



English 354

Technical and Professional Communication

Syllabus

Professor: Dr. Lynn Ludwig

Office: CCC 447 (I am teaching all online this semester, so I will **not** hold office hours in CCC). I am happy to schedule a Zoom meeting with you. Just email me to set up the date and time.

E-mail: lludwig@uwsp.edu (Preferred form of contact)

Expected Instructor Response Times

- I will attempt to respond to student emails within 24 hours. If you have not received a reply from me within 24 hours, please resend your email.
- I will attempt to reply to and assess student discussion posts within 72 hours of discussions closing.
- I will attempt to grade written work within 72 hours; however, longer written assignments may take longer to assess.

The opportunity to create digital documents has become the mainstay of today's professionals and non-professionals. This course provides a unique opportunity to advance the digital writing skills of each of you: tomorrow's professional workforce. Additionally, the digital products will be valuable pieces, within your professional portfolio, when applying for jobs.

Academic Coaching

If you feel you need help with any of the following skills: **time management strategies, note-taking, study skills, communication on campus, or preparing for mid-terms**, please consider scheduling an appointment with an Academic Coach on campus or virtually. They are here to help you be successful in your online courses when you feel you need extra support. Email Kari Van Den Elzen (kvandene@uwsp.edu) to schedule an appointment or use the Navigate student app by selecting Tutoring Learning Center. You can meet as many times as you need. Coaches are also available to review campus technology platforms with you. (**Canvas, AccessPoint, Office 365, Navigate, etc.**)

Course Goals

This online course will help you prepare for writing, creating, analyzing, and critiquing text in digital realms. You will strengthen your critical thinking and communication skills,

with a focus on expression in global digital environments. This course will consist of assignments and discussion posts in Canvas. **Due to the wide array of popular digital tools we use in our lives daily, Canvas will be the repository of all required course tasks.**

Required Text (Rental):

Dobrin, Sydney I., Keller, Christopher J., and Christian R. Weisser. *Technical Communication in the Twenty-First Century*, 2nd ed. Prentice Hall, 2010. ISBN: 978-0-13-503174-2

Course Structure

This course will be delivered entirely online, through the learning management system, Canvas.

Student Expectations

In this course, you will be expected to complete the following types of tasks:

- communicate via email
- complete basic internet searches
- download and upload documents to Canvas
- read documents online
- view online videos
- participate in online discussions
- upload documents to Canvas

Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course, or to report a problem with Canvas, you can:

Seek assistance from the [IT Service Desk](#) (Links to an external site.)

- IT Service Desk Phone: 715-346-4357 (HELP)
- IT Service Desk Email: techhelp@uwsp.edu

Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. apply methods of audience analysis and strategies, with attention to style, audience, purpose and medium.
2. understand common components and rhetorical best practices in digital environments.
3. identify appropriate writing strategies to respond to the needs of readers, in various online contexts.
4. design online communication that others find to be clear, convincing and motivating.
5. write and submit/post various forms of digital writing.

6. give, and accept, constructive criticism to/from fellow digital writers.

Topic Outline/Schedule

Important Note: Refer to the Canvas course calendar for specific due dates. Details will be explained within each week's corresponding learning module. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Note: There is no final exam in this online course.

Online Discussion Posts: You will post and respond to a minimum of 2 discussion posts, each week.

Grading Policies

Weekly Assignments

Weekly Assignments are worth **75%** of your total grade.

Weekly assignments are designed to provide an opportunity for you to explore the concepts, principles, and content from all resources tied to course learning goals. Please see Canvas, for all assignment details.

Discussions

Discussions are worth **25%** of your total grade.

I know that different classes treat discussions in a lot of different ways. For the purposes of this course, please consider these **discussions to be interactive**, rather than **bulletin** boards—this means that you should **engage in a conversation**. You are required to interact with each other by responding to and prompting each other, just like you would in a real conversation. Please keep in mind the following points:

1. **Response posts do not have to be new threads:** Your “initial” response post for a module does not have to be a brand-new thread. If someone else has already begun a thread on a given topic, your post can contribute to that thread—**YOU DO NOT HAVE TO START A NEW THREAD**, and in fact, I do NOT want to see 8 new threads on a given topic. Again, this aligns with the idea of a discussion—if you are paying attention to a conversation, you wouldn't say exactly what the person before you said, you would add on to the The same is true of the discussion boards. Please read through all other related posts before posting responses—respond where appropriate or start an entirely new conversation. If you have something **new** to say, start a new thread.
2. **Each post should represent a single main point:** Each post should focus on a single main point, and NO post should respond to every prompt for the discussion forum. Think about each post as a paragraph, with one main point and several points that support the main point. Putting too many ideas into a single post is confusing for your classmates and for the conversation.

3. **Incorporate course material:** Your posts should incorporate course materials into the conversation--**this is your chance to demonstrate that you've explored the materials**, and to reflect on the degree to which you agree or disagree with the authors. When they make a claim, consider whether it is true, true for you, or true in every situation. Additionally, I appreciate that you use personal experiences to enhance the conversation, but make sure the connection between the example and the course material is clear. Clearly reference book material with page numbers reflecting the content you are responding to.
4. **Posts should forward the conversation:** Add to the conversation. What new idea can you present to get everyone thinking? What question could you ask?
5. **Proofread:** Please proofread your posts before submitting them. I expect that work will be carefully constructed and
6. **Meet deadlines:** Failing to meet deadlines will result in a failing grade for the discussion

Discussion Forum Rubric

	Poor	Adequate	Good	Excellent
	<i>0%</i>	<i>70%</i>	<i>85%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Quantity	1 or 0 posts	2 posts	3 posts	4 or more posts
Distribution	0 posts	Posts 1 day.	Posts 2 days throughout the module.	Posts 3 or more days throughout module.
Focused	0 posts	Posts are unfocused and unsupported.	Posts have more than 1 main point, or lack adequate support.	Each post has a single main point with supporting points.
Course Material Integration	No course material integrated.	Posts reference course material.	Posts reference course material,	Each post references course material, with references to

with references to source & pg #s. Material fully integrates the readings into the posts.

& pg #s.

Material not integrated.

Stimulation	Responds without advancing discussion.	Responds to ideas in a way that advances discussion minimally.	Responds to ideas in a way that advances discussion in predictable ways.	Responds to ideas in a way that advances discussion beyond the obvious, prompts further discussion.
--------------------	--	--	--	---

Your posts should:

1. Have a single main point, supported by
2. Integrate course material, with source identified and page #s given—they do not simply include the quote or idea but explain it and why it is relevant to their
3. Respond thoughtfully and try to advance the conversation.
4. Include personal stories that they tie directly to their argument and course material (any example or anecdote should be fully explained and connected to course material and the conversation).

Participation

Students are expected to participate in all online assignments and discussions.

Complete Assignments

All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Canvas, unless otherwise instructed. Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline, or special permission must be requested from instructor *before the due date*. Extensions will not be given beyond the next assignment except under extreme circumstances.

All discussion assignments must be completed by the assignment due date and time. Late or missing discussion assignments will affect your grade.

Late Work Policy

Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—there will be no make-up assignments, or late work accepted without a serious and compelling reason and instructor approval.

Letter Grades

Final grades assigned for this course will be based on the percentage of total points earned and are assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%
D	60-66%
F	0-59%

Course Policies

Netiquette Guidelines

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Your fellow students and I wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea, but you are not to attack an individual. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course community.

The following netiquette tips will enhance the learning experience for everyone in the course:

- Do not dominate any discussion.
- Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
- Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.

- Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- Popular emoticons such as ☺ can be helpful to convey your tone, but do not overdo or overuse them.
- Avoid using vernacular and/or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
- Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write.
- Share tips with other students.
- Keep an "open-mind" and be willing to express what might be a minority opinion. Minority opinions have to be respected.
- Think and edit before you push the "Send" button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- Using humor is acceptable.

Adapted from:

Mintu-Wimsatt, A., Kernek, C., & Lozada, H. R. (2010). *Netiquette: Make it part of your syllabus*. Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 6(1). Retrieved from http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no1/mintu-wimsatt_0310.htm (Links to an external site.)
 Shea, V. (1994). Netiquette. Albion.com. Retrieved from: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/book/> (Links to an external site.).

Build Rapport

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let me know, as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing me when difficulties arise during the semester, so that we can help you find a solution.

Understand When You May Drop This Course

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider unenrolling from a course. Refer to the UWSP [Academic Calendar](#) (Links to an external site.) for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons include: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student's family.

Incomplete Policy

Under emergency/special circumstances, students may petition for an incomplete grade. An incomplete will only be assigned if I have met with you and we mutually agree to the incomplete. All incomplete course assignments must be completed within the timeframe we determine.

Inform Me of Any Accommodations Needed

If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Disability and Assistive Technology Center](#) and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me, as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of

disability to Disability Services and meet with a Disability Services counselor to request special accommodation *before* classes start.

The Disability and Assistive Technology Center is located in 609 Albertson Hall and can be contacted by phone at (715) 346-3365 (Voice) (715) 346-3362 (TDD only) or via email at datctr@uwsp.edu

Statement of Policy

UW-Stevens Point will modify academic program requirements as necessary to ensure that they do not discriminate against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. The modifications should not affect the substance of educational programs or compromise academic standards; nor should they intrude upon academic freedom. Examinations or other procedures used for evaluating students' academic achievements may be adapted. The results of such evaluation must demonstrate the student's achievement in the academic activity, rather than describe his/her disability.

If modifications are required due to a disability, please inform me, and contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center in 609 ALB, or call (715) 346-3365.