

**ENGL 231C: Introduction to Technical Writing- 22156**  
**Spring 2020**

“Good writing is clear thinking made visible.”

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**Texts & Materials:**

- [\*Writing in the Sciences: Exploring Connections of Scientific Discourse\*](#), 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, Penrose and Katz (Pearson, 2010), ISBN: 0-205-61671-2
- ODU MIDAS account and reliable daily Internet access
- An electronic method of pulling up saved work in class (USB drive, Google Drive, etc.)
- Paper and pens/pencils for writing **each day**
- Access to a black and white printer well-supplied with ink for the duration of the semester

**Course Description:**

Introduction to Technical Writing. 3 Credits. This course emphasizes critical reading, thinking, and writing as they apply to the technical and scientific disciplines. Students are introduced to principles of analysis and argumentation and taught the requisite skills that will allow them properly to paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize research as it applies to and is most commonly found in the technical and scientific communities. The course culminates in the preparation of a fully-documented research paper. A student with credit for ENGL 131C cannot receive credit for ENGL 231C. Prerequisites: ENGL 110C.

**Written Communication Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):**

In accordance with the WPA Outcomes statement, students successfully completing English 231C with a grade of C or above will:

**Develop rhetorical knowledge by:**

- Analyzing and drafting a variety of compositions or genres shaped by readers' and writers' practices,
- Transitioning between situations and contexts by adjusting structure, content, diction, and tone,
- Matching the capacities of different technologies to a range of audiences and rhetorical situations,
- Understanding that rhetorical situations differ across communities and disciplines.

**Develop critical thinking, reading, and information literacy skills by:**

- Using writing as a tool for critical thinking and reflection,
- Reading and writing several genres that utilize analysis, reflection, narrative, critique, and argument skills,
- Locating primary and secondary research materials among library resources and evaluating them for credibility, sufficiency, accuracy, timeliness, and bias,
- Using strategies to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources,
- Understanding that thinking, reading, and literacy skills differ across communities and disciplines.

**Develop multiple strategies, or composing processes, to draft texts by:**

- Working through multiple drafts of a writing project and reflecting on composing practices,
- Exploring strategies for the writing process and adapting them for a variety of technologies and modalities,
- Learning to give and to act on productive feedback to works in progress,
- Understanding that composing strategies and processes differ across communities and disciplines.

**Develop knowledge of conventions by:**

- Refining the understanding of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling,

- Practicing genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, and mechanics,
- Demonstrating a clear understanding of intellectual property rights and applying citation styles systematically, according to disciplinary conventions,
- Understanding that conventions differ across communities and disciplines.

### **Assignments:**

**Readings:** You may be assigned reading both in your textbook and in other forms. Selections will be provided electronically on Blackboard. Readings should be done *before* the class period under which they appear on the schedule. Be prepared to contribute to class discussions, freewriting, and small group activities that address the readings.

**Informal writing:** Informal writing (meaning it doesn't require drafting and revision) will occur in the form of in-class freewriting, reading and video responses, reviews, Blackboard journals, in-class projects, etc. This will be done in and out of class, and will be your only chance for extra credit.

**Quizzes:** May be added at any time, especially if lack of participation, reading, or class preparation becomes apparent.

### **Formal Papers:**

At least three formal papers (writing that results from invention, drafting, response, revision, and editing) emphasizing argumentative, analytical, and critical skills (totaling a minimum of 2,200 words) are required.

**Rough drafts of all formal papers, including the Research Paper, are due as hard copies for group members for peer review.** One assignment in this category may be collaborative and/or multimodal, if instructor chooses.

**Paper #1: Narrative Essay** (Over 500 words): You will compose an organized essay about yourself and your own intellectual passions and interests. What about your chosen field of study excites you? What scientific or technological issues, questions, and problems within your field most interest you? Most importantly, how do you think your fascination with these issues will guide the course of your life and career?

**Paper #2: Dual Audience Technical Description** (Over 600 words)

**Paper #3: Annotated Bibliography** (Over 1100 words)

**Research Paper** (a minimum of 2000 words): This is a formal paper (that results from invention, drafting, response, revision, and editing) like the papers above, but the Research Paper is more significant and you should consider it your primary, overarching project of this course. Students will strengthen their analytical, critical, and research skills by preparing a fully-documented research paper. They may select their own topics as part of the research process, use a variety of investigative techniques, and survey a wide range of resources inside and outside the library (lectures, films, documentaries, police reports, interviews). Through careful analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information, students formulate adequate theses, moving beyond the scope of reporting information to composing papers that express their reasoned judgments on their topics.

### **Final Exam - ePortfolio and Reflective Essay:**

Students **MUST** electronically save ALL written work **including ALL drafts** throughout the year. At the end of the semester, students will submit *representative writing that demonstrates all written communication learning outcomes for ENGL 2\*\*C*: at minimum, your formal papers and a reflective essay. These artifacts will be submitted along with a Reflective Essay, which altogether constitutes the student's writing portfolio.

### **Conferences:**

Twice during the semester, you are required to have a conference with me during scheduled days (TBA--see schedule). This is a good time to ask any questions or address any concerns that you have about your progress in the class. Missing a scheduled conference meeting constitutes an absence. Though you may choose to reschedule the meeting, you will not be able to redeem credit or attendance points.

**Evaluation:** *\*May change if assignments are added/changed; you will be notified of any changes*

Assignment	Points
Attendance & Participation - includes in-class work, freewriting, in-class projects, completing readings, homework, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Points will be deducted for lack of participation, disrespect, <b>cell phone/laptop usage</b>, etc.</li> <li>5 points will be deducted <b>each</b> time you are late--if it becomes a pattern, it will severely affect your grade</li> <li>Department policy: once you miss two weeks' worth of class, or <b>four absences for this course</b>, you <b>automatically earn a failing grade for the course</b>; I keep track of attendance and will do my best to notify you when you are close, but you should keep up with your own absences to know when you are nearing four</li> </ul>	10%
Quizzes- announced at least one class in advance. Quizzes cannot be made up; missed quizzes will result in a zero. Quizzes can be taken ahead of time, or with the class, but not afterward.	10%
Three Formal Papers	30%
Research Paper	15%
Group presentation	5%
Final Exam (ePortfolio Submittal, including End-of-year Reflection Essay)	30%

#### **Grading Scale:**

Your letter grade is determined by the percentage calculated from your points earned out of the total points available (see above point breakdown). You can calculate a rough estimation of your grade as it stands at anytime. **Note that a C is the lowest passing grade for this class.**

A = 100-94%; A- = 93-90%; B+ = 89-87%; B = 86-83%; B- = 82-80%; C+ = 79-77%, C = 76-73%; C- = 72-70%; F = 69% or below

#### **Schedule**

##### Unit 1: Introductions & Formal Paper #1

##### **Week 1: January 13/15/17**

Introductions to the course and each other, Read Chapter 1, pp. 1-16. CW assignment from chapter 1

##### **Week 2: January 22/24 (No class on Jan. 20)**

Discuss persuasive nature of science, Chapter 1. Introduce first formal paper; Crash review of 110C topics; How-to paper format; Discuss peer reviews

**Jan. 21- Last day to withdraw without penalty**

##### **Week 3: January 27/29/31**

IMRAD Form, Read Chapter 2, Ethics in Science. Peer review and revision on Jan. 31.

**Jan. 28- Last day to withdraw with 1/2 tuition refund**

Unit 2: Formal Paper #2 & Audience

**Week 4: February 3/5/7.**

Essay due on Feb. 3.

Codeswitching, writing for a specific audience.

**Week 5: February 10/12/14**

Read Raff's "Guide to Reading Scientific Articles."

Read scientific article from textbook

CW: Applying Raff's work to respective article.

**Week 6: February 17/19/21**

Working toward second formal paper. Peer review of second essay on Feb. 21.

Unit 3: Research

**Week 7: February 24/26/28**

Second essay due Feb. 24

Research analysis, collaboration

Data collection in research

Chapter 4

**Week 8: March 2/4/6**

Research techniques, source credibility

Chapter 5

**Week 9: March 9-14: Spring Break**

**Week 10: March 16/18/20**

Avoiding plagiarism through APA citation

Paraphrasing vs. summarizing

Conference signup

**Week 11: March 23/25/27**

Conferences

**Week 12: March 30/April 1/3**

Work on Annotated Bibliography assignment, due March 31

Research proposal for group/individual project

**March 31: Withdraw deadline**

**Week 13: April 6/8/10**

Group work on research projects

Thesis, editing, paragraphs

**Week 14: April 13/15/17**

Group presentations

Work on individual projects

**Week 15: April 20/22**

Work on projects, peer review on April 22

**April 24/27/29**

Conferences for research papers

**Exam: May 1, 8:30-11:30 a.m.**

Students will drop off essays and final research projects, and complete reflective essay

## **Policies and Procedures:**

**Mandatory Attendance Policy:** A great deal of 231C is given to activities requiring student interaction (discussion, peer review, conferences). Missing class meetings and conferences will negatively affect the quality of the work students produce. Students are allowed three absences without penalty; after that, absences will begin to affect students' attendance/participation grades (see Evaluation). Per department policy, **students who are absent for more two weeks of class time (4 classes for TR sections), will receive an F for the course.** Reasonable provisions may be made if the student provides documented representation at University sponsored athletic or academic functions, mandatory military training, and documented illness to me **before or immediately after their absence.** If a student has an extended absence for any reason, they must go through the Student Outreach Services in order to get these absences excused ([odu.edu/life/support/student-outreach](http://odu.edu/life/support/student-outreach)).

**Participation:** To successfully participate, you should attentively listen to both myself and your classmates, take notes on all written and verbally presented course material, actively take part in group activities, and write for the full time given for freewriting exercises.

**Late Work:** Only formal papers and the research paper are accepted late. Late work will not be accepted more than **one class** past the deadline and each day past the deadline will result in a **10 point drop** in the assignment's final grade. The final exam may **not** be turned in late.

**Cell phones, Laptops, Etc.:** No cell phones. Your cell phone should be on silent and stowed in your bag during class. Laptops are permitted only for note-taking and in-class writing assignments. Cell phone usage will result in a lowered attendance grade and you may be asked to leave class (which will count as an absence, even forty minutes into class).

**Plagiarism:** Writers who use the words or ideas of others are obligated to give credit through proper acknowledgment and documentation. Failure to give credit is plagiarism, a violation of the ODU Honor Code that almost certainly will lead to failing the course and could lead to expulsion from ODU. If the quality of your in-class and out-of class writing varies dramatically, the instructor has the right to ask you to write under supervision. If you have questions about how and when to acknowledge sources, please refer to your textbooks or see the instructor for advice.

What is plagiarism? The ODU Catalog defines plagiarism as follows: "A student will have committed plagiarism if he or she reproduces someone else's work without acknowledging its source; or if a source is cited which the student has not cited or used. Examples of plagiarism include: submitting a research paper obtained from a commercial research service, the Internet, or from another student as if it were original work; making simple changes to borrowed materials while leaving the organization, content, or phraseology intact; or copying material from a source, supplying proper documentation, but leaving out quotation marks. Plagiarism also occurs in a group project if one or more of the members of the group does none of the group's work and participates in none of the group's activities, but attempts to take credit for the work of the group."

**Statement on Educational Accessibility for Students with Disabilities:** Old Dominion University is committed to ensuring equal access to all qualified students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Office of Educational Accessibility (OEA) is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

The Office of Educational Accessibility is located at 1021 Student Success Center and their phone number is (757)683-4655. Additional information is available at the OEA website:

<http://www.odu.edu/educationalaccessibility/>

**Writing Sample Placement Test (WSPT):** ALL students are required to successfully complete the WSPT before being admitted to English 110C. Instructors should explain to students that if they have not taken and passed the WSPT, they will be administratively dropped from English 110C and will not receive credit for the course. Students may contact the Student Success Center at: 757-683-3699 to register.

**The Writing Center:** The Old Dominion University Writing Center (WC) offers free appointments and walk-in writing consultations to all currently-enrolled students on campus. Students may seek help with their writing projects for a variety of courses and meet with a consultant to discuss anything from brainstorming to learning how to proofread their own work.

The WC offers supplemental instruction to help students improve their writing strategies. We offer writing consulting sessions that assist students in learning to proofread their own work, in getting projects started, and in developing the writing process for a paper.

Appointments are approximately 45-minutes (shorter for walk-ins after 20 minutes past the top of the hour). WC graduate student consultants work with individual students or groups. Most tutoring sessions are by appointment; walk-in appointments are provided when tutors are not in a scheduled session. For distance students, we use WOnline.

The WC is located in the library, room 1208, and is open Monday through Friday. To make an appointment call 757.683.4013 during open hours or book an appointment online at [odu.mywconline.com](http://odu.mywconline.com).

**Library Instruction:** Subject specialist librarians are available to meet with classes for instruction in the effective use of information resources. Instructors wishing to arrange instruction for their writing and research courses should complete the request form at: <http://www.odu.edu/library/help>, giving a minimum of 2 weeks' notice. Call Megan Smith at 757-683-4182 for further information. Reference librarians welcome the opportunity to work with faculty on integrating information literacy into their courses.