quiz #3 on punctuation: peer review discussion	Paper Draft Due (portion of Ph.D. Proposal)
	Part II: Visual Design & Communication	
	Transition: Oral Presentation assignments; Visual design in documents & slides	Read handouts re: Challenger disaster
	Visuals: design and organization	View info on assigned sites
WEEK 9	Principles for Designing Slides	
	Explaining visuals	Analyze selected TED talks
	Part III: Oral Communication	
	Delivery Issues and Considering Audience	
WEEK 10	One slide presentations: Explaining Visuals	Peer Review
	One slide presentations: Explaining Visuals	Peer Review
	Informative presentation discussed	
WEEK 11	Informative presentation workshop	
	Informative presentation workshop	
	Informative Talks; Peer Review	
WEEK 12	Informative Talks; Peer Review	Submit self-Evaluation & ppt
	Informative Talks; Peer Review	Submit self-Evaluation & ppt
	Informative Talks; Peer Review	Submit self-Evaluation & ppt
WEEK 13	Informative Talks; Peer Review	Submit self-Evaluation & ppt
	Lecture: 3-Minute Thesis Talks/Non-Technical audience	Submit self-Evaluation & ppt Final Paper Due
	Workshop (for non-technical talk)	
WEEK 14	3 Minute Thesis Talk (non-technical)	
	3 Minute Thesis Talk (non-technical)	Submit self-Evaluation & ppt
	3 Minute Thesis Talk (non-technical)	Submit self-Evaluation & ppt
WEEK 15	Last Day of Class: Summary and Discussion	Submit self-Evaluation & ppt

Acknowledgement: Dr. Lisa Rosenstein developed the original course; with permission, some of her materials are used.