Technical & Professional Writing (WRIT 3562W)

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Office Hours:	Weds, 9:30a - 10:30a or by appointment.
Course Time:	MWF 11:15am - 12:05pm
Course Place:	Bruininks, Room 432A

Overview

Any study of workplace writing will require not only knowledge of the types of writing that happen in the workplace, but also practice of the skills needed in order to compose such texts. This *writing-intensive* course will introduce you to and allow you to practice the following:

- <u>The genres of workplace writing</u>: Introducing the various written genres of workplace communication, such as memos, letters, proposals, instructions, and reports, as well as understanding the features that constitute these types of texts.
- <u>The skills of rhetorical and audience analysis</u>: Analyzing writing situations, multiple purposes, and potential audiences in order to create texts that solve problems.
- <u>The spatial design of visual and verbal information</u>: Understanding and working with the concepts of text arrangement and document design.
- <u>The features of "readable" written communication</u>: Developing the skills necessary to produce writing that is as grammatically easier to translate and as stylistically-appropriate for targeted audiences.

We will also practice collaboration skills, wherein we will work on cultivating a learning community where ideas develop together. Writing projects will require producing multiple drafts and peer reviewing. In this way, I hope that you come to understand that you learn just as much about writing by reviewing as you do by writing yourself. Accordingly, I designed this course to help us all develop a stronger sense about how writing is a social activity, where good ideas and writing take great effort.

Ultimately, we will create workplace documents that respond to simulated, yet authentic, workplace situations. In this case, I created a writing course that will grow out of a professional research and writing scenario and exigence.

Professional Scenario

You are on a technical communication team of usability researchers. Your team has been hired by a software company as an independent entity to conduct an exploratory research study that identifies issues found about how users experience the task of reading the company's End User License Agreement (EULA).

Exigence

Over the past few years, software companies have started to experience the consequences of not creating and maintaining a more responsible and transparent understanding about their services for their users. Companies are realizing that users are becoming more concerned about how their data and content are being collected and used, as well as their ownership of said items. Due to the litigious nature of these rising user concerns, X company hired your team of technical communicators, so they could craft a more responsible, user-friendly End User License Agreement (EULA), which is the document that includes all of this information.

Here is how the course projects align with the scenario and broader exigence, as it plays out throughout the semester:

Writing Project	Exigence	Writing Project as Response
Technical Description	Before crafting a research project, the team needs to learn more about EULAs in general *and* the software company's particular EULA.	Individually research and write a *technical description* that helps you and your team educate each other about the technical nature and issues of EULAs.
Usability Testing: Data Management Plan & Executive Summary	As the team plans and conducts its usability testing of the EULA, they need to 1. Organize their data and document their decision-making about the testing method and preliminary analysis of the data; 2. Provide their stakeholders a synopsis of their preliminary findings.	1. Develop and maintain a *data management plan* that records your team's data collection and preliminary analysis. 2. Write an *executive summary* at the beginning of the data management plan to report your progress
Analytical Report	The data needs to be analyzed more thoroughly and written up in a more formalized manner.	Individually analyze and write up the results of the exploratory study in an *analytical report*.
Instructions	After conducting and reporting their research, the team realizes that it will take time to make impactful changes to EULAs.	The team decides to develop instructions for how to critically engage this particular EULA.

Course Objectives

In this class, we will work together to test the readability and usability of technical documents. This overarching objective provides us the set of activities, means, and materials to:

- Analyze audiences and adjust our communication for varying audiences and situations;

- Identify and analyze potential ethical issues, i.e. misinformation, confidentiality of information, etc.;

- Create a report that practices various information-gathering strategies, evaluates the quality and appropriateness of information, and demonstrates an overall ability to effectively manage a semester-long project;

- Produce written work that is stylistically-appropriate and free of grammatical errors; and

- Write workplace correspondence that meets the needs of the reader and conforms to the conventions of format. Use word processing to create usable, attractive documents.

Required Texts & Technologies

Textbook

Johnson-Sheehan, Richard. (2015). *Technical Communication Today*. 5th edition. New York: Longman.
- **Note: Do not attempt to complete this class without access to this textbook (physical or digital)!**

Google Drive

Class-Shared Folder

I created a Google Drive folder for our course content and some activities. I have shared it with you via your UMN email. Be sure to favorite our class Drive folder by 'starring' it, so you can locate it more easily.

Individual Student Folder

In addition to the class-shared Drive folder, create an individual Google Drive folder with your UMN email.

- Use the following naming scheme: *familyname-firstname-3562ws17*.
- Share this Drive folder with me: *lindg250@umn.edu*.

You will use this folder to submit individually written assignments for assessment.

Eli Review

Eli Review is a web application that helps me create guided peer-review feedback sessions amongst you and your peers. By using Eli, you will have the opportunity to practice providing more useful feedback, and in return learn how to better write particular genres of writing through this process.

- Sign-up process:

  - Go to elireview.com and sign up for an account.
  - On your dashboard, click on the Eli for Students tab.
  - In the 'Join a Course' box, enter the course code "`cumuli306epic`".
  - Choose the 6-month access option ($25).
  - When you click on this option, you will be directed to PayPal.com, where you can pay by your bank account (requires a PayPal account), credit card, e-check, or prepaid PayPal gift card.
  - For a more detailed set of instructions, see Eli's provided individual subscription process.

Writing Projects

Assignment (Each 100 points)	Weight
Technical Description	10%
Usability Testing of EULA: Team Management Document & Executive Summary	20%
Analytical Report	40%
Rhetorical Reading Instruction of EULA	20%
Class Participation	10%

Technical Description

Technical descriptions take the time to break up complex information about a particular thing and render it understandable for an audience less familiar with it. For this reason, this genre serves as a good fit for you and your team members to write up to better understand EULAs.

In this first assignment, each of your team members will individually research and write a technical description that describes the background and features of EULAs both generally and specific to your particular EULA.

Objectives

- Learn how to research, write, and design technical descriptions
- Learn typified features (and variations thereof) of technical descriptions
- Learn more about the history, features, and functions or EULAs

Overall, the technical description assignment will prepare all of us to learn more about EULAs, so you and your team can better design and conduct usability tests on them. In turn, this will help you generate better data to analyze and develop other writing projects: executive summary, analytical report, and instructions.

Rubric

See the template-rubric-tech-description.

Logistics

- Individually written project
- No more than 3 pages
- Groups of people will research and write particular EULAs.
- Potential apps include: YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, 23andMe, Ancestry.com, etc.
  - Note: I provide some of these examples, since it will be easier to research issues surrounding the company. Such issues invariably end up being represented somehow within their EULA.

Usability Testing and Executive Summary

After conducting your initial research on EULAs and your particular EULA, you and your team will learn some basic ways to create, manage, and conduct an exploratory usability test on the EULA. While conducting your research, you will maintain a *data management plan* that tracks the development of your ideas and organizes your documents and data. After conducting your usability test of people reading you particular EULA, your team will learn basic data triangulation strategies and develop preliminary findings together. Based on those preliminary findings, your team will write an *executive summary* that will be placed at the beginning of your data management plan. Please note that you will analyze and write up your preliminary results individually in the more detailed analytical report.

Objectives

- Learn how to design and conduct a usability test that collects data about specific problems / inquiries
- Use usability data collection methods, as learned through our trip to UMN's usability lab.
- Gain experience developing and conducting 'lo-fi' data-collection methods: paper-prototypes, think-alouds, in situ interviews, short surveys.
- Learn basic strategies about how to manage data and triangulate it.

The usability testing will prepare all of us to make sense about how people interact with your teams' particular EULA by drawing conclusions from the findings. Note: The process to make more meaningful understanding of the data and useful applications also happens during the Analytical Report assignment.

Deliverables

Rubric Team Management Plan: This plan will be a 'living' document, where the group is responsible for updating any plan changes, role delegations, new and completed tasks and deadlines, as well as vetting the information about the research method, data management, and logging of preliminary analysis decisions.

- Groups will use and modify this template: [To Be Provided].
- Outlines research method: what method collects what data about readers of EULAs
- Details procedures for organizing and storing the data for the group
- Documents project timeline of team delegations of roles, tasks, and responsibilities.
- Includes series of memos that note key decisions regarding the following items (but not limited to): key decisions about research problems and questions, data collection method, data analysis; any changes in roles and responsibilities; and meeting agenda logs.

Executive summary of preliminary findings: The executive summary delivers a brief survey of the most claims and evidence that you deem most important to convey to your intended audience. It should:
- Provide an overview of the topic and purpose of the research.
- Use bullet points to help readers find essential information about the preliminary findings from the research.
- Write clear headings to indicate major-minor elements,
- ~~Incorporate at least one graphic integral to the key takeaway from the research~~, and a
- Concluding paragraph that summarizes the overall key findings and next steps.

Analytical Report on Usability Testing

In this third assignment, individuals will take the findings from their group usability testing and write it up in an analytic report. We will maintain and build on our constructed context of work: how we are from a third-party usability testing agency, who have been hired to identify issues and propose changes to the company's EULA.

Objectives

- Integrate background and contextual information developed from the technical description
- Synthesize background research with results from testing
- Propose changes to the particular EULA tested
- Learn typical rhetorical and communicative moves made in analytical reports
  - Note: I encourage dialogue between group members about how to come to understand the findings from the testing. Yet, I discourage the sharing of actual drafts amongst group members. We will conduct peer reviews across different groups, so we can inhibit some more explicit textual moves made by your own group members.

Rubric

- Complete elements: Abstract, Introduction, Background, Method, Findings, Discussion, Proposed Changes
- Elements take up and creatively implement the particular communicative moves reviewed in class and in the textbook:
  - [To Be Provided].
- Uses professional prose style (adheres to Paramedic Method, as practiced in class): More micro-structures and moves, such as active/passive constructions, verb choices, number of prepositions per sentence, etc.
- Minor details: 1,500 - 1,800 words; uses numbered endnotes; APA citation scheme for references

Logistics

- Individually written
- Submit final draft as a shared Google Document on your Google Drive.

Instructions for Reading the EULA

In this fourth assignment, groups re-assemble and re-purpose the findings from their usability study to create a set of instructions for people to navigate and better understand a particular area of concern regarding their EULAs in its tested form.

Objectives

- Develop a procedure that helps users navigate and understand a particular area of concern within the EULA, (e.g., privacy).
- Learn how to break up a procedure into manageable elements
- Learn how to use research findings to make decisions about how to develop the instructions.
- Integrate visuals that supplement and guide users.
- Learn basic procedural writing and writing for translation strategies

Rubric

- Creates major and minor steps derived from the findings of the research.
- Adheres to best practices to write instructions for language translation.
- Demonstrates ability to write in an imperative style.
- Integrates graphics that supplement and guide users.
- Layout and content considerate of audience and situated use of text.

Logistics

- Three-phase plan for writing these instructions:
    a. Individuals write draft instructions individually.
    b. Group analyzes individual procedures and develop uniform strategy.
    c. Group collectively writes the procedure.
- Submit within group project folder.

Participation Memo

In this fifth assignment, you must individually write a final memo that reports on how you contributed to this class as a colleague. Prompts will be provided to help you develop material for this memo.

Objectives

- Reflect on one's own ability to contribute to a collegial effort to learn, meet, and even exceed the class/project objectives.

Rubric

- Makes clear claims about personal and collegial participation in and outside of class
- Backs up claims with evidence (peer-review ratings can be used here)
- Provides descriptive headings
- Adheres to memo formats, as listed below.

Prompts

- Discuss how you participated within the class discussions and activities.
- Discuss how you contributed to the team projects.
- Cite specific deliverables, situations, etc.

Logistics

- 1-2 pages, single-spaced, TNR, 12-pt font, 1" margins, memo format
- Submit on Google Drive in your individual folder

Schedule

Since no class dynamic is the same, *I sometimes must make adjustments to the schedule*. If this is the case, I will announce such changes in advance to help you adjust accordingly.

Technical Description	Usability Testing	Analytical Report	Instructions	Final Revisions
~2.5 Weeks	~3.5 Weeks	~4 Weeks	~4 Weeks	~3.5 Weeks
01/18 - 02/06	02/06 - 03/03	03/03 - 04/03	04/03 - 04/28	04/28 - 05/15
Due: 02/06	Due: 03/03	Due: 04/03	Due: 04/28	Due: 05/15, 8am

Technical Description	
Wednesday 01/18	**Course Introduction**
	Readings: • None **Writings**: • None
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Friday 01/20	**What are EULAs and Its Issues?**
	Readings: • Vedantam, S. (23 Aug. 2016). Do you read Terms Of Service Contracts? Not many do, research shows. *NPR.org*. Retrieved 23 Aug. 2016 from http://www.npr.org/2016/08/23/491024846/do-you-read-terms-of-service-contracts-not-many-do-research-shows. • Böhme, R., & Köpsell, S. (2010, Apr.). Trained to accept? A field experiment on consent dialogs. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems* (pp. 2403-2406). ACM. [see Google Drive folder] **Writings**: • None

	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Monday 01/23	**What are 'Technical Descriptions'? & the 'Paramedic Method'**
	Readings:
	● *TCT*, Chp. 6 - Technical Descriptions and Specifications. pp. 119 - 146.
	○ Be sure to also review the annotated examples to see what elements they highlight in each one.
	Writings:
	● None
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
	● Form EULA groups
	● Be sure to sign up for ELI and share an individual folder with me
Wednesday 01/25	**Divide & Conquer: Inventing Major-Minor Parts of Your Technical Description**
	Readings:
	● Your team should have chosen a web app and its EULA to research. Now, individually locate and read at least 3 sources that will help you learn more about EULAs in general and issues connected to your particular web app.
	Writings:
	● Draft some possible topics – at least 10 – to research more and potentially write about in your respective TDs. This can be just a simple list of possibilities, as derived from your initial step into your research. You will reconvene as a team on this day and divide up these possibilities amongst each other.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
	● We will also continue discussions/activities about the features of technical descriptions.
	● Students, be sure to check out the REUL Lab as a resource too: http://www.reullab.gatech.edu/
Friday 01/27	**Research of Technical Descriptions, continued**
	Readings:
	● Locate, read, and take notes on at least 3 sources. See the Writings section for

details about how to take notes more effectively.

Writings:

- **Notes**:
  Copy the provided reading matrix to your individual folder: See our [Google Drive doc](#). Use it as follows:
  - ○ ***Be sure to make a copy of the 'template' version*** to your individual Google Drive folder.
  - ○ Create a new directory called: 'technical-descriptions'
  - ○ Move the copied template file to this directory.
  - ○ Re-name the template as follows: *familyname-eula-readings-matrix.*
  - ○ Use the matrix to guide your reading:
    - ■ Try not to always 'quote dump'. Instead paraphrase the purposes of particular sections or claims and evidence
    - ■ Be sure to also develop potential uses of the source info in the last column
    - ■ *Important*: Log the page number(s) where the particular information resides in the source.

- **Refine your Major and Minor Parts**:
  - ○ ***Copy*** and use this [template-td-invention](#) document to your individual folder.
  - ○ Use it to guide your initial ideas about your TD.

Other Directions / Comments / Questions

- We will use the invention document to coordinate review sessions during class.

Monday 01/30	**TD Draft Due & ELI Peer Review Session**

Readings:

- Continue conducting own research for the major and minor sections of your draft technical description.
- Watch this video of ELI co-creator Dr. Bill Hart-Davidson talking about what ELI helps writers learn: Becoming better writers by becoming better reviewers.
  - ○ [Describe - Evaluate - Suggest : Giving Helpful Feedback](#)
  - ○ Be sure to note the 3-part heuristic.
- Review the Eli Student Help page: http://elireview.com/learn/tutorials/students/
  - ○ Read sections 2 and 3 (Writing Tasks and Review Tasks)

Writings:

- Submit a draft of your TD to ELI before class on Monday. It should include a title, introduction, at least one completed major section with minor parts, and a revised outline of the remainder parts of the TD.

Other Directions / Comments / Questions
- Bring your laptops; we will be conducting peer review in class.

Wednesday 02/01	**Incorporating Graphics**

	Readings:
	
	• Travis, D. (01 Aug. 2011). A CRAP way to improve usability. *User Focus* [blog]. Retrieved 30 Aug. 2016 from http://www.userfocus.co.uk/articles/A_CRAP_way_to_improve_usability.html
	• Review the guidelines in *TCT* (Chp. 6, p. 140), and the different TD examples.
	
	Writings:
	
	• Take up the CRAP principles and the guidelines from TCT to draft ideas about
	  ○ what layout to use with your content, and
	  ○ what visual to incorporate to bolster what point in your TD.
	Sketch 3 ideas in a notebook and bring your sketches to class.
	
	• Complete the 2 ELI peer review tasks

	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Friday 02/03	**Final Review of TD**

	Readings:
	
	• Develop new revision tricks with Richard Lanham's Paramedic Method:
	
	  ○ Link goes to a video in the UMN Library collection, so you must log into your UMN account.
	  ○ Watch the first ~11 minutes.
	  ○ Take notes about the PM method, and what prose issues it helps you mitigate.
	
	Writings:
	
	• Submit complete draft of your TD on ELI.

	Other Directions / Comments / Questions •
Usability Testing: Data Management & Executive Summary Final due date: Friday, 03/03	
Monday 02/06	**Final TD Peer Review**
	Readings:

	● None **Writings**: ● Submit complete TD in ELI.

	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
	
	● Will conduct 2 peer reviews:
	  ○ Integration of graphic(s) and overall layout
	  ○ Major sections and their respective supportive content
	● Short discussion of concluding paragraph

Wednesday 02/08	**TD Due & Introduction to Usability Testing**
	Readings: ● Review the Usability Testing project description + Data Management Plan Template ● Usability.gov: "Usability Testing", "Planning a Usability Test", & "Scenarios" Pay close attention to the different elements, metrics, and scenarios. For the record, we are conducting exploratory studies, so we will not use any internally-valid, quantitative measures. As such, you do not need to review them. Of course, you may collect simple numbers, such as how long it takes to find some bit of information or to complete some task. ● Review the UMN Usability Lab page. **Writings**: ● Submit final draft for my review from your individual Google Drive folder
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Friday 02/10	**Visit UMN Usability Lab (See 'Other Directions' section)**
	Readings: ● Review usability.gov pages. **Writings**: ● As a team, create a Usability Testing project folder within the '3562ws17/usability-testing' folder. Then, copy the 'template-ut-management' file to your respective team folder. ● During our visit to the lab, you will be introduced to a variety of research problems

and methods. Please review the usability.gov pages and come with a list of prepared questions. While listening and participating, be sure to jot down and ask questions as they should arise.

Other Directions / Comments / Questions

- Class will meet in the UMN Usability Lab. Go to the basement of Walter Library; opposite the coffee shop.

Monday 02/13	**Develop Initial Usability Test Design**

Readings:

- None

Writings:

- Each team member write a memo in your team's management plan document, describing some take-aways, or things you learned and want to apply, from the Usability Lab visit.

- As a team, copy the "[Usability Testing Invention]" document to your team folder. Then, use this document to draft your research problem, questions, and method.

Other Directions / Comments / Questions

- During class, your team will have an opportunity to decide upon a particular research plan and document your decisions within your management plan. The goal is to be able to come to class on Wednesday prepared to conduct a pilot test on your group members.

Wednesday 02/15	**Practice Usability Tests**

Readings:

- None

Writings:

- Prepare for you practice tests.

Other Directions / Comments / Questions

- After your practice test, I will ask your group to debrief and memo what insights you gleaned from the practice run. In your management plan, document
  - Changes and decisions, and who will take care of what changes
    - Consider the rough spots: What needs to be improved? Who will do what regarding both of these concerns?
  - Data storage.

	■ For example, if you are using paper-based materials, how will you ensure that everyone has access to these materials after the test?
Friday 02/17	**Conduct Usability Tests: Day 1**
	Readings: ● None **Writings**: ● None
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions ● Be prepared to conduct 2 usability tests. We will save time at the end for your team to debrief and plan for your weekend tests.
Monday 02/20	**Conduct Usability Tests: Day 2**
	Readings: ● As a group, read the following: Organizing Files & File Naming Conventions ● Then, implement a directory-file organizational scheme and file-naming scheme for your data and other documents. **Writings**: ● As needed memos, debriefing docs, etc. to log and organize data from first 2 tests.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions ● Be prepared to conduct 2 usability tests. We will save time at the end for your team to debrief.
Wednesday 02/22	**Building Chains of Evidence**
	Readings: ● Your data **Writings**: ● Any memoing that your group needs to conduct ● Any updates that your group needs to provide to the Management Plan
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions

	- We will take the day and begin analyzing your data. I will provide an activity for your team to start conducting your analysis, generating some preliminary findings. - As a group, be sure your data and other documents and artifacts are organized well for easy use. By doing so, you will create a smoother analysis process for you and your team.
Friday 02/24	**Executive Summaries: Writing Up Your Preliminary Findings**
	Readings: - Your data. *TCT*, Section on Executive Summaries, pp. 280 - 283 (includes an example). **Writings**: - Continue your work to develop some preliminary findings from your data.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Monday 02/27	**More Data Management and Analysis Work**
	Readings: - Your data **Writings**: - Continue your work to develop some preliminary findings from your data.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Wednesday 03/01	**Practice Paramedic Method on Example Executive Summaries**
	- UT work: Team continues data work. - Re-read the example executive summary (ES) in *TCT*. Conduct the reverse-outlining strategy that I mentioned on last Friday. Specifically, apply the outlining method to each of the bullet points and consider how you would categorize the points under particular headings. *Come to class prepared to share your revision of the example ES.*
Friday 03/03	**Class Review Day: Assessing Where We're At and Where We're Going**
	I will hand back your technical descriptions and talk through how I see us moving through the remainder of the course.

Monday 03/06	**Draft Executive Summary Due & Peer Review**
	Readings: ● Data work, as delegated by your team. **Writings**: ● As a team, complete a first, full draft of the Executive Summary at the designated section in your Management Plans.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions ● Bring your laptops, since we will be conducting peer review sessions
Wednesday 03/08	**Revisions & Paramedic Method**
	Readings: ● Your team reads all the feedback. **Writings**: ● Create a *revision plan* based on the feedback your team received. Log it in a memo within your management plan. Then, divide the work amongst your team by creating tasks for each person to complete. 　○ What feedback will we address? 　○ Who will do what to address it before Wednesday? ● Complete tasked revisions before class.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Friday 03/10	**TBA**
	SPRING BREAK **03/13 - 03/17**
	Analytical Report

Monday 03/20	**Usability Testing Due: Executive Summary & Management Plan + Introduce Analytical Report Project**
	Readings: ● *TCT*, "Analytical Reports," pp. 253 - 258 (includes an example report) and "Step 2: Organize and Draft Your Report," pp. 265 - 276 (includes another example report. ○ Be sure to review the annotated examples, because we will conduct a similar 'genre analysis' to identify rhetorical moves in these reports throughout this week. **Writings**: ● UT Due. Submit as is in your team folder.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Wednesday 03/22	**Analyzing Rhetorical Moves in an Analytical Report**

	Reading / Writing:
	
	● Read the Intro and Background
	● <u>**Print out**</u>, read, and annotate the rhetorical moves made in the *introduction* and *background* sections in the following usability report:
	
	Riegelsberger, J., Lee, M., & Lederer, S. (2012, May). A room with a view: Understanding users' stages in picking a hotel online. In *CHI'12 Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 713-716). ACM.
	
	    ○ Google Drive location/link: 3562ws17/lectures-materials.
	    ○ Bring your annotated copy to class.
	    ○ As you annotate it, consider how your context and audience differ from this article.

	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Friday 03/24	Continue Genre Analysis of Report
	Readings: ● Review the Riegelsberger et al. article from Wed. We'll look at it more closely on this day. **Writings**: ● Same as Wednesday.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions

	● Review the Planning material that your team started on Wednesday ● Start analyzing the Riegelsberger *et al.* report.
Monday 03/27	**Peer Review of Draft Introduction and Background Sections**

	Readings:
	
	● Anything you need to read to write your materials
	  ○ Suggested Journals:
	    ■ Technical Communication
	    ■ Technical Communication Quarterly
	    ■ Journal of Business and Technical Communication
	    ■ Journal of Technical Writing and Communication
	    ■ Information Design Journal
	  ○ Locate many of the above journals vis-a-vis a journal search. Be sure to be signed into your UMN account before clicking on the links below:
	    ■ Techcomm: UMN Library Link
	    ■ Information Design: UMN Library Link
	
	Writings:
	
	● Submit draft Introduction and Background sections to ELI

	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Wednesday 03/29	**Genre Analysis, Cont'd: Method and Findings**
	Readings: ● Read and annotate the Method and Findings sections of the Riegelsberger *et al.* article. Bring it to class. **Writings**: ● Create a revision plan based on your feedback in ELI.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Friday 03/31	**Draft Method and Findings & Eli Peer Review**
	Readings: ● Anything needed to help you draft your Method and Findings sections **Writings**: ● Submit drafted sections to ELI before class.

	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Monday **04/03**	**Genre Analysis, Cont'd: Discussion and Conclusion**
	Readings: ● Read and annotate the Implementation and Conclusion sections of the Riegelsberger *et al.* article. Bring it to class. Note: we will have a Discussion section instead of an Implementation section. **Writings**: ● Create a revision plan based on your feedback in ELI.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Wednesday **04/05**	**Drafted Discussion and Conclusion**
	Readings: ● *As you need.* **Writings**: ● Draft of Discussion and Conclusion due in ELI.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Friday **04/07**	**Tables & Figures**
	Readings: ● *TCT*, "Choose the Style, Design, and Medium", pp. 285 - 286. **Writings**: ● Complete your revision plan; continue revision work.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Monday **04/10**	**Abstracts**
	Readings: ● *TCT*, "Abstract", pp. 278-280 **Writings**:

	● Revise your report, according to your revision plans.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Wednesday 04/12	**Final Peer Review of Full Draft**
	Readings:
	● As you need.
	Writings:
	● Print out your full draft and bring it to class. We will be conducting 3 rounds of peer review. I will provide guidance for each round.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Instructions	
Friday 04/14	**Analytical Reports Due**
	Readings:
	● TCT, Chp.7 - Instructions, pp. 152-179. ● Read the project description in the syllabus.
	Writings:
	● Submit your report via your individual Google Drive folder by sending me a notification email from the Google Doc.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Monday 04/17	**Introduce Instructions Project**

	Readings: ● TCT, Chp.7 - Instructions, pp. 152-179. ● Read the project description in the syllabus. **Writings:** ● None
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Wednesday 04/19	**Task Analyses & Breaking Up Procedures into Manageable Tasks**
	Readings: ● Bellamy, Carey, & Schlotfeldt. (2012). Tasks & Task Analysis. (Excerpt from DITA Best Practices). Retrieve from Google Drive 'instructions' folder: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B8gKWBFDNv6delNHSjBDSUJWNXc **Writings:** ● Your team will complete a Google Doc that discusses the following rhetorical elements noted in *TCT*: Subject, Purpose(s), Readers, Context of Use
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Friday 04/21	**Using Task Analyses & Layout**
	Readings: ● Review the example Instructions in *TCT*. Using your knowledge of CRAP principles, assess and annotate the 2 examples in the chapter (pp. 156-160). Be sure to consider how its design and included elements relate to its rhetorical situation / context. **Writings:** ● Based on Bellamy *et al.*, complete your task analysis using the task analysis template..
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Monday 04/24	**First Draft Due -- No class meeting (out of town)**
	Readings: ● None

	Writings:
	● Create a first draft of your instructions by class time in a Google Doc within your group folders. As a group, send me any questions that you have about the project through the Google Doc feature to email collaborators.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
	● Looking ahead: Review *TCT*, pp. 171-172, as a way to help your team start working with more granular parts of writing Instructions. For ex., Use imperative mood, express one action per step, number the steps, and organize the steps in a helpful and concise manner.
	● Look out for a Google Doc + email for what to do between Monday and Wednesday's class.
Wednesday 04/26	**TBA**
	Readings:
	● English prose problems for translators handout: https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B8gKWBFDNv6dd0NzNGxQUlhoeVE ● Review *TCT*, pp. 171-173
	Writings:
	● See email from me.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
	● In class, we will review the readings + revise your instructions based on the readings and your team's individual testing of the procedure
Friday 04/28	**No Class (I'm walking during the graduation commencement!) :-)**
	Readings:
	● TBA
	Writings:
	● TBA
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Monday 05/01	**Piloting Instructions**

	Readings: ● None **Writings**: ● Compete next wave of revisions. We will conduct peer review in class by having 1-2 people from outside your team use the document.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Wednesday 05/03	**Participation Memos**
	Readings: ● Read the Participation Memo assignment **Writings**: ● Continue revising your instructions.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions
Friday 05/05	**Final Class Period**
	Readings: ● None **Writings**: ● Keep working on any revisions.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions ● Prepare a 5-7 minute progress report for me. It should include the following: ○ Describe the aim of your procedure ○ How you think the procedure accomplishes this aim in a user-friendly way ○ Ask me any questions and raise any concerns ● For groups waiting for me, you can 1) prepare for our meeting, if needed, or 2) Review what work you need to accomplish for this course, or 3) If your team will be revising your executive summary, review what work needs to be done to revise. For #2 and #3, create a revision plan for each project. ● Note: You must stick around, since I need to hand out the review forms. :-)

Monday 05/15 [finals due]	Revisions and Participation Memo Due
	Writings: ● Submit by 8am today.
	Other Directions / Comments / Questions

Course, Department, and University Policies

Grading Guidelines

- A: 100-94%, A-: 90-93%: "A" work exceeds basic assignment criteria in several ways.
- B+: 87-89%, B: 84-86%, B-: 80-83%: "B" work meets and exceeds basic assignment criteria
- C+: 77-79%, C: 74-76%, C-: 70-73%: "C" work meets basic assignment criteria.
- D+: 67-69%, D: 64-66%, D-: 60-63%: "D" work fails to meet one or more basic assignment criteria.
- F: 0-59%: "F" work is incomplete, not received, or fails to meet any basic assignment criteria.

Deadlines/Late Work

Final drafts handed in after their due dates will be reduced half a letter grade, unless prior arrangements are made with me. After a two days, the grade lowered a full-letter grade, and the same for the third. A fourth day results in failure. However, life happens, and if you require extra time to complete your project, contact me prior to the assignment deadline if you would like to earn partial credit.

Revisions

Revisions are a major part of this course. You must revise the Analytical Report assignment, and you can opt to revise your Technical Description and/or Executive Summary for a better grade.

All revisions are due on Monday, 05/15/2017 by 8am.

Note: Group assignments must be revised as a group.

- Optional: Technical Description, Executive Summary
- Required: Analytical Report

Institutional Review Board

Because this course involves a research-based report in which you may conduct surveys and interviews of other people, this class follows guidelines for research as approved by the UMN Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB functions to protect human subjects who participate in research by requiring researchers to outline issues of risk, anonymity, and confidentiality in an informed consent form. Our class project is considered "exempt research" by the IRB, meaning that interview or survey research on topics related to this class are considered "minimal risk" to interview or survey participants. I can help you with the consent form and with designing appropriate questions. For further information, or for any inquiries, contact me, or contact Director of Undergraduate Studies Dr. Lee-Ann Kastman Breuch (lkbreuch@umn.edu).

University Writing Intensive Requirement

As stated on the University of Minnesota WI web site, writing intensive courses must meet the following standards:

- Writing is comprehensively integrated into the course
- The writing in the course must be tied to the course objectives and course outcomes.
- The syllabus must reflect the critical role that writing plays in the course.

- Writing assignments in a WI course may be designed as a means to achieving mastery of course content, as a means to enable students to develop professional output, or as a balance between the two.
- Writing is a significant part of the course work
- Students must write at least 2,500 words or the equivalent of finished writing, in genres and modes of production appropriate for the course and discipline.
- The written products may be distributed over a variety of assignments or through a single major assignment; both are encouraged.
- Group-authored documents may be part of a WI course, but each student must meet the minimum word count.
- Writing is a significant part of the course grade
- Writing must be a major component of the final course grade, with this relationship detailed explained in the syllabus.
- Writing is learned through revision
- Instructors should provide substantial feedback on writing assignments, and allow revision in response to that feedback. Continuous, focused feedback building systematically over the course of the class is encouraged, as is a variety of modes and purposes of feedback.
- Writing is explained and practiced in the course
- Explicit writing instruction must be integral to the course, as part of the course content and as a significant, recurring activity. Through instruction, students should learn about writing, including its disciplinary structures and functions, and should practice writing in a variety of modes and settings appropriate to the discipline. The forms and types of writing instruction that will be used in the course should be explained in the syllabus or supporting teaching materials.
- Instructors should understand the practice of writing instruction
- Those responsible for teaching and assessing writing in a WI course should recognize the importance of writing instruction.If teaching assistants participate in teaching and assessing writing, they must be trained and supervised. If multiple faculty members are teaching a WI course, all must ensure that writing intensive requirements are met.

Absence Policy

Unlike many courses at the University, WRIT 3562w is a small, discussion-oriented class. Your attendance is required and will benefit your progress in the course. Please note the following policies:

- Missing the equivalent of one week or more of class with unexcused absences will result in a lower grade.
- Missing the equivalent of three weeks or more with unexcused absences will result in failing the course.
- In some cases, an excessive number of absences, even if they are excused, may result in a lower grade.
- Students are responsible for coming to class on time. Tardiness may be considered equivalent to unexcused absences. In addition, a student who is unable to function adequately in class (e.g., falling asleep or attending without appropriate materials or assignments) may be considered to have unexcused absences.
- Absences will be excused only with verification.
- Excused absences include illness as verified by a doctor's note, death in the immediate family, jury duty, military service, religious observances, and participation in officially scheduled university student organization events (e.g., inter-collegiate athletics, ROTC, school sports events; see the CLA policy at http://www.cla.umn.edu/cgep/3.html).
- Excused absences do not include vacations, transportation problems, or employment. In case of an excused absence, you must notify your instructor of your excuse preferably before you miss class, but no later than 24 hours after the absence.

- A student who is absent for any reason is responsible for all material and activities missed in class. Students must check with the instructor to find out was missed.

Academic Honesty & Integrity

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code: http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see UMN's policies. The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

Plagiarism can include submitting a paper:

- written by means of inappropriate collaboration;
- written by you for another course, submitted without the permission of both instructors;
- purchased, downloaded, or cut and pasted from the Internet [includes graphics and visuals];
- or that fails to properly acknowledge its sources through standard citations.

For resources on how to appropriately use and cite sources, and to avoid plagiarism, see: http://writing.umn.edu/sws/quickhelp/sources.html

Sexual Harassment

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy.

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, & Affirmative Action

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy.

Disability accommodations

The University is committed to providing quality education to all students regardless of ability. Determining appropriate disability accommodations is a collaborative process. You as a student must register with Disability Services and provide documentation of your disability. The course instructor must provide information regarding a course's content, methods, and essential components. The combination of this information will be used by Disability Services to determine appropriate accommodations for a particular student in a particular course. For more information, please reference Disability Services.

Mental health services

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website.

Academic freedom and responsibility

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students."

Research & Writing Resources

- [UMN Library Tech Comm & Writing Database List](#)
- [UMN Library Peer Research Consultants](#)
- [Technical Communication Quarterly](#)
- [Communication Design Quarterly](#)
- [Journal of Business and Technical Communication](#)