

Dr. Anthony T. Atkins
Introduction to Technical Writing
UNC Wilmington
Spring 2007

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Office Hours:
 M= 2:30-3:30pm / T=12:30-1:30pm
 And by appointment

Course Goals:

This course will introduce students to the basics of technical writing and professional communication. In addition to writing traditional job application letters/resumes, students will produce documents for the web. Students will gain some experience with web authoring tools, desktop publishing software, and evaluating the impact of the image on communication. Most work for the course will be completed electronically, though previous knowledge with computers is not necessary. This course carries a prerequisite of Eng. 103 or 201. Specific goals are below:

- begin to understand and analyze the roles of reading and writing in our society, especially in the academic and local communities;
- consistently support ideas with evidence and argumentation through proper design and good writing;
- recognize and respond to persuasive demands an audience places on a writer;
- use technology when appropriate to convey ideas;
- read media texts critically and recognize the media as a source of information that should be critiqued;
- use digital technology to create and submit projects in a professional manner.

Texts and Materials:

Anderson, Paul V. *Technical Communication: A Reader Centered Approach 6th Edition*.
 Boston, MA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2007.

Thumb/flash drive (or some reliable way to maintain your electronic work/assignments)

Assignments:

Resume + Cover Letter:	20%
Newsletter Project:	20%
Web Project:	25%
Reading Quizzes (5):	20%
In class work/homework/participation/attendance:	15%

Brief overview of Assignments (see official/formal assignment sheets and rubric/s for evaluation criteria)

Resume + Cover Letter

This assignment requires that you locate a potential job, read the advertisement, and apply for the job using a cover letter and a resume. In class, we will discuss these two pieces of the job application process. You will receive class time to work on both of these items.

Graded items:

- Any rough drafts assigned
- Prepared to work in class (must be working on *our* project when given class time to do so)
- Submit the job advertisement, resume, and cover letter in hard copy on the assigned due date

Please remember that not working in class and neglecting to have materials/rough drafts when assigned affect the final grade for this project. Use your book and be prepared for class. Remember too that format and typographical errors will significantly lower your final grade.

Newsletter Project

This assignment requires that you choose any topic and develop a newsletter for that topic. You may use InDesign or Publisher to complete this task. Again, you will receive class time to work on this project. Again, you must be prepared to work in class and work only on *our* project. You will need to use images and graphics and proper writing to receive a “good” grade. Remember that I will also use the laws of Gestalt in order to evaluate your newsletter.

Graded items:

- Any rough drafts assigned
- Work in class
- Submit one color hard copy and email a pdf version (neglecting to submit both versions/formats will result in a grade no greater than C+) on the assigned due date

Web Project

This project requires that you return to your resume. You will create a professional web site that includes a number items. Please see the official assignment sheet and grading rubric for this particular assignment.

Please remember, though, that sloppy work will result in a poor grade—for example, broken links, inconsistent color scheme or design, pictures not appearing, etc. Mistakes like these will cause you to receive less than a B+ for this particular project.

Graded items:

- Any rough drafts
- Work in class
- Web site (emailed to me as a link. You will have posted this to your student web space)
- Your pages and links must work! Non-working pages or blank images will significantly lower your grade

Reading Quizzes:

You are assigned “reading” quizzes. The quiz is designed to simply ensure that you read and comprehend our assigned material. Some quizzes are harder than others, but these are not “pop” quizzes. You can see when the quizzes are assigned on the schedule. Anything we read or discuss since the last quiz is subject to be included. Each quiz is ten questions and may take any form, from short answer to True/False to multiple choice. You will have 5 quizzes this term. I will use the average of all 5 quizzes to figure your final grade for this portion of the course. Each question is 10 points. For example, if you score the following for the 5 quizzes: 80, 90, 100, 70, and 65 the average would be: 81.0. This is a solid B- and would be recorded as such for this portion of your final grade.

Graded items:

These quizzes will be in hard copy and distributed in class on the day they are assigned. Under no circumstances will you be allowed to “make-up” a quiz.

In class work/homework/participation/attendance

You will receive significant class time to work on projects. I do this to be available to help you with technological tasks, writing, and general guidance during the course of each project. This is not a time to waste or ignore. Those of you not working may be asked to leave and/or you will receive a low grade for this part of the course and be counted as absent. This also means I expect you to contribute to class discussions, attend class everyday, and complete any other tasks I assign during class or for homework. Any homework assigned is due the next class period and cannot be made up. You must be in class with your homework in hand in order to receive full-credit. Again, no make-up of homework is permitted.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is very serious. While many students still take it upon themselves to cut and paste pieces of text/images from web pages and conveniently insert them into their projects, it is a violation to do so without attributing proper credit to the creator of the original text/image. Remember: ideas as well as words/images are covered under the realm of plagiarism. Nothing is wrong with using another’s work- **JUST CITE THEM.** If you are found to be plagiarizing, I will first wish to speak with you. If the matter is not resolved between you and I, we will then meet with the department chair for further action. I will

prosecute to the highest extent the university will allow if you are found to be plagiarizing material. At the minimum, you will receive an F for the specific assignment in question.

Students with Disabilities

It is the policy of UNCW to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law, state law, and the university's commitment to equal educational opportunities. Any student with a disability who needs accommodation, for example, in seating placement or in arrangements for examinations, should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services, at 910-962-7555 or TDD 910-962-3853 or Dr. Peggy Turner via email at [turnerm@uncw.edu].

Attendance Policy**(fall/spring policy only)**

You may miss three days without penalty or excuse. On day 4 your final grade is lowered by one letter. On day 5 your final grade is lowered by two letters. On day 6 you fail the course. Missing 6 days is missing three weeks of class. This is unacceptable. I do not accept excuses. Do not bring them to me nor email me about absences. If you miss class please check the web site and/or check with a friend to find out what you missed.

Late Policy

Coming to class late is also unacceptable. When I am ready to begin class you should be in class and in your seat. Once I close and lock the door, anyone coming to class after that is considered late. Every 2 times you are late counts as an absence. If you are late 3 times, you have an absence and 1 late day. If you are late 4 days then you simply have two absences.

In summary, you may be late once without penalty. You may be absent three times without penalty.

Sign –in Procedure

When you arrive there will be a sign-in sheet close by. You should sign the sheet immediately upon walking in the door. I will not sign a sheet for you nor go back at a later date and allow you to sign it.

Other notes

You may not leave until the professor officially dismisses you. Do not schedule doctor's appointments, etc. during our course time. You are absent. Keep up with the readings, attend class faithfully, and always work on our projects when given time, and good things will happen. If at any time you wish to speak with me please make an appointment and I will be happy to help.

The best way to contact me is email: atkinsa@uncw.edu

Emailing me after 5pm may not get a response until the next business day.