Instructor: Jason Hawreliak  
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Office: PAS 1284  
Office Hours: M W: 2:00-3:00 (or by appointment)

Course Description and Goals:

“A study of the principles, processes and products which constitute technical writing. This course provides an introduction to techniques of audience analysis and principles of document design as well as experience in the process of creating technical documents. Writing practice will be provided in the many roles of the technical writer -- from researcher to editor” (University of Waterloo Course Calendar).

Usually taken in your 2B term, 210E is designed to provide students with the tools necessary for reading and writing technical documents. We will be primarily concerned with the theory and application of rhetoric in document analysis and design; that is, what makes a “good” (or bad) technical document? How can we improve upon existing industry practices? Although we will be drawing from the text throughout the term, much of the course will be focused on practical applications of analysis and design. Students will be required to write original technical documentation, as well as re-write existing documents (which will be provided). By the end of the term, students will have acquired an understanding of various technical writing processes and techniques, and will be required to apply these elements in a comprehensive final project.

Required Text:


Assignments and Marks:

Participation: 10%  
Assignment 1: 15%  
Mid-term: 20%  
Assignment 2: 25%  
Final Group Project: 30%

**Participation:** The participation grade is based on your regular attendance, contribution to class discussions, and overall classroom demeanor. Laptops are permitted, but must be used responsibly.

**Assignments:** The first two assignments will involve document analysis and design. For Assignment 1, students will analyze, critique, and re-write an existing technical document. For Assignment 2, students will be required to write their own technical documentation for a product provided by the instructor. **Late assignments will be penalized 3% per day.**

**Mid-term:** The mid-term will consist of two parts: 1) definitions of terms from the text and class; and 2) analysis of a brief technical passage. An absence from a mid-term will require a doctor's or other health care professional's documentation in the case of illness. Any other extraordinary circumstances will also require documentation. Only under these circumstances can an alternative examination be scheduled.

**Final Group Project:** MAME cabinet documentation / oral presentation.
Class Schedule:

**Week 1 (Jan 5):** Course Introduction; principles of rhetoric and design.

**Week 2 (10, 12):** Professional writing techniques; ethics; writing technical documents. **Readings:** Chapters 1 and 2 (Jan 10), Ch. 3 (Jan 12).

**Week 3 (17, 19):** Writing collaboratively; audience analysis. **Readings:** Ch. 4 (Jan 17), Ch. 5 (Jan 19).

**Week 4 (24, 26):** Explaining technology: “how stuff works” (Jan 24). **Reading:** Ch. 7 (Jan 26).

**Week 5 (31, Feb. 2):** Communicating persuasively. **Reading:** Ch. 8 (Jan 31). **Assignment 1 due Feb. 2.**

**Week 6 (7, 9):** Writing coherently and clearly. **Readings:** Ch. 9 (Feb 7), Ch. 10 (Feb 9).

**Week 7 (14, 16):** Creating technical specifications and instructions. **Reading:** Ch. 20 (Feb 14). **Mid-term Feb 16.**

**READING WEEK (21-25)**

**Week 8 (28, Mar. 2):** Designing websites; creating graphics. **Readings:** Ch.11 (Feb 28), Ch. 12 (Mar 2).

**Week 9 (7, 9):** Workplace applications: memos and proposals. **Readings:** Ch.14(Mar 7), Ch. 16(Mar 9).

**Week 10 (14, 16):** Preparing job application materials. **Reading:** Ch. 15 (Mar 14). Students must bring a sample resume to class this week. **Assignment 2 due March 14th.**

**Week 11 (21, 23):** Public speaking and oral presentations. **Reading:** Ch. 21 (Mar 21).

**Week 12 (28, 30):** Writing reports. **Readings:** Ch. 17 (Mar 28), **PRESENTATIONS** (Mar 30).

**Week 13 (April 4):** **PRESENTATIONS**

**Note on plagiarism:**

The Faculty of Arts requires that the following statement on the avoidance of academic offences, including plagiarism, be included on all Arts course outlines:

“Note on avoidance of academic offences: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offence, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offence is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (section 1; on the Web at [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoucal/UW/policy_71.html](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoucal/UW/policy_71.html)). If you need help in learning how to avoid offences such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your TA or course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.”

Note: On November 18/02, Senate passed a motion that all course outlines also contain the following reference to the student's right to grieve: “Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.html](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.html).” For guidance on avoiding plagiarism and other academic offences, please consult the Arts Faculty Web page, “How to Avoid Plagiarism and Other Written Offences: A Guide for Students and Instructors” ([http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html](http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html)).