

English 2116-020

Introduction to Technical Communication

Summer Session II—2013

Dr. Aaron A. Toscano Office: Fretwell 280F Office hours: MTWTh 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm 4:00 pm – 5:00pm (and by appt)	Classroom: Fretwell 219 Time: MTWTh 2:00 am - 4:00 pm http://webpages.uncc.edu/~atoscano/
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Course Description

English 2116 is designed for advanced-writing students in engineering, natural sciences, computer sciences, business, communication, and English studies. We will concentrate on writing in a variety of technical forms of discourse and engage critical thinking and writing by developing our writing processes and producing finished prose—both technical and expository. We will also emphasize discovering our writing processes, secondary research, and problem-solving; recognizing the rhetorical character of technical and professional discourse with its multiple purposes and audiences; evaluating and integrating a variety of written, visual, and oral elements of design; and developing field-specific vocabularies for talking about this discourse. Special to this class is that we will be in a computer lab, and our focus will be on technology. Therefore, students will write for and in an electronic environment on topics related to technical and professional situations. All students are required to have an online presence—a web page devoted to the class.

Text and Materials

Required	Tebeaux, Elizabeth & Dragga, Sam. <i>The Essentials of Technical Communication</i> . {1st ed.--9780195384222; 2nd ed. 9780199890781} Asimov, Isaac. <i>I, Robot</i> . {Any Edition} Access to a UNCC Internet account (e-mail, web space, etc.) Willingness To Learn
Recommended	Some means of portable storage (i.e. your “h” drive, a flash drive, etc.) Any general writing handbook Manuals or guides to the various software applications we’ll use in class A good dictionary

Expectations

I expect students to be prepared to participate in class discussions; therefore, students should finish all reading before the class meets. In addition to hard copy assignments turned in, students must maintain a basic web page throughout the semester that reflects some mastery of online communication skills. This is not a Web development class and covers minimal software-instruction, but students should be able to manuver in computer-mediated environments. If you can use Microsoft Word, find "Save As..", and drag & drop files, you can create a very basic Web site. Unless otherwise stated hand in all work to

me. Please do not e-mail me any attachments—I **will not accept attachments**. In fact, I delete all attachments to avoid malicious viruses. Please do not beg for an exception; this is non-negotiable. You are solely responsible for backing up your work and getting hardcopies to me. The fact that your computer crashed or your Internet connection failed is a potentiality that calls for backing up your work and avoiding procrastination. If last minute “issues” come up, you may upload your assignment to a webpage—this does not mean e-mailing an attachment—but you must also bring a hardcopy to me at the next class meeting. **Do not expect me to provide printing resources**. Alternative assignments and extensions are given at my discretion. If you are unwilling to fulfill these expectations, please reconsider your enrollment in this course.

Work Requirements

Students in this course are expected to be able to complete unified, coherent documents nearly free of mechanical, logical, or structural errors. Additionally, students must strive to write using inclusive language including, but not limited to, gender neutral/ inclusive language, nontechnical language (where appropriate), and interculturally aware language. The ability to read college-level texts critically is also a requirement. Students will write essays, take a midterm and final exam, do bi-weekly responses, and complete other assignments individually. Also, students will have the opportunity to collaborate or work individually on a final presentation and annotated bibliography that addresses an issue or issues in technical communication. The final exam will be during the regularly scheduled final exam time: Wednesday, August 7, 2013 from 2:00-4:00 pm. **All of these assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade in the course. Just because the assignments have percentage values associated with them does not mean you will pass the course if your missing assignments do not drop you below 60%.**

Assignments/Grade Distribution

Portfolio Assignments (30%)			
Cover Letter			
Resume			
Set of Instructions			
Other Assignments (25%)		Project (10%)	
Prose Revisions	100	Proposal	25
I, Robot Essay	100	Annotated Bibliography	50
Web Page	50	Visuals	25
Technology Journal	50		
Ethical Dilemmas	25	Total	100
Total	325		
Exams/Quizzes (15%)		Everything Else (20%)	
Syllabus Quiz	50	Participation (15%)	15%
Midterm	200	Presentation (5%)	5%
Final	200		
Total	450		

All of the above must be completed to receive a passing grade in the course.

Portfolios, Journals, and Exams

Students must revise the portfolio assignments, which are not graded until the end of the semester, to go into their final portfolios. These portfolio documents will go through the entire writing process (prewriting, drafting, re-visioning, and editing). Please keep all work I return to you, and, especially, keep the portfolio assignments I return to you because you will be turning in the originals I've commented on with your portfolio revisions 8/01/2013). **Portfolios without the required materials may not receive a passing grade.** Every other week students should write a 250-word response to the journal discussion prompts. These journals will be collected at midterm and the end of the semester, but we will refer to the topics throughout the semester. The Midterm and Final Exams will cover all course readings and prose revision lessons. The Final Exam will be *slightly* cumulative.

Grading Policy

Your final grade is supposed to reflect your entire work for the semester and will be based on the percentages below:

Grading Scale for Graded Assignments and Final Grade:				
A= 90 - 100	B= 80 - 89	C= 70 - 79	D= 60 - 69	F=Below 60

Definition of A, B, C, D, and F Grades

Remember, your final grade is a combination of the five areas above in the assignment percentage table. An 'A' means your work was excellent—not mediocre, average, or just good. A 'B' means your work was good—not quite excellent but definitely above average and thoughtful. A 'C' means your work was barely adequate enough to satisfy the assignment—showing a lack of effort or thought for the assignment guidelines. A 'D' or 'F' usually means assignments were late, missing, or incomplete—often this work does not demonstrate appropriate college-level work for a 4000- or 5000-level course.

Late Work

An assignment is due at the beginning of the class for which it was assigned. All late work will **reduce** the assignment by **10% for each class period it is late**. Therefore, an assignment worth 100 points that is one class meeting late will not be able to have a grade higher than 90. If a portfolio assignment is late, your overall grade will be 4% less. Therefore, if you turn in a portfolio assignment a day late, your final grade begins at 96%. If you will not or cannot be in class on the day an assignment is due, you should make arrangements to get the paper to me via another student, put it in my mailbox, or upload the paper online and e-mail the link to me. Of course, you must still bring in a hardcopy (if required) of the assignment on the next class meeting. Again, you must still bring in a hardcopy (if required) of the assignment on the next class meeting. **Remember, I will not accept assignments attached to e-mails.** Please discuss any problems you may have regarding attendance or late work **before** class if at all possible. Remember, you are responsible for making up all work missed. Something I've learned from past semesters is that if you don't turn things in on time early in the semester, you end up not turning other things in on time (or at all). Do your best to get all your work in to me on time. If you are absent, get the information from another student. Do not expect me to e-mail the class notes to you. Of course,

never e-mail me and ask, "so...like, Dr. Toscano, man...did we...like...you know...do anything the other day in class?" What should you do instead?

Participation

You must participate **thoughtfully** during class discussions. Merely showing up will not get you participation credit—you **must speak**. If you're not in class, you can't receive credit, so your participation grade will be affected. I will note your participation (or lack thereof) daily. Thoughtful participation means that you engage critically in our discussions or ask engaging questions about the subject. Simply making jokes or telling the class an irrelevant story about last night's *American Idol* does not warrant thoughtful participation. **Doing work for another class or distracting other students will lower your participation grade—even to the point of falling below 15% (meaning, you can have a negative participation grade).**

Please see me ASAP if you're concerned about your participation grade because you're shy or if you don't understand these requirements. Telling me at the end of July that you didn't participate because you're the quiet type or because you didn't understand what "thoughtful" meant will be too late. Even worse, e-mailing me after the semester is over to complain that participation isn't a "valid" class assignment is too late. The purpose of discussions is for students to have control over their own learning and to reinforce critical thinking generally and "critical technological awareness" specifically. I am willing to provide a quasi-alternative to *supplement* a student's participation grade, but please note that discussion, which allows speakers to exchange ideas, is an extremely important component of critical thinking. One alternative is to do class reflections you post online. Please discuss this alternative with me early in the semester...like today!

Attendance

I will take attendance each day of class starting July 9th. It is very important that you attend every class in order to keep up with the work and reading. Your final grade will be lowered by a full letter grade for each day missed beyond **3** absences. After **6** absences you will receive a failing grade for the course. Please make an effort to come to every class and to get here on time. Don't just skip class because you feel you have four "free" days. Save your absences for emergencies. There are no such things as excused absences. Only students participating in UNCC sponsored activities (with the proper documentation) will not be penalized for missing class. I will ask you to request a meeting with the Dean of Students if you have situations that you feel should allow you an exception to missing more than **3** classes. Cars break down, parking is limited, students get sick, and traffic is brutal, but class still happens. Also, please be respectful of the other students and get to class on time, or make every effort to be quiet as you come in late.

Academic Integrity

All UNC Charlotte students have the responsibility to be familiar with and to observe the requirements of The UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity. This Code forbids cheating, fabrication, or falsification of information, multiple submission of academic work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials (such as Library books on reserve), and complicity in academic dishonesty (helping others to violate the Code). Any further specific requirements or permission regarding academic integrity in this

course will be stated by the instructor, and are also binding on the students in this course. Students who violate the Code can be punished to the extent of being permanently expelled from UNC Charlotte and having this fact recorded on their official transcripts. The normal penalty is zero credit on the work involving dishonesty and further substantial reduction of the course grade. In almost all cases, the course grade is reduced to 'F.' If you do not have a copy of the Code, you can view it on UNC Charlotte's Academic Integrity Web site at <http://integrity.uncc.edu/>. Standards of academic integrity will be enforced in this course. Students are expected to report cases of academic dishonesty they become aware of to the course instructor who is responsible for dealing with them.

If you try to pass off any work in full or part as your own without proper credit being given to the original source, you will receive an 'F' in this course.

In addition to the above identification of Academic Dishonesty, students should be aware of technology-mediated concerns related to Academic Integrity. The Oxford English Dictionary defines "integrity" as "The condition of having no part or element taken away or wanting; undivided or unbroken state; material wholeness, completeness, entirety." A second definition states that integrity means "The condition of not being marred or violated; unimpaired or uncorrupted condition; original perfect state; soundness." Therefore, anything that draws students' attention away from course activities and goals is a violation of academic integrity because it corrupts the soundness and condition of learning. For instance, engaging in critical thinking/awareness is a sound, perfect state activity for this course; on the other hand, devoting attention to facebook, instant messaging, non-class-related Web surfing or e-mailing, etc. violates or corrupts the learning goals of this course. Although we may point to the Internet in general and social media sites specifically in our discussions of 21st-Century communication, engrossing oneself in them during class to "catch up with friends" divides your attention and may be distracting to members of this class. This violation is as serious as plagiarism and will result in an 'F' in participation the first time and an 'F' in this course for a subsequent violation. This syllabus section is your warning.

You may also receive an 'F' in the course for other academic integrity violations specified on the UNCC Integrity Web site. Do not expect another warning--this is it. Please see me if you need further clarification regarding cheating, fabrication or falsification of information, multiple submission of academic work, plagiarism, complicity in academic dishonesty, or other violations of academic integrity.

A Note to Students from UNC Charlotte's English Department, Statement on Diversity (April 2009)

The English Department strives to create an academic climate that respects people of varied cultural backgrounds and life experiences. As a community of scholars and teachers who study language, literature, and writing, we are committed to nurturing intellectual and aesthetic diversity. In all our activities, we invite participation by diverse groups, including, but not limited to, those who define themselves in the following terms: race and ethnicity; gender; political orientation; sexual orientation; special health needs; age; religion; country of origin; and socio-economic status. Finally, by fostering multiple perspectives in our coursework, we can help our students prepare to participate in our increasingly diverse society, as well as in the global community.

The Department of English is committed to the centrality of writing in our curriculum.

Important Dates and Administrative Information

The syllabus schedule below has important dates marked. Students are responsible for not only knowing course deadlines but also knowing UNCC deadlines (drop/add, billing, vacation, etc.). Please visit the following link for the registrar's calendar: http://registrar.uncc.edu/calendar?tid_1=10&tid=40.

Instructional Modifications

Students who have a condition that may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria are encouraged to meet with me to identify, discuss, and document any feasible instructional modifications or accommodations. Please inform me about circumstances no later than the second week of the semester or as soon as possible after a disability or condition is diagnosed, whichever occurs earliest. For information and assistance, contact the Disabilities Resource Center.

Statement of Academic Freedom

I strongly encourage students to use class as a place for free inquiry and intellectual growth. Although we as a class will not always agree or be comfortable with the views of others, every student has the right to his or her own tastes and convictions. I promise to be fair and always support your right to look at the world from your own position, but I encourage all students to branch out and consider multiple perspectives. **I will not tolerate any harassment or abuse (emotional or physical) or any instance where others adversely affect students' learning.**

Building "Issues" and Inclement Weather

Some buildings have A/C problems and class have to be canceled because it's too brutally hot to remain inside. If the A/C "issue" cancels class, keep up with the syllabus. We'll pick up where we left off on the syllabus when we return to class. Also, if anything else (i.e., weather) causes us to miss class, we'll pick up where we left off.

Right to Make Changes

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives, to compensate for missed classes, or to make our lives easier.

Schedule for Readings and Assignments

(have readings and assignments done before class)

WEEK 1	
July 1	Introduction to the course. Get online. Make a web page. Say hello.
July 2*	More Introduction to the course Ch. 1 and 2 in Tebeaux and Dragga
July 3	Ch. 12 in Tebeaux and Dragga; Résumé reading Bring in résumé information
July 4 & 5	No Classes —4 th of July Holiday
*July 2 nd : Last Day to Add or Drop a Class with no grade by 11:59 PM	
WEEK 2	
July 8	Syllabus Quiz (also review this link: http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/ps-105.html) More Résumé stuff
July 9* **DUE**	Résumés and Cover Letters DUE Ch. 4 and 7 in Tebeaux and Dragga Lessons on Plain Language
July 10	Prose revision
July 11	Ch. 5 and 10 in Tebeaux and Dragga ...Be reading <i>I, Robot</i>
*July 9 th : Last Day to Withdraw from a Course and Retain Others by 11:59 PM	
WEEK 3	
July 15 **DUE**	Prose Revisions Due Technology in a social context discussion (reading online)
July 16	Writing for the User
July 17	Introduction to Information Design Ch. 6 in Tebeaux and Dragga Midterm Preview
July 18 EXAM	Midterm Exam ...Be reading <i>I, Robot</i>
WEEK 4	
July 22	Midterm Review and <i>I, Robot</i> essay topics
July 23 **DUE**	<i>I, Robot</i> Discussion <i>I, Robot</i> essay DUE
July 24*	Final Project and Research Discussion Ch. 8 in Tebeaux and Dragga

July 25 **DUE**	Set of Instructions DUE (More Research discussion if needed) Ethics discussion Ch. 3 in Tebeaux and Dragga; Huff, Darrel. "How to Lie with Statistics" on Moodle
*July 24 th : Last Day to Withdraw from All Classes by 11:59 PM	
WEEK 5	
July 29 **DUE**	Proposal, Visual, and Annotated Bibliography DUE
July 30	Ch. 11 in Tebeaux and Dragga Presentation discussion and workshop
July 31 **DUE**	Portfolio Workshop Ethical Dilemmas DUE
August 1 **DUE**	NO CLASS—Transfer SOAR session Portfolios DUE —turn in portfolios to my mailbox where I'll have a cardboard box below for your portfolios
WEEK 6	
August 5	Presentations
August 6	Presentations Final Exam Preview
August 7	Final Exam (Technically 3:00-5:30, but let's meet during our regular class time, 2:00-4:00)