

# English 2116-082

## Introduction to Technical Communication

Summer (First Half Term)—2021

Dr. Aaron A. Toscano Office: Fretwell 280F Office hours: variable via Zoom or Webex	Classroom: NONE Internet (100% online)* Time: You have deadlines but no class time
<a href="https://pages.uncc.edu/aaron-toscano/engl2116summer2021/">https://pages.uncc.edu/aaron-toscano/engl2116summer2021/</a>	

\*Online course delivered through a combination of class website and Canvas. Learn to use Canvas at <http://canvas.uncc.edu/>.

### Course Description

English 2116 is designed for advanced-writing students in engineering, natural sciences, computer sciences, business, communications, 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.

The COVID-19 pandemic has moved this course 100% online. Students will need to have access to Canvas to complete assignments for this class. Because we're not in a face-to-face environment, you'll need to read very carefully, and the exercises will reinforce the reading. Online environments are not ideal for learning because of the many distractions available to us. Do your best to work in a distraction-free environment. I strongly recommend you access the materials and do your work from a laptop or desktop and not a tablet or phone.

### Text and Materials

Required	Tebeaux, Elizabeth & Dragga, Sam. <i>The Essentials of Technical Communication</i> . 5 <sup>th</sup> edition preferred {9780197539200} Asimov, Isaac. <i>I, Robot</i> . {Any Edition—Will Smith doesn't have to be on the cover} Willingness To Learn
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### 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. The table below has a list of required assignments to complete 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 **Tuesday, June 29, 2021 on Canvas**. All of these assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade in the course. Just because the assignments have point values associated with them does not mean you will pass the course if your missing assignments do not drop you below 60%. Your final grade is out of 1,000 total points.

It might seem odd for an online, asynchronous class to have dates on the calendar portion of this syllabus and the class webpage (<https://pages.uncc.edu/aaron-toscano/engl2116summer2021/>), but I've organized the class this way to help keep you on top of what you need to do. You may be able to devote your entire Monday to all the week's material, and that's fine. I have the course separated into days so that it's easier to manage than if I just lumped everything together. Please go to both Canvas and the course webpage—yes, they are two separate entities—for important class assignments and activities.

## Assignments/Grade Distribution

Portfolio Assignments (300 points)—Grade comes at end of term			
Cover Letter			
Resume			
Set of Instructions			
Portfolio Reflection			
Other Assignments (300 points)		Project (100 points)	
Prose Revisions	100	Proposal	
I, Robot Essay	100	Annotated Bibliography	
Technology Journal	50	Visual(s)	
Ethical Dilemmas	50		
		Total	100
Total	350		
Exams/Quizzes (200 points)		Everything Else (100 points)	
Midterm	100	Weekly Discussion Posts	50
Final	100	Presentation	50
Total	200	Total	100

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

## Portfolios, Journals, and Exams

Students must revise the three portfolio assignments (Cover Letter, Resume, and Set of Instructions), 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). I will make comments on drafts in Canvas, and those comments should guide your revision. Unlike in a face-to-face class, you will not have a physical portfolio to turn in. Although the first two assignments are short (1-2 pages), please note that you will have a final reflection that will give context to the decisions you made in your writing process. Every week students should write a 250-word response to the journal discussion prompts. These prompts will be located on [Canvas](#). They are due by Thursday at 11:00 pm of the week they're assigned. 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, and both exams will be on Canvas.

## 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 2000-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 meeting 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 3% less. Therefore, if you turn in a portfolio assignment draft a day late, your final grade begins at 97%. You are responsible for making up all work missed. Something I have learned from past semesters is that if you do not 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.

## Participation

Participation is a much bigger component of face-to-face classes. Your Technology Journal and Weekly Discussion Posts are how you'll participate through the discussion forum on Canvas. 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.

## Academic Integrity

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte is an academic community dedicated to teaching, scholarship, service, inclusion, and the holistic development of Students. Academic integrity is a cornerstone value of the University's intellectual community. It is important to nurture an atmosphere of honesty, fairness, trust, respect, and **mutual responsibility. Integrity is essential because it ensures that Students fairly benefit from their educational experience and pursuits of knowledge.** Violating the principles of academic integrity damages the reputation of the University and undermines its educational mission and goals.

The University recognizes that Academic Misconduct detracts from the value of a UNC Charlotte degree and has influence beyond the University community, including relationships with employers, other educational institutions, the business community, the UNC system, and the community at large.

The purpose of the Code is to:

1. support and promote an ethical learning environment;
2. create consistent standards for all members of the academic community;
3. **assist Students in learning responsibility for one's own academic work;**
4. protect the academic environment of the University community; and
5. **clarify Student values and how they relate to the behavior in question.**

Definitions of Academic Dishonesty (From University Policy: 407, Ch. 6—<https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407#c6>)

- A. **Cheating** means using or attempting to use materials, or giving assistance or materials without Authorization to another in any academic exercise that could result in gaining or helping another to gain academic advantage.
- B. **Fabrication** means providing fabricated information, including inventing or counterfeiting information, in any form in an academic exercise.
- C. **Falsification** means altering without Authorization any data or information, regardless of communication method (e.g., e-mail or other electronic communication), in an academic exercise.
- D. **Misuse of Academic Materials** means sharing, distributing, altering, acquiring, damaging, or making inaccessible academic materials without Authorization, that could result in gaining or helping another to gain an academic advantage.
- E. **Multiple Submission** means submitting academic work or substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) in more than one academic exercise without Authorization.
- F. **Plagiarism** means presenting the words or ideas of another as one's own words or ideas, including failing to properly acknowledge a source, unless the ideas or information are common knowledge. Plagiarism includes self-plagiarism, which is the use of one's own previous work in another context without indicating that it was used previously.
- G. **Unauthorized Collaboration** means sharing the work or effort in an academic exercise with another Student or Students without Authorization.
- H. **Research Misconduct** means a determination that Research Misconduct has occurred under [University Policy 309, Responding to Allegations of Misconduct in Research and Scholarship](#) and its [Supplemental Procedures](#). (See Chapter 3, Section III of the Code.)

**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. If you use non-sanctioned resources (e.g., other classmates) to complete tests and exams, you will receive an 'F' in this course.**

You will also receive an 'F' in the course for other academic integrity violations. 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, or complicity in academic dishonesty. Again, so there's no confusion, you will most likely fail the course if you violate any part of the academic integrity code.

## **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 the Office of Disabilities Services (<http://ds.uncc.edu/>) to identify, discuss, and document any feasible instructional modifications or accommodations.

## **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.

## **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	
May 24	Introduction to the course Get on Canvas and check out our Class website: <a href="https://pages.uncc.edu/aaron-toscano/engl2116summer2021/">https://pages.uncc.edu/aaron-toscano/engl2116summer2021/</a>
May 25*	Asimov, Isaac. "Cult of Ignorance" (1980) on Canvas Introducing critical technological awareness
May 26	Ch. 1 and 2 in Tebeaux and Dragga
May 27	Ch. 12 in Tebeaux and Dragga Résumé reading on Canvas
*May 25 <sup>th</sup> : Last Day to Add or Drop a Class with no grade by 11:59 PM	
WEEK 2	
May 31	<b>Memorial Day—No class</b>
June 1 <b>**DUE**</b>	Ch. 4 and 7 in Tebeaux and Dragga Lessons on Plain Language <b>Résumés and Cover Letters DUE</b>
June 2	More Lessons on Plain Language and Prose revision
June 3	Review Prose Revisions and catch up on work ...consider starting to read <i>I, Robot</i> ...your essay is due in two weeks!
WEEK 3	
June 7 <b>**DUE**</b>	Ch. 5 and 10 in Tebeaux and Dragga <b>Prose Revisions Due</b>
June 8	Final Project and Research Discussion Ch. 8 in Tebeaux and Dragga
June 9 <b>**DUE**</b>	<b>Set of Instructions DUE</b> Technology in a social context discussion (reading online) Midterm Preview
June 10 EXAM	Midterm Exam—on Canvas (open 8:00 am-11:00pm; 1 hour 15 minutes to complete) ...Be reading <i>I, Robot</i>
WEEK 4	
June 14*	Midterm Review and <i>I, Robot</i> essay topics Ch. 6 in Tebeaux and Dragga
June 15	Ch. 9 in Tebeaux and Dragga
June 16	<i>I, Robot</i> Discussion
June 17	<b><i>I, Robot</i> essay DUE</b>

**DUE**	More <i>I, Robot</i> and Science Fiction in a Technical Communication context Discussion
*June 14 <sup>th</sup> : Last day to withdraw from course; grade subject to Withdrawal Policy: <a href="#">Policy Information</a>	
<b>WEEK 5</b>	
June 21 *DUE**	<b>Proposal, Visual, and Annotated Bibliography DUE</b> Ethics and Perspectives discussion Ch. 3 in Tebeaux and Dragga; Huff, Darrel. "How to Lie with Statistics" on <a href="#">Canvas</a>
June 22 **DUE**	More on ethics in writing and professional contexts <b>Ethical Dilemmas DUE</b>
June 23	Ch. 11 in Tebeaux and Dragga
June 24 **DUE**	Presentation discussion <b>Portfolios DUE</b>
<b>WEEK 6</b>	
June 28	Presentations—Via Zoom or submitted video on <a href="#">Canvas</a>
June 29	Final Exam—on Canvas (open 8:00 am-11:00pm; 2 hour 30 minutes to complete)