

Instructor Information

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- Office: HB 217
- Office hours: T & Th 11-12

Important Dates

- **June 8** is the last day you can add/drop a course.
- **July 6** is the last day you can Withdraw from a course.

Announcements

- Make sure to pick up your course textbooks from the book store.
- Your first reading assignment will be due the second day of class.
- Make sure you have access to our course website in Canvas.
- Make sure to check your @uab email account often.

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EH 404/504: Technical Writing is designed to help students sharpen their abilities to present technical information in multiple contexts. (Original Art by Aaron Bernard)

English 404/504 Course Overview

The fundamental goal of Technical Writing is to sharpen your abilities to present technical information in styles and formats appropriate for target audiences. The reading and writing assignments in this course will help you develop skills that are crucial to composing effective technical documents, including invention, problem-solving, drafting, collaboration, audience analysis, research, and visual design, among many others.

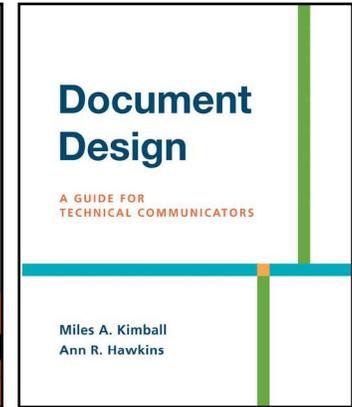
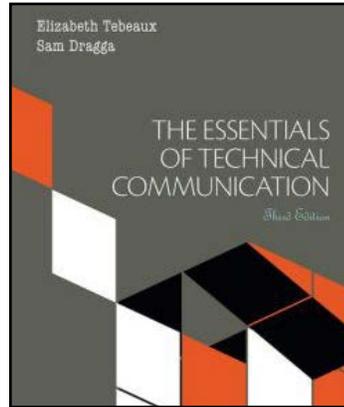
Required Textbooks, Materials, and Technology

By the end of week one, students should have:

- *The Essentials of Technical Communication* by Tebeaux and Draggra (ISBN: 978-0-19-989078-1)
- *Document Design: A Guide for Technical Communicators* by Kimball and Hawkins (ISBN: 978-0-312-43699-5)
- Digital Course Reserves available through Sterne Library

Students must have access to:

- Microsoft Word or OpenOffice
- A copy of the free Portable Apps platform
- A working computer and the Internet
- A USB Flash drive
- Scissors



Textbooks are available at the University Bookstore or Snoozy's.

Course Goals, Objectives, and Learning Outcomes

Writing in Context – Students in this course will:

- Analyze the invention, manufacture, and distribution of technical documentation in context and use writing to communicate these attributes in a variety of media and genres
- Write to a range of audiences and stakeholders with different levels of technical expertise
- Understand the ethical implications of working within the nexus of technology and culture

Research – Students in this course will gain an understanding of the research methods and strategies necessary for the production of professional documents, including:

- Working ethically with research participants, subject matter experts, and technical experts
- Locating, evaluating, and using information selectively for particular audiences and purposes
- Applying concepts of usability research, such as user-centered design
- Selecting appropriate primary research methods such as interviews, observations, focus groups, and surveys to collect data
- Triangulating sources of evidence

Project Management – Through a variety of collaborative assignments students will:

- Select and use appropriate technologies that effectively and ethically address professional situations
- Understand, develop, and deploy various strategies for planning, researching, drafting, revising, and editing documents both individually and collaboratively
- Build professional ethos through documentation and accountability

Document Design – Students in this course will make rhetorical design decisions about technical documents including:

- Understanding and adapting to genre conventions and expectations of a range of audiences including both technical and non-technical audiences
- Understanding and implementing design principles of format and layout
- Drafting, researching, testing, revising visual design and information architecture
- Ensuring the technical accuracy of visual content
- Interpreting and arguing with design

Teamwork – Students in this course will learn and apply strategies for successful teamwork, such as:

- Learning how to use project management strategies and technologies to achieve team goals
- Responding constructively to peers' work, soliciting feedback, and using peer feedback effectively
- Working with colleagues to determine roles and responsibilities
- Managing team conflicts constructively

Technology – In this course, students use and evaluate many of the writing technologies frequently used in the workplace, such as emailing, instant messaging, image editing, video editing, presentation design and delivery, content management, and desktop publishing technologies.



My office is in the Humanities Building room 217.

Policies Concerning Attendance and Communication

Office Hours – Throughout the semester, I will be holding regular office hours. You do not need an appointment to visit me during my office hours. However, please send me an email if you are unable to see me during my regularly scheduled office hours so we can set up a different time to meet.

Electronic Communication – All students are required to obtain and use their UAB e-mail address. All official correspondence will be sent ONLY to the @uab.edu address. All students are responsible for ensuring that the correct email address is listed in Canvas by the beginning of Week 1. Failure on your part to do so can result in you missing important information that could affect your grade. *(Please note: I will usually respond to your emails within one business day, however, during busy times of the semester it may take me up to 48hrs to respond so please plan accordingly).*

Attendance – All absences can hurt your grade indirectly: you might not get an assignment in on time, or you might not learn how to write a particular document. In this class, you will have a cushion of 3 absences for which your course grade will only be affected indirectly. But absences begin to hurt your grade directly when they become excessive. If you are absent 4 times during the term, your final course grade will go down a full letter; and if you are absent 5 times, your course grade will go down two full letters. Six absences or more result in an F for the class. If you come to class after I have taken attendance you will be counted “late” (two “lates” equal one absence), but it is your responsibility to remind me after class to change your absence to a “late.” Absences are “excused” only in cases of jury duty, military duty, or official UAB business (and only when documented).

University Policies and Student Support Systems

Library Support – The Libraries at UAB provide access to materials and services that support the academic programs. The address of the library’s Website is <http://www.mhsl.uab.edu/>. This site provides access to the resources of all Campus and Regional Libraries, as well as the Library’s Catalog and Databases.

Drop/Add – This course follows UAB policy concerning drop/add and will adhere to the university date of June 8, 2015 being the last date to drop/add a course. Students registering late (after the first class meeting and until June 8, 2015) will be able to make up all class items that have been missed. The last day to withdraw from this course with a grade of “W” is July 6, 2015.

Out-of-Class Research – Students may be required to access information on the Internet for completion of specific written assignments due to the fact that this course involves, or may involve, a research project. No stage of a research project for this course is to begin prior to the student, course instructor, and student advisor receiving a stamped copy of the IRB Approval Form. Initiating any stage of the research prior to such formal approval is a violation of UAB guidelines and will result in failing the course. This policy has been approved by the UAB Institutional Review Board. The UAB Institutional Review Board may impose additional consequences. Students may request additional information about IRB requirements from the Office for Research Grant Support: EB 233 (975-5388).

Non-Harassment, Hostile Work/Class Environment – The UAB College of Arts and Sciences expects students to treat fellow students, their Course Instructors, other UAB faculty, and staff as adults and with respect. No form of hostile environment or harassment will be tolerated.

Faculty Evaluation – At the end of each term, students will be requested to fill out two Course Evaluation Forms. These evaluations are completely anonymous and your participation in this activity will be appreciated.

Reasonable Accommodations – If you are registered with Disability Support Services (DSS), please make an appointment with your instructor to discuss accommodations that may be necessary. If you have a disability but have not contacted DSS, please call 934-4205 or visit DSS at 516 Hill University Center. Students with disabilities must be registered with DSS and provide an accommodation request letter before receiving accommodations in this class.

Weather or Other Emergencies – During any actual emergency or severe weather situation, this site - www.uab.edu/emergency - will be the official source of UAB information. In addition, the UAB Emergency Management Team will use B-ALERT, the university’s emergency notification system, to communicate through voice calls, SMS text messages and e-mails to the entire campus all at the same time. B-ALERT also integrates with Facebook and Twitter. To register for B-ALERT or update your existing information in the system, go to www.uab.edu/balert. All registration is connected to your BlazerID.



UNIVERSITY
WRITING CENTER
College of Arts and Sciences
www.uab.edu/writingcenter



The University Writing Center (UWC), Mervyn H. Sterne Library Room 175, is open to students and faculty at all levels for individual writing consultations and instructional workshops.

UABWritingCenter

@UABWritingCtr

Summer Reading Schedule for Technical Writing (EH 404 and 504)

All readings listed below are due on the day they are listed and This Schedule is subject to change.

Part I: Understanding Users and Usable Documents

Week 1 (6/2 & 6/4)

Tuesday: What is technical writing? Read O' Hara; Watch "What is Technical Communication?" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fi5eZ2XLJc4&feature=related>) & "History of Technical Communication in Seven Minutes" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHgkUGIDPHI>).

Thursday: Portable Apps; Read CH1 (ETC), CH1 (DD) & Alkinci's "Four Ideas to Organize your Technical Images and Screen Shots." (<http://ezinearticles.com/?Technical-Writing---4-Ideas-to-Organize-Your-Technical-Document-Images-and-Screen-Shots&id=1800608>); and talk about writing memos.

Week 2 (6/9 & 6/11)

Tuesday: Read CH2 (ETC), CH2 (DD) & *Miller's "A Humanistic Rationale for Technical Writing" (DR).

Thursday: Read CH7 (ETC), CH3 (DD) & *Katz' "The Ethic of Expediency" (DR); and Memo Number One Due.

Week 3 (6/16 & 6/18)

Tuesday: Read CH10 (ETC), CH4 (DD) & *Slack's "The Technical Communicator as Author" (DR).

Thursday: Read CH 5 (DD) & *Kuniavsky's "User Experience Design for Ubiquitous Computing" (DR).

Week 4 (6/23 & 6/25)

Tuesday: Usability Day; Read CH6 (DD) & *C. Selfe & R. Selfe's "The Politics of the Interface" (DR).

Thursday: Read CH5 (ETC) & *Fisher's "Value of the Technical Communicator's Role" (DR); Client Visit; and Memo Number Two Due.

Part II: Editing and Designing in Context

Week 5 (6/30 & 7/2)

Tuesday: Read CH3 (ETC) & Kurtus' "Process of Writing a Technical Manual" (http://www.school-for-champions.com/techwriting/process_writing_manual.htm); and Technical Instructions Project due before the start of class.

Thursday: Read CH4 (ETC) & *Alber's "Design and Usability" (DR).

Week 6 (7/7 & 7/9)

Tuesday: Read CH6 (ETC), CH7 (DD) & *Maher's "The Technical Communicator as Evangelist" (DR).

Thursday: Read CH8 (ETC), CH9 (DD); Technical Editing Project Drafts due; and Memo Number Three Due.

Week 7 (7/14 & 7/16)

Tuesday: Read *Sullivan's "Political-Ethical Implications" (DR); and Technical Editing Project Client Drafts due.

Thursday: Read CH8 (DD) & *Jablonski's "Seeing Technical Communication from a Career Perspective" (DR).

Part III: Helping Users Understand and Use Technology

Week 8 (7/21 & 7/23)

Tuesday: Read CH9 (ETC) & CH10 (DD); and Technical Editing Project Revisions due before the start of class.

Thursday: Read CH12 (ETC), CH11 (DD) & *Dombrowski's "Practicing 'Safe' Technical Communication" (DR); and Memo Number Four Due.

Week 9 (7/28 & 7/30)

Tuesday: Read Norman's *Living With Complexity* (CH1) (<http://jnd.org/dn.mss/LWCChapter1.pdf>) & *Russell's "Rethinking the Articulation Between Business and Technical Communication and the Writing Disciplines" (DR); and Work Day.

Thursday: Read Norman's *The Design of Future Things* (CH8) (<http://www.jnd.org/dn.mss/Norman%20HowToTalkToPeopleDOFT.pdf>) & *St. Amant and Cunningham's "Examining Open Source Software in Offshore Contexts" (DR); and Work Day.

Week 10 (8/4)

Tuesday: Final Projects due at 10:45 a.m.

Note: readings with a * next to them are optional for students enrolled in EH 404 and are required for students enrolled in EH 504.



The Digital Media Commons, Heritage Hall Room 334, has 20 iMac stations you can use preloaded with a number of industry standard production tools.



UAB's Professional Writing & Rhetoric and Composition Magazine

<http://www.uab.edu/cas/englishpublications/memorandum>

Course Projects Grade Breakdown and Grading Scale

| Project | English 404 | English 504 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Weekly Memos and Peer Review | 125 points 25% (4ss) | 125 points 25% (5ss) |
| Technical Instructions Project | 125 points 25% (3ss) | 125 points 25% (4ss) |
| Technical Editing Project | 125 points 25% (3ss) | 125 points 25% (4ss) |
| Instructional Videos | 125 points 25% (5-8 mins.) | 125 points 25% (10-15 mins.) |
| Total | 500 points | 500 points |

Course Projects and Activities for the Semester

Communication across multiple audiences and for multiple purposes continues to be a desired skill set in technical and professional fields. Beyond field-specific knowledge and experience, successful and ethical communication drives the professional world. This class, in content and form, models these successful communication practices. Working individually and in groups, students learn effective strategies for communicating about and with technology, particularly in networked workplaces and through usability testing. To achieve success in this course, students must display the ability to succeed in their future workplaces by developing a variety of print and electronic documents.

Grading – All major projects in the course will be comprised of several components, each of which will be worth a percentage of the student’s final grade (further details about each assignment will be provided as we get closer to each project’s initial due dates). Grades are not rounded. Meaning, a grade of 79.99% is 79.99% (C), 89.99% is 89.99% (B), etc. This applies to all grades including the final overall grade. All grades will be posted in the student’s Gradebook in Canvas and students are expected to review their grades at least once a week. The Course Instructor does not use e-mail to communicate scores on assignments or make comments about graded assignments.

It is the student’s responsibility to review scores and comments on graded assignments as instructed above. Students are expected to complete all of the assignments by the given deadlines. If an assignment is mistakenly submitted and the student wants to re-submit it, the student must e-mail the Course Instructor asking that the assignment be deleted BEFORE it is graded and BEFORE the deadline for the assignment. Both of these criteria must be met.

Early Alert System (EAS) – The EAS is designed to help students be more successful academically at UAB. If you receive an e-mail with EAS in the title, please open it, read it, and take advantage of the support that UAB offers to all students. UAB is committed to ensuring that students receive academic support and that students are aware of the resources available that will assist them in successfully completing their degree program.

Incomplete Grade Policy – Missing any part of the Course Schedule may prevent completion of the course. If circumstances prevent the student from completing the course, the student should complete a request for an Incomplete Grade. *Note: A grade of Incomplete is not automatically assigned to students.*

Late Work – The instructor will stick closely to the course calendar. It is important that you keep up. When possible, you may certainly complete assignments early, but you must complete them on time. Much of what you do for this class quickly leads to another assignment. Thus, the majority of missed class assignments cannot be made up. I do not grade work that is turned in after the initial due date. I do not make exceptions for computer catastrophes or email glitches, so save your work often and do not wait until the last minute to turn in your work.

Being absent does not relieve students from the responsibilities of this course. If a serious and unavoidable problem arises, however, you should contact your instructor by email prior to the deadline to determine whether or not an extension for the work will or will not be granted. Late work will rarely, if ever, be accepted without prior approval.

Note: Most of your assignments for this class will be submitted digitally. Not having access to a computer, computer problems, computer crashes, loss of Internet and/or loss of electricity are not acceptable excuses for late work, incomplete work or a request for an assignment deadline extension. Students are expected to have a back-up plan in case any of these occur.

EH 315 (MWF 1:25 - 2:15):

Introduction to Professional Writing

In this course, students will explore professional writing as a discipline and learn how to compose professional documents. Successful professional writing begins with effective composing processes, including invention, revision, audience analysis, research, document design, usability testing, and editing. The professional documents that students produce in this class will vary from teacher to teacher but may include instructions, proposals, memos, résumés, slide presentations, blogs, brochures, newsletters, hypertext documents, and web pages.

Academic Misconduct – UAB faculty expects all members of its academic community to function according to the highest ethical and professional standards. Academic dishonesty and misconduct includes, but is not limited to, acts of abetting, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and misrepresentation. Candidates are expected to honor the UAB Academic Code of Conduct as detailed in the most current UAB Student Catalog. Please consult this resource for additional information regarding the specific procedures to be undertaken when a student violates the UAB Academic Code of Conduct (link: <https://www.uab.edu/students/academics/honor-code/>).

Because this is a writing course, the most relevant type of academic dishonesty is plagiarism. We will discuss plagiarism — its definition, penalties, and how to avoid unintentional plagiarism — regularly throughout the semester. Plagiarism is defined as “using the words or

thoughts of another person without proper citation; specifically, it is submitting as one’s own work any portion of a book, magazine, journal, handout, original creation, speech, lecture, oral communication, paper or examination written by someone else.” Plagiarism means claiming as your own the ideas, words, data, computer programs, creative compositions, artwork, etc., done by someone else. Examples include improper citation of referenced works, the use of commercially available scholarly papers, failure to cite sources, or copying another person’s ideas.

This policy includes both traditional material and electronically mediated material such as that found on websites. Penalties for plagiarism may include failure on an individual assignment, automatic failure of the course, and even dismissal from the university. The penalty depends upon the severity of the infraction and will be handled on a case-by-case bases.

Biweekly Homework Assignments and Peer Review

Learning how to craft reader-friendly and usable technical documents, one of the main objectives of any working Technical Writer, takes a lot of time and practice. To help you understand the process and to help you start crafting your own user-centered documents, students in this course are responsible for writing a number of short memos throughout the semester and posting them to a semipublic discussion board in Canvas. You are always welcome, and encouraged, to post beyond the minimum requirements, but to receive any credit on your individual posts you must fulfill the minimum requirements (i.e. any memo or peer response post short of the word count requirement will be given an automatic 0).

Memos (100 points) - Every other week you will be responsible for the production of a 500-word memo. Each memo should be posted in Canvas before the start of class on the day they are due and will be worth 25 points each (20 points for students in the EH 504 section). The topics for the memos come directly from the required textbooks as outlined below:

- Memo 1 (6/11), respond to Exercise #3, pg 175 (ETC)
- Memo 2 (6/25), respond to Exercise #4, pg 109 (ETC)
- Memo 3 (7/9), respond to Exercise #7, pg 198 (DD)
- Memo 4 (7/24), respond to Exercise #3, pg 371 (DD)

Peer Reviews (25 points) - When a memo is assigned, you are required to submit one (1) peer review comment to a memo posted by your classmates. Each peer review comment should be, at minimum, 50 words long and will be completed during the first 15 minutes of class on the day the memos are due. All comments and replies to an author’s memo should follow effective rhetorical strategies for networking with others on the Web. Make sure to move beyond simple statements regarding quality. Instead, examine and comment on how to improve the formatting of the memo, comment on the authors use of style, offer suggestions on how to make the document more read-friendly, and comment on the logic contained within the document.

EH 340 (MWF 10:10 - 11:00): Developing Digital Documents

Designed to help students develop the ability to produce dynamic digital documents, this course provides students the opportunity to plan, write, and design documents using computer-aided publishing technologies.

EH 430/592 (T/TH 9:30-10:45): Writing in the Community

Through a community-based learning model, this course examines the role of writing and communication in social leadership and change. Coursework will include written reflections, a hands-on service project, and a profile report about a local nonprofit organization. Students will learn to use writing, research, and communication to contribute to their local communities and work toward social change. By producing “real” writing for (and with) community organizations, students will also develop key workplace communication skills and documents they can include in professional portfolios. Course texts will include Thomas Deans’ *Writing and Community Action*.

EH 504 Requirements

In addition to the memos listed above, students enrolled in the EH 504 section of this course are also required to craft one additional memo. Using at least 4 of the readings listed on the course calendar with a * next to them, write a 1000-word memo explaining the difference between Technical Writing and other types of communication practices.

Project One: Crafting “Usable” Technical Instructions

An important task for technical writers is producing instructional materials for both expert and novice users. However, clear, concise, and helpful instructions are extremely hard to produce. This project asks students to use three sheets of construction paper to build a durable paper ballot box and then write two sets of instructions to help two different audiences build the same object.

The Assignment

During this assignment you will write and package two sets of instructions. First, you will produce a set of instructions elementary age students can use to build their own ballot box (assume the students have access to a pair of scissors). Second, you will produce a set of instructions for the students’ teacher detailing how to prepare for the activity and present it to the students. In other words, your task is to help the teacher become an expert in ballot box building and present the activity to a group of novice students. Both sets of instructions should be clear, concise, helpful, user-centered, and use words and graphics to assist the appropriate audience. Your instructions should also carefully and respectfully consider audience experience, expectations, knowledge, competency, and vocabulary. Your instructions are expected to be in a size other than 8.5 by 11 inches and, at minimum, should include:

- A list of materials
- Any necessary warning labels
- A list of tools needed to build the object
- A blueprint of the object that can be photocopied and distributed to the students
- An image of what the final product should look like
- Step-by-step instructions on how to build the object using the provided blueprint

Deliverables

Drafts and Usability Testing (10 points due 6/23):

Rather than completing a typical peer review, students will instead be conducting a modified usability test. In this testing session, you will be examining two things: 1) How effectively a teacher can use the instructions; and, 2) How well a group of students can use the instructions to build the object. During the testing session, you will observe someone giving your instructions to a group of students and then will revise your documents based on what happens (more information will be provided closer to the time of testing).

EH 504 Requirements

In addition to the activities described above, students enrolled in the EH 504 section of this course will also lead the usability testing sessions on June 23. More details about this requirement will be provided at a later date.

Final Drafts (100 points due 6/30): For this assignment, you will be responsible for producing your final deliverables. In other words, to receive full credit on this assignment you must print and package both sets of instructions as if you were preparing them for an actual elementary school teacher to be used in the classroom. Each set of instructions will be worth 50 points. Also, using the instructions, build a model of the object you have selected and bring it with you on the day the assignment is due.

Memorandum of Transmittal (15 points due 6/30):

Write a 700 to 1000-word memo that describes in detail the differences between the two sets of instructions, why those differences are important, and why you decided to package your final documents the way you did. Also, although it is okay to find inspiration on the Internet to complete the project, you must identify any sources you consulted while working on this project inside this memo. Failure on your part to identify any sources you consulted will result in a project grade of 0 and the normal procedures used in a case of plagiarism will be followed.

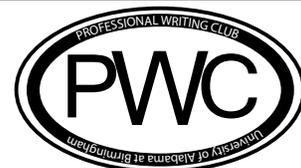
Grading

I will grade your instructions based on the following criteria:

- Each set of instructions includes appropriate words and graphics to assist readers, and is an appropriate length to cover all necessary information.
- Words and graphics complement one another.
- Instructions are visually appealing, applying the design principles covered in the course textbook.
- Instructions are of a professional quality and appropriate for a professional context.
- Each set of instructions is clear, concise, helpful, and user-centered.

Restrictions

Your instructions and the images you use in them must be created by you. No text or images, not even creative commons or non-copyrighted images, can be included in your documents.



The Professional Writing Club at UAB’s mission is to equip students interested in Professional Writing with knowledge and experience to prepare them for the workforce, to allow students interested in Professional Writing the opportunity to network with each other, and to connect with professionals in the field by participating in industry-focused workshops.

Project Two: Technical Editing (Education Foundation)

One of the most common activities performed by working professional and technical communicators involves taking unformatted text and preparing it for publication. This activity usually involves revising the original text to match its eventual context and adding appropriate formatting tags so the content will match a company's pre-established style guidelines. To mimic that common workplace practice, the second major project of the semester puts the technical writing skills you are acquiring to the test by adding a real-world client to the mix. This is not a drill! This is for real.

The Assignment

Your ability to judge and appeal to a client and their audience will be instrumental in this project. Additionally, this project has some very specific professional guidelines that you will need to follow (i.e. this project assumes you are a working Technical & Professional Communicator). For this project we will be working with the Birmingham Education Foundation and revising their employee manual. Specifically, working in pairs or working individually, students will be given a section of the manual to research and revise (your documents will contain both text and visuals). The eventual product will be used by the client's employees on a regular basis, meaning accuracy is a major component of your grade for this assignment.

Deliverables

Designing the Document (25 points): During this assignment we will not just be editing and producing content for the client's manual. Instead, we will also create a style sheet, build page templates, create a table of contents, produce a cover for the manual, and create the final document in Scribus for easy exporting. Most of these activities will be handled during class time. Your grade will be lowered for each design activity you miss or cannot participate in because you are unprepared.

EH 402/502 (W 5-7:30): Writing in Popular Periodicals

This course will introduce you to the world of magazines in all their forms: print and online, consumer and trade, historical and contemporary. We'll begin the course by examining the cultural phenomenon of popular periodicals, including when and where this media form first appeared and the role it played in civil society. From there, we'll delve into the following: trends in the periodical industry; what we know and assume about magazine readers; how ideas are shaped for optimal reader consumption; the strategies magazine editors use to differentiate their product from other titles; what's involved in producing a magazine issue; and how to go about contributing to your favorite periodical. Course assignments include keeping a magazine journal, writing a short paper about magazine coverage of a historical issue, and completing a final project drawing on your particular interests in the course.

Rough Drafts and Peer-review (50 points): Timing and collaboration is critical for this project. Our client needs one coherent document that requires little editing before publication. In order to insure your documents are free of errors, and your content is accurate, you are required to prepare two different drafts of your work for review. On July 9 you are required to print and bring a full draft of your materials to class for peer editing. If you do not have a full draft of your section for peer editing, or do not participate, you will receive a 0 on this portion of the assignment. On July 14 you will then need to bring your edited content to class so we can build a preliminary draft of the manual and give it to our client so they can approve our work or request changes. As I said, this is a time-sensitive project. Our client will only collect drafts for approval once. Meaning, if your work does not make it into the preliminary document we provide the client, it will not be graded. (Please note: If the client does not receive full drafts of your work your final documents will not be included in the final manual and you will receive a 0 on that part of the assignment as well.)

The Final Documents (50 points): To receive full credit on this assignment, you must submit two final, polished documents: 1) A formatted OpenOffice version of your section with embedded images; and, 2) A Scribus version of your work correctly set in the page design we develop and tagged with font styles we select for the document. In addition, you will also need to save all of the images for your section, labeled correctly, to the USB Drive we will be delivering to our client. Again, this is a time sensitive project and our client will only be available to collect your work once. Meaning, if your work does not make it into the final document it will not be graded.

Grading

Grading Criteria: Part of your grade for this project will be determined by how closely your work matches the expectations of our client and if your documents are ready to be published by the final due date. As such, your drafts and final deliverables will be graded based on their rhetorical effectiveness, professionalism, and how much editing your work requires before it can be published.

EH 504 Requirements

In addition to the activities described above, students enrolled in the EH 504 section of this course are also required to craft one of the following documents: A one-page, single-spaced memorandum of agreement; A one-page, single-spaced progress report; A one-page, single-spaced letter of transmittal; or one-page, single-spaced memo detailing how to edit and print the manual. Instructions for each of the documents will be provided at a later date.

Project Three: Creating a How-to-Video Tutorial

Learning how to use new technology, especially new software, can be a challenging activity for most people. Especially because research shows most technology users have given up on reading instructions altogether, or do not look at a piece of software's included help files, and try to operate technology without explicit instructions, with varying rates of success. If users get stuck, rather than going to the company that created the software, they will jump on the Internet and Google their way to user-generated content in an attempt to complete the task they were attempting to complete. This project mimics that activity by putting students in the role of subject matter experts helping other professional writing students learn how to use some of the free software applications they will need to use in order to successfully complete their coursework.

Assignment

As WEB 2.0 social platforms grew in popularity software companies began offering their users how-to-videos rather than spending money producing and printing manuals for their products. Today, more and more software companies have abandoned the idea of creating any support material for their products and instead rely on the users of their products to create those how-to-videos for them (sadly, most of those videos fail to successfully deliver their content). To mimic that practice, and produce "better" material than what is currently available, this assignment asks students to choose one Open-source software application available through the Portable Apps Platform and create a 5-8 minute how-to-video other students can use to learn how to complete one specific task, or two complementary tasks, with the software. Some examples include, but are not limited to, formatting text in Inkscape, adding style definitions to a Scribus document, or adding a layer mask to an image in Gimp. When finished, your how-to-videos will be uploaded to Youtube and embedded on the Professional Writing Club at UAB's website.

Deliverables

Topic Proposal Memo (25 points due 7/28): To make sure people are not covering the same activities in their how-to-videos, each student will post a 500-word topic proposal memo in Canvas describing in detail what product and process they will cover for this project. In the memo, make sure to include exactly what the product and process is and what your instructions will cover. Make sure to post your memos early (you will be able to post these memos starting the second day of class) and make sure to look through what other students have selected to cover in their videos (if someone has already proposed the task you want to focus on you will need to select a different task).

Video Instructions (100 points due 8/4): Using a screen recording program that offers a free trial period, like Camtasia, record yourself completing the task you outlined in your topic proposal memo. I strongly suggest filming the steps necessary to complete the task separately or taking breaks during the recording that you can edit out later. Then, you will combine a provided intro clip, a title screen, your screen recordings, a credits screen, and a provided end clip together inside a video editing program like iMovie or Movie Maker. Once your how-to-video has been put together you will need to export it as an MP4 media file and upload it to the Professional Writing Club's Youtube account. In addition, you will need to provide the instructor with a copy of your MP4 file. We will also watch these videos during our final exam period.

Grading

As we move closer to the project's due date the instructor will provide a detailed rubric outlining how your how-to-videos will be graded.

EH 504 Requirements

Students enrolled in the EH 504 section of this course are required to create two 5-8 minute how-to-videos.



BA Concentration in Professional Writing: English Majors who concentrate in Professional Writing will learn how to write and design the kinds of documents that are most common outside of university classrooms, such as memos, brochures, newsletters, reports, instructions, manuals, multimedia presentations, and resumes. Professional Writing courses emphasize drafting, revising, and designing documents in both print and digital formats. Many of the courses provide students opportunities to engage the community and gain hands-on experience writing for real audiences and purposes.