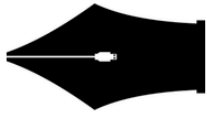


English 421: Technical Writing
Purdue University | Summer 2020



Instructor Information	Course Information
<p>Instructor: Ryan M. Murphy Email: murph355@purdue.edu Office Hours: Tues. 10am-11am* and Wed. 5pm-6pm* or by appointment Virtual Office: https://purdue-student.webex.com/meet/murph355</p>	<p>CRN/Section: 22391/ENGL 42100-Y05 Schedule Type: Distance Learning Meeting Location : Online (asynchronous) in Brightspace https://purdue.brightspace.com/d2l/home/22838 Date Range: June 15, 2020 to August 4, 2020 *all listed times are in Eastern Daylight Time</p>

Course Description

English 421 helps students become better technical communicators, whose work is characterized by the presentation of technical material in written and visual formats that are user centered and aware of audience and context. The course and its principles are grounded in rhetorical theory and informed by current research in technical communication.

Technical communication is both a professional practice and a field of academic inquiry. As a distance learning section, this course will model workplace writing in networked environments for technical contexts. It will emphasize context and user analysis, data analysis/display, project planning, document management, usability, ethics, research, and team writing.

Inclusive Learning Statement

Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently, and I am committed to making this class an inclusive learning space. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

Required Course Texts

Technical Communication Today, 6th ed. by Richard Johnson-Sheehan (Pearson, 2018). Revel version. ISBN: 0134438663. Access the text at: <https://console.pearson.com/enrollment/qz2iqw>

Additional texts and assigned media will be posted in weekly course content in Brightspace.

Please complete the readings in this class by Wednesday each week. If you need more time to read or review you can always look back. The assigned readings will help you complete the assignments in this class. The reading quizzes in Revel count toward your final course grade.

Technology Requirements

1. A reliable internet connection (plan on accessing Brightspace and Purdue email often)
2. A desktop or laptop computer
3. A word processor (e.g. Microsoft Word, Google Docs)
4. Data plans sufficient for you to view videos, read online, and participate in online calls

Completing this class on a smartphone is not recommended

If, during this course you encounter problems with technology, please notify me by email as soon as possible. We can work through problems with technology, but you will still be responsible for completing the assignments.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Use technical writing theories and approaches to analyze and solve problems individually and in teams
2. Communicate complex technical information, processes, and procedures via a variety of media, genres, technologies, and presentations to a range of audiences and stakeholders
3. Adapt written genre conventions and expectations to both technical and non-technical audiences with changing organizational needs
4. Apply primary and secondary research methods and strategies to produce technical documents
5. Demonstrate awareness of both the technical and human needs of users, paying special attention to accessibility, cultural diversity, and global sensitivity
6. Interpret, contextualize, explain, and visualize data sets in specific rhetorical contexts or problems

Evaluation and Graded Course Components

Final letter grades in this class will be based on the cumulative total of the points that you have earned on the assignments in this class. 1000 total points are possible. Since there are no fractions of points, there is no rounding for grades.

Letter Grade	Point Range
A	1000–930
A–	929–900
B+	899–870
B	869–830
B–	829–800
C+	799–770
C	769–730
C–	729–700
D	699–600
F	599–0

In addition to my written comments on your work, you are always welcome to ask me for additional feedback, ask that I review additional preliminary drafts, or otherwise talk with me if you have questions or concerns about your grade.

There is no planned extra credit in this class; however, circumstances may arise that warrant creating an extra credit opportunity. No extra credit opportunity will be made unless it is made available to every member of class.

Graded Course Components

Course Component	Points Available
Unit I	250
Unit II	275
Unit III	275
Discussion Boards & Class Activities	100
Reading Quizzes in Textbook*	100
Total	1000

Unit I includes a series of deliverables related to document design and remediation of a technical text for audience awareness. The primary deliverables in unit I include:

- a section of text from an end user license agreement (EULA) re-written and re-formatted for usability
- an infographic or other graphic representation of the technical text
- a design memo that identifies your work process and rhetorical design choices.

Unit II involves researching and writing a technical report focusing on feasibility. You will be able to select the topic of your research, but your report will need to follow genre guidelines for feasibility and include primary and secondary research as well as visualizations of quantitative or qualitative data. Unit II deliverables include:

- A topic proposal (500 words)
- A preliminary draft of your report for peer response workshop
- Participation in peer response workshop
- A final revised draft of your report (about 10-12 pages or 10,000 to 12,000 words)
- A transmittal memo that situates your study and report

Unit III consists of collaboratively authored technical documentation for technology that could help Purdue students succeed in the fall semester in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. You will work in small groups of 3 or 4 to write technical documentation and the group project management documents that help you organize with your classmates.

Project management documents include:

- Team charter and work schedule
- Status memos
- Postmortem at the completion of the project

Technical documentation deliverables include:

- A proposal of the technology you plan to document
- A technical description and specification of the technology
- Instructions for potential users of the technology
- A brief digital presentation of your technical documentation to share with class

Discussion Boards & Class Activities

Each week there will be a combination of online discussion boards for you to participate in as well as other smaller class exercises and activities. All of these discussions and activities will appear in the weekly modules in Brightspace.

Reading Quizzes in Textbook (in Revel)

As you read through the textbook you will periodically arrive at short reading quizzes. Each question is worth 3 points. If you answer correctly on your first attempt you will earn all three points. If you answer incorrectly you will have two more attempts to answer correctly for partial credit.

**How points for reading quizzes are calculated:*

As you complete reading quizzes, you will accumulate points in Revel. At the end of the class, the points you earn in Revel will be scaled for conversion as 100 points toward your final course grade. **The points in Revel do not correspond on 1:1 basis to course points in this category.** To calculate your course points for this category, I will divide the total number of points you earn in Revel by the total number of quiz points that are possible. The resulting percentage will appear as your point total for this category.

There is no final exam in this class.

Late Work & Deadline Extensions

I do not accept late work; however, due date extensions can be offered if you have a circumstance that warrants one and you request an extension before the assignment is due.

As soon as you think you might need an extension, please contact me by email and we can discuss your situation and whether an extension might be appropriate. I generally allow each student one extension for the duration of the course. All agreements for extensions must be in writing. The best way to do this is to send an email letting me know when you think you can complete your work. If approved, I will send a return email confirming your new deadline extension.

Course Policies

Office Hours

Office Hours Link: <https://purdue-student.webex.com/meet/murph355>

I will hold regularly scheduled drop-in office hours via WebEx for this class. My virtual meeting room will be open Tuesdays 10am to 11am, Wednesdays 5pm to 6pm, and by appointment. If you would like to meet with me at a different time, just send me an email and we can make an appointment.

Teaching this class and supporting your learning is my priority. I sometimes call my office hours “drop-in hours” to emphasize that you can drop in with or without an appointment. I’ve scheduled this time for you so please don’t hesitate to visit me.

To protect your privacy, I will use the locked waiting room feature in WebEx. When you click the link to join the meeting, I will let you in. If I’m meeting with another student, you might need to wait for a moment. This will ensure that each of you can have uninterrupted meeting time with me. Group meetings are also fine if you and others in class want to meet with me at the same time.

Email

Communicating by Purdue email accounts will be the primary means of communicating outside of Brightspace. **I will respond to all emails within 24 to 48 hours (usually less). I expect you to monitor your email account as well.** Please send email from your Purdue email account and include a meaningful subject line and your name in your message. Because identities of senders from non-Purdue accounts cannot be guaranteed, I generally do not communicate any class or personal details when I respond to email from external email addresses (e.g. Gmail).

Federal legislation pertaining to educational privacy (FERPA) prohibits me from discussing protected information, specifically student grades, over email. If you have questions or concerns about your grade in this course or a specific grade on an assignment, please visit me during virtual office hours or request to make an appointment.

Use Purdue Email for:	Use Office Hours for:
Class questions	Questions about grades
Requests for appointments	Class questions
Requests for assignment extensions	Consultations about assignments

Course Timing & Due Dates

This is an asynchronous course with time bound milestones and deadlines. This means that there will be no scheduled full-class meetings. You have the flexibility and freedom to check in on the course at times that are convenient for you. Some possible exceptions to this

asynchronous formation could include meetings during instructor drop in hours or meetings that you schedule with your classmates.

There are still time-sensitive deadlines scheduled through this course. Check the course schedule and assignment information sheets for details. Work for this class will generally be due on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Due Wednesdays (by 11:59pm)	Due Saturdays (by 11:59pm)
Assigned weekly readings Reading quizzes in Revel Discussion board posts	Class activities and exercises Major unit deliverables

If you can't finish the reading by Wednesday night, be sure to write a post based on what you were able to read and finish the reading later.

This is a course that is typically spread over 16 weeks, but we will be completing it in half that time. Please be prepared to schedule your workload accordingly. Let me know if you would like to discuss strategies for time or project management.

University Policies and Resources

Nondiscrimination Policy

All class participants are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and sensitive manner towards others and the course material. Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. Purdue's nondiscrimination policy can be found at

http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information that is submitted provides the greatest opportunity for the university to investigate the concern. Incidents of academic misconduct in this course will be addressed by the course instructor and referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) for review at the university level. Any violation of course policies as it relates to academic integrity will result minimally in a failing or zero grade for that particular assignment, and at the instructor's discretion may result in a failing grade for the course. In

addition, all incidents of academic misconduct will be forwarded to OSRR, where university penalties, including removal from the university, may be considered.

Purdue Honor Pledge: As a Boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together - we are Purdue.

Mental Health Services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (765)-494-6995 and <http://www.purdue.edu/caps/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office of the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.

If you need support and information about options and resources: Please see the Office of the Dean of Students, <http://www.purdue.edu/odos>, for drop-in hours (M-F, 8 am- 5 pm).

Major Emergency Planning

In the event of a major emergency (campus, local, global), course requirements, deadlines, and grading are subject to change that may be necessitated by a revised calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted on Blackboard and I will send an email.

Writing Lab

Even the most accomplished writers need feedback. The tutors in the Writing Lab can work with students at any stage of the writing process, from planning and drafting to editing and polishing strategies. Writing Lab consultants work with undergraduate and graduate students from every department on any piece of writing from class assignments to job search documents. For more information, visit https://owl.purdue.edu/writinglab/the_writing_lab_at_purdue.html or call (765)-494-3723.

Cultural Centers on Campus

The following cultural centers are open at all students at Purdue University. They help promote learning and community spaces beyond the classroom; I encourage you to visit them.

[Asian American and Asian Resource and Cultural Center](#)

[Black Cultural Center](#)

[Latino Cultural Center](#)

[Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Center](#)

[Native American Educational and Cultural Center](#)

Land Acknowledgement

As this is a distance learning course, we will not be meeting in a single physical space. Still, physical lands and territory support our learning, from the buildings on Purdue University's West Lafayette campus that houses servers and network hardware to the various places where we reside while studying and working in this class. This land acknowledgement, while not enough, is an important decolonial practice in recognizing the indigenous lands that support our learning. Please take a moment to visit this interactive site to <https://native-land.ca/> to learn about the people on whose land we reside and depend for this class.

If you want to be successful in this class, it helps to...

- Be self-motivated and self-disciplined.
- Be willing to ask questions and speak up, especially if problems arise, or ask me questions privately.
- Do the reading.
- Practice being open, generous, and actively attentive.
- Be willing to step out of your comfort zone and try something new.
- Accept critical thinking and decision making as part of the learning process.
- Commit to 10 to 20 hours per week (variable) to this course.