

ENG 3050 TECHNICAL WRITING

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY | WINTER 2019

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Office Hours: Mon 1-2; Wed 1-2; Audio/Video Call/Chat/Screenshare by appointment
Schedule Appointments at: calendly.com/kellyjplante

Syllabus

Course Description - English Department

ENG 3050 prepares students for reading, researching, writing, and designing technical documents. While some technical writing addresses a general audience (e.g., instructions), technical documents are often written for multiple audiences with different specializations (e.g., technical reports for executives and implementers). Technical documents incorporate both textual (writing) and visual (graphics, illustrations, etc.) elements of design.



Course Description - WSU Undergraduate Bulletin

(3 credits) Instruction in basic technical writing skills. Requirements include writing summaries, letters, memos, instructions, and technical reports. Topics include audience and purpose analysis, textual and visual aspects of technical document design, and formatting.

Prerequisite for ENG 3050

To enroll in ENG 3050, students must have completed their WSU Basic Composition (BC) requirement (ENG 1020 or equiv.) with a grade of C or better.

General Education Designation

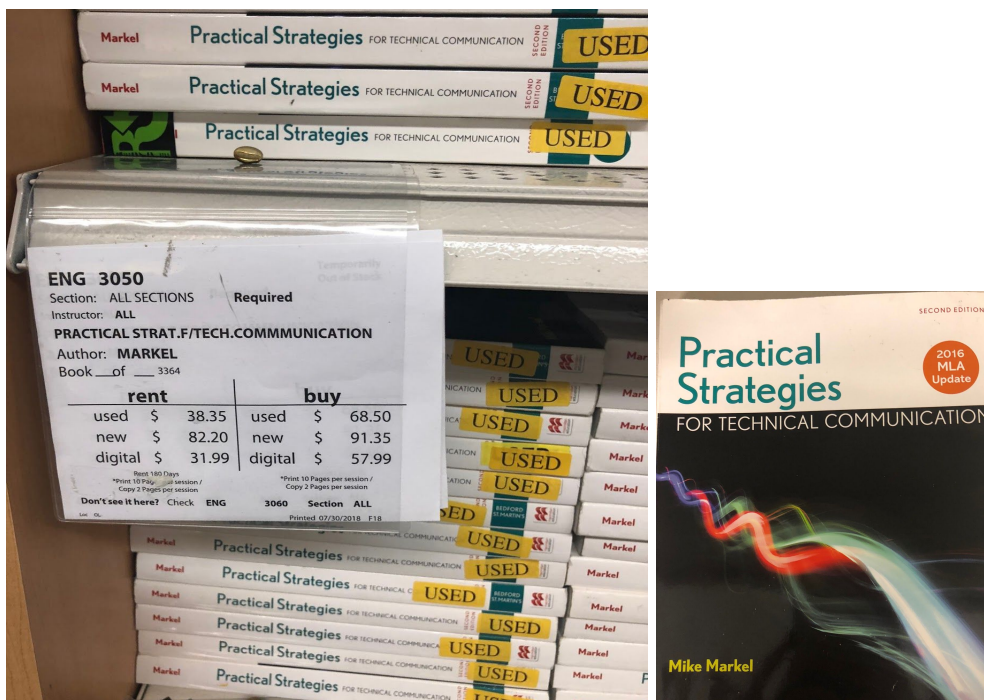
With a grade of C or better, ENG 3050 fulfills the General Education IC (Intermediate Composition) graduation requirement. Successful completion of Intermediate Composition (IC) with a grade of C or better is a prerequisite to enrolling in courses in the major that fulfill the General Education WI (Writing Intensive) requirement for graduation. More information on the General Education requirements is available from the [WSU Undergraduate Bulletin](#).

Learning Outcomes

- **Writing & Designing**—Write effectively as individuals and in teams in standard genres of technical writing (including summaries, professional correspondence, resumes, instructions, technical descriptions, reports, and performance assessments), including the appropriate use of grammar, mechanics, style, and document design for formal and informal documents and standard conventions of citation and documentation.
- **Reading & Analyzing**—Read, analyze, and evaluate the design of, and the audience(s) and purpose(s) for, technical documents, including text, visuals, format, usability, citation, documentation, and mechanics.
- **Researching & Documenting**—Design and conduct primary and secondary research; evaluate appropriate sources in support of composing technical documents.
- **Using Technology & Media**—Make productive use of current technologies for reading, researching, writing, and designing technical documents.

Required Text

I highly recommend that you obtain an electronic copy of this book, rather than the paper copy, unless you really prefer paper. You can do this by accessing the WSU Bookstore app in the App Store (a Barnes and Noble-schools app) and selecting this course and selecting the digital version of the text. It should load in the Nook app, I believe. Or, you could go to VitalSource.com and obtain a copy there. It is a really nice e-text, and handier in my opinion to be able to take with you wherever you go to work on your assignments and can do the reading right on your computer, tablet or phone. There is a VitalSource app to download for tablets and computers and reading online on their website on laptops/desktops.



Markel, Mike. *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's. ISBN: 978-1-319-00336-4

Assignments & Grading

Students are required to write a minimum of 30-34 pages (8,000-9,000 words) in ENG 3050 (including drafts and informal writing). This course will feature 4 major projects along with less formal short assignments for writing practice. Please see the [Grading Breakdown](#) Excel sheet for more information. Descriptions of the projects are located in the Assignments area on Canvas. Grades on individual papers will be weighted as follows, out of 1,200 points total:

Project 1 – Job Application Materials – 150 points total

- 1A: Paper Resume and Cover Letter: 100 points
- 1B: Professional Website: 50 points

Project 2 – Instruction Set & Test Memo – 250 points total

- 2A – Instruction Set – 150 points
- 2B – User Test Memo – 100 points

Project 3 – Three Component Report – 400 points total

- 3A – Project Plan – 100 points
- 3B – Progress Report – 50 points
- 3C – Research Report – 250 points

Project 4 – Performance Review – 130 points total

Process Work/Assignments – 270 points total

- Quizzes – 50 points
- Discussions – 60 points
- Peer Review Drafts & Comments – 160 points

Percentage = Your Total Earned Points / 1,200 Total Possible Points

University Grading Scale

A	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	84-86%
B-	80-83%
C+	77-79%
C	74-76%

A grade of C or better in ENG 3050 fulfills the General Education Intermediate Composition (IC) graduation requirement.

C-	70-73%
D+	67-69%
D	64-66%
D-	60-63%
F	<59%

The Performance Review: A Semester-long Cultivation of Digital Organization Habits

Understanding that we live and write in contexts that include, but are not limited to, the university, this course asks students to undergo a semester-long project to maintain a well-organized, digital technical-writing portfolio, and to write an accompanying reflection piece (project 4) in the format of a workplace performance review. Because we are constantly adapting our communication, reflecting on our accomplishments throughout the semester can help us to better comprehend our growth as technical communicators, giving us a sense of accomplishment that provides relevance and aids in goal achievement. This process will sharpen your awareness of your writing skills. Also, because technical writing requires extensive organization of digital research assets, files, data, and revision control of documents, your digital asset management will prove invaluable to your success in the complex reports required in this class.



Project Formats & Submission

All assignments, including drafts, shall:

- Be typed using Microsoft Word in your digital writing portfolio on Office 365 (you will receive access to your digital portfolio space during week 1 of the semester). They will then be output and turned-in as PDFs to Canvas unless otherwise stated (i.e., at times a link instead will be required).
- Be edited, spell-checked and proofread.
- Include citations and an [APA format](#) or MLA-style works cited page for all research sources when required by the instructor.

- Have your last name and page numbers somewhere on the document as per the project description.
- Follow the required file-naming conventions and organization policy below."

File-Naming Convention & Organization Policy for Digital Assignment Submissions

Because ENG 3050 culminates in a performance review (project 4) for which an organized digital collection and preservation of the revision process of your work throughout the semester, we will follow a prescribed file-naming convention (and preserve the folder hierarchy provided in your portfolio space provided to you) for assignment submissions. For example, project 3 versions of drafts and reference materials used must all reside in the project 3 folder in your portfolio, and so on. This is known as digital asset management. Many office environments have file naming convention and folder hierarchy/organization policies to assist in managing digital assets (files), so this organizational skill will benefit you in this course, other courses, and beyond.

Here are some examples of file names:

- ENG3050_P1A_Plante,K_v1
- ENG3050_P1A_Plante,K_v2
- ENG3050_P3B_Plante,K_v1



Note: Underscores separate major elements of the file name. Hyphens separate parts within the major elements. All first letters are capitalized to assist readability. The last element in the file name ("v1" above) denotes the version number. This helps maintain version control of your drafts/documents: v1 = version 1, v2 = version 2, and so on. This way, you can return to previous drafts if needed, and the version that I or your classmates reviewed is documented. This is especially critical for revision control during group work, and a life-saver in the event that your computer crashes or some other digital catastrophe.

Schedule

Our course schedule is posted on Canvas. I reserve the right to update the course schedule at any time. This schedule is a living document. It is your responsibility to review our schedule regularly. If I update the schedule, I will notify you via announcement/email.

Week	Day	Reading Due	Discussion Due 11pm	Projects Due 11pm	Quizzes Due 11pm	Modules of the Week: What to read, watch, comment, and post questions on Canvas
Week 1 - First week of class, introductions	Wednesday, 9/20	Shilly first drafts				
Week 2 - Writing job application materials	Monday, 9/24	PBFO ch. 10	Discussion 1	Peer review draft project 1A	Quiz 1	
	Friday, 9/27			Peer review project 1A		
Week 3 - Designing persuasive documents	Monday, 9/24	PBFO ch. 7	Discussion 2	Project 1A	Quiz 2	
	Wednesday, 9/26			Peer review draft project 1A		Early Academic Assessment begins, last day for withdrawal with tuition reimbursement
Week 4 - Writing definitions, descriptions, & instructions	Monday, 9/24	PBFO ch. 14	Discussion 3	Peer review draft project 1A	Quiz 3	
	Wednesday, 9/26			Project 1B		Withdrawal deadline required to complete the tuition reimbursement form, 11/11
Week 5 - Creating graphics	Monday, 10/1	PBFO ch. 9	Discussion 4		Quiz 4	
	Wednesday, 10/3			Peer review draft project 2A		
Week 6 - Ethical & legal implications	Monday, 10/8	PBFO ch. 2	Discussion 5	Peer review draft project 2A	Quiz 5	
	Wednesday, 10/10			Project 2B		
Week 7 - Usability	Monday, 10/15	Usability.docx	Discussion 6		Quiz 6	Early Academic Assessment ends
	Wednesday, 10/17			Peer review draft project 2A		

Adding/Dropping Classes

The last day you can drop this/any course and receive your tuition back for Winter 2019 is Friday, January 18. The last day to withdraw (with no tuition refund) is Sunday, March 24. Completing a S.M.A.R.T. Check at the Welcome Center is mandatory if you are intending to withdraw from a class. Withdrawals can seriously impact your financial aid and progress toward degree completion. Consider carefully before making the decision to withdraw from this course. See the bottom of this syllabus for the university withdrawal policy. Here are some resources for helping you with this decision.

Religious Observance Policy

Because of the extraordinary variety of religious affiliations represented in the university's student body and staff, the Wayne State University calendar makes no provision for religious holidays. It is university policy, however, to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students who find that their class assignments or examinations involve conflicts with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance to make suitable alternative arrangements.

Late Work Policy

Thank you for not turning in late work. Students must contact me in advance if work cannot be submitted by the due date. No comments will be provided for late work. I reserve the right to determine specific grade reductions based on timely prior notification, whether revised deadlines are met, and similar factors. Late work will be accepted and graded only if a new deadline is arranged with me in advance.



Attendance Policy

This is an online course to which you will be expected to log in regularly. You must log into Canvas once a week minimum and actively participate with your group or will expect a lower grade in this highly collaborative class.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the act of copying work from books, articles and websites without citing and documenting the source. Plagiarism includes copying language, texts, and visuals without citation (e.g., cutting and pasting from websites). Plagiarism also includes submitting papers (or sections of papers) that were written by another person, including another student, or downloaded from the Internet. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. It may result in a failing grade for the assignment or a failing grade for the course. Instructors are required to report all cases of plagiarism to the English Department. Information on plagiarism procedures is available [here](#). Please contact me if you have any questions on what constitutes plagiarism.



A Note about Research Ethics

Within the academic community, we divide the practice of research into two separate kinds of tasks. Research that involves looking at sources authored by other people, often found in a library or on the internet, is called secondary research. You may already be very familiar with this kind of work and you'll be doing it for several projects in this class. The other kind of research we call original (or sometimes primary) research. Instead of reading someone's else's presentation of knowledge, original research creates or gathers knowledge together in a way that was not done before. For instance, a biologist might conduct an experiment to test the effects of a drug or a fertilizer and write an article to explain her research process and results—again, you're probably familiar with this kind of research. But some academics, especially those in the social sciences, do original research by gathering stories and knowledge from human participants through interviews, focus groups, surveys, or other methods. You won't be doing biological experiments in this class, but you may end up using some of these other methods of original research in your projects. As you involve other humans in your research processes, you must respect their rights to maintain their privacy and to choose how and when their information or stories get shared. As members of the academic community, we expect you to be responsible researchers as you gather and disseminate this data, as well as any data obtained through secondary research.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T Policy

Thank you for being punctual, prepared for class, and ready to explore the topics at hand. It is essential that we show the highest degree of respect for each other in this class, in every way. This respect should translate from our interpersonal interactions to how we address each others' writing to how we ourselves write. Rude, mean, divisive, and/or dismissive attitudes or comments are not appropriate for the college classroom, nor will they be tolerated. I expect attentive and thoughtful conduct in every situation. Please show the same respect to others that you wish to be shown to you.



Communicating with Me, Your Instructor

- **Please note that as a business rule, I only respond to student emails sent via Canvas. This helps me to stay organized and keep my students as a priority, so that I can stay focused on you and not get distracted by the plethora of others who email my @wayne.edu address. [Access the Canvas Inbox on the left green panel and select our course from the drop down to communicate with me via email.] THANK YOU for understanding and accommodating this request to streamline our communication.**
- One of the best things you can do for yourself in this course is to keep up a solid, consistent, and respectful line of communication with me. Stopping by my office during office hours by making an appointment using calendly.com/kellyjplante is a great way to do that. Also, email: I make myself as available as I can—you have to do your part and avail yourself of the resources provided to you (i.e, emailing me questions, being prepared for class, stopping by the writing center, etc.). I check my email frequently, and do want to hear from you.
- Caveat 1: While I check my email often, I don't check it every hour of the day. Don't email me at midnight the night before something is due with a question; I won't be able to answer it in time. Do give me about 24 hours during the week—48 on weekends—to respond to emails, so that I can give you the careful, thoughtful responses you deserve.

- Caveat 2: Unfortunately, emails I receive that lack information or correct and respectful etiquette are often impossible to respond to. This is especially true of emails that have no identifying information, such as those sent directly from a phone. A basic template for a respectful, appropriate email is as follows.

Dear Kelly,*

*Thing that I want to ask/tell you about
regarding our class and/or my work in the class.*

Thank you,

Student Name

- Please note: * I am in the Ph.D. program at WSU and do not have a Ph.D. yet, so I do not go by [Dr. or Professor](#). “Kelly” or “Ms. Plante” are how I prefer to be addressed.
- Pet peeve: * Please include a professional salutation such as “Dear Kelly” or “Dear Ms. Plante,” “Good Afternoon Ms. Plante,” etc., in your emails. Be sure to also include a sign off with “Thank you” or “Sincerely,” etc., plus your name. If you simply email a statement such as “I don’t understand this project” (1) that is unprofessional, (2) this is a professional writing class so let’s practice that skill in our correspondence with each other, and (3) please demonstrate respect for our time by articulating exactly what it is that you don’t understand, quoting from the assignment description or relevant references and demonstrating that you have consulted the relevant resources.

Warrior Writing, Research, and Technology (WRT) Zone in the Undergraduate Library

The WRT Zone is a one-stop resource center for writing, research, and technology. The WRT Zone provides individual tutoring consultations, research assistance from librarians, and technology consultations, all free of charge for graduate and undergraduate students at WSU. Tutoring sessions, run by undergraduate and graduate tutors, can last up to 50 minutes. Tutors can work with writing from all disciplines.

Tutoring sessions focus on a range of activities in the writing process—understanding the assignment, considering the audience, brainstorming, writing drafts, revising, editing, and preparing documentation. The WRT Zone is not an editing or proofreading service; rather, tutors work collaboratively with students to support them in developing relevant skills and knowledge, from developing an idea to editing for grammar and mechanics.



Librarian and technology support is a walk-in service. Consultants work with students on a first come-first serve basis. Consultants provide support with the library database system, finding and evaluating sources, developing research strategies, organizing sources, and citations. Consultants also provide technology support including, but not limited to: video editing, graphics creation, presentation building, audio recording, MS Office, and dissertation formatting. The WRT Zone has several computers with the Adobe Creative Suite for students who want to work on multimedia projects. Our location is also equipped with two Whisper Rooms where students can work on multimedia projects in a more private and sound-isolated environment.

To make a face-to-face or online appointment, consult the [WRT Zone website](#).

For more information about the WRT Zone, please contact the director, Jule Thomas, by email at au1145@wayne.edu.

Student Disability Services

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. The SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-202-4216 for videophone use. Once you have met with your disability specialist, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your accommodations. Student Disability Services' mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University. You can [learn more about the disability office on its website](#). To register with Student Disability Services, [complete the online registration form](#).

University Withdrawal Policy

- Students who withdraw from a course will receive a grade of WP, WF, or WN. The last day to withdraw from this course can be found [here](#). WP will be awarded if the student is passing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested. WF will be awarded if the student is failing the

course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested. WN will be awarded if no materials have been submitted, and so there is no basis for a grade.

- Students must submit their withdrawal request online. The faculty member must approve the withdrawal request before it becomes final, and students should continue to attend class until they receive notification via email that the withdrawal has been approved. Withdrawals can be requested at any point from the fifth week of class through the study day. Please review the [university's withdrawal policy](#).
- A note on Incomplete grade requests: A grade of Incomplete will be issued only if the student has attended nearly all of the class sessions, submitted an Incomplete Contract (using the English Department's recommended form) and signed and obtained the instructor's signature on it. University policy states that: "The mark of I—Incomplete, is given to an undergraduate student when he/she has not completed all of the course work as planned for the term and when there is, in the judgment of the instructor, a reasonable probability that the student can complete the course successfully without again attending regular class sessions. The student should be passing at the time the grade of 'I' is given. A written contract specifying the work to be completed should be signed by the student and instructor. Responsibility for completing all course work rests with the student (2017-2018 WSU Undergraduate Bulletin)."

Additional Resources

[Academic Success Center](#)

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

[Dean of Students' Office](#)

