Lesson Plan for CSCE 698 Guest Lecture on Technical Writing – 31 Jan 2019

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## LEARNING OUTCOMES (The Student Will Be Able To…):

Identify the key principles which enable the reader to maximize comprehension of technical writing, using guidance from George D. Gopen’s recommendations (<https://www.georgegopen.com/> )

Assess a technical writing sample for readability and identify good and bad elements in the writing

Write units of discourse (sections, paragraphs, sentences, phrases, clauses) for which the reader maximally understands the author’s meaning with minimum effort.

## PRE-CLASS WORK

**Develop a ½ page sample of writing** to discuss one of the papers you have selected and added to Mendeley – preferably as you would expect to present it in your literature review / related work chapter (Thesis Chapter 2). Try to write at least 5-10 sentences about the paper.

**Print 3 copies of your writing sample**

**Read the following George Gopen Litigation Articles** – while reading, substitute “scientist” or “engineer” for “lawyer” or “litigator”:

1 – A New Approach to Legal Writing (2 pages) (<https://www.georgegopen.com/uploads/1/0/9/0/109073507/litigation_1_introduction.pdf> )

2 – The Importance of Stress: Indicating the most important words in a sentence (2 pages)

(<https://www.georgegopen.com/uploads/1/0/9/0/109073507/litigation_2_stress_position.pdf> )

**Keep the first and second copies of your writing sample unaltered**

**On the third copy of your writing sample**, locate all the sentences in which you have not placed the most important words in the *stress position*.

* Highlight the stress position in each of these sentences and write a brief description of why the words in this position are not the most important words. Count how many sentences you have which don’t have the most important words in the stress position. What proportion of your writing has this attribute?
* For each sentence, indicate which words in the sentence ARE the most important words.
* Choose at least one of these sentences to rewrite and rewrite it such that the most important words are in the stress position.

**Bring all 3 copies of your writing sample to class**

Helpful hint: If you are having trouble finding any sentences to rework, look for ones in which you’ve placed a comma followed by an assumption, limitation, or caveat after the most important words in the sentence.

For example:

“This research demonstrates when the operator’s neurophysiological signals are input to the machine learning model, the model can produce excellent estimates of operator workload, given that there are no sensing-equipment problems.”

Here, the caveat located in the stress position dampens the most important words of the sentence which describe the author’s main contribution. A rework of the sentence to put the most important words into the stress position solves the problem:

OPTION 1: Given that there are no sensing-equipment problems, this research demonstrates when the operator’s neurophysiological signals are input to the machine learning model, the model can produce excellent estimates of operator workload.

OPTION 2: This research demonstrates, given that there are no sensing-equipment problems, when the operator’s neurophysiological signals are input to the machine learning model, the model can produce excellent estimates of operator workload.

Put article review here: