

W.Booth School of Engineering Practice
&Technology

GENTECH 1PC3

Professional Communications

Fall 2023



ENGINEERING

Course Dates: 09/05/2023 - 12/06/2023

Units: 3.00

Course Delivery Mode: In Person

Course Description: Students will develop their written and oral communications skills with an emphasis on styles appropriate for a technology-based workplace including technical report writing. They will also develop their teamwork, problem solving, and research skills. Two lectures; one tutorial (two hours): first term Prerequisite(s): Registration in Automation Systems Engineering Technology, Automotive and Vehicle Engineering Technology, or Biotechnology Antirequisite(s): GENTECH 1CS3, 1CZ3, 3TC3, 4TC3, SFGNTECH 4TC3

Instructor-Specific Course Information

This course includes graded in-class activities. Participation during lectures will be facilitated using a platform called Top Hat (worth 10% of the final course grade). Students require a phone, tablet, or laptop computer to participate in this component of the course - *please come to the Lecture with an appropriate device*. Some assignments will be completed during tutorials worth varying amounts of the final course grade (see the Course Evaluation section of this document for a breakdown). ***Students are strongly encouraged to attend all lectures and tutorials.*** **STUDENTS MUST ATTEND THEIR ASSIGNED TUTORIAL SECTION.**

This course does ***not*** have a midterm exam or term tests, ***BUT*** there is a **Final Exam worth 35%** of the final course grade.

There is no required text for this course.

Generative AI forms an integral part of this course (in a controlled manner). Students should familiarize themselves with one of the common (free) Generative AI platforms. Students should pay particular attention to the minimum age requirement for some platforms - *options are available for students under 18 years of age*. Students should also pay particular attention to the statement on Academic Dishonesty described in this document.

Meeting Details

Students are encouraged to take notes during lectures. A PDF version of the presentation slides will be provided each Monday morning prior to the Lecture. Students may choose to *annotate* this pdf document as a means of taking notes.

When applicable, course deliverables for each week and their associated rubrics will also be provided each Monday morning.

Laptops or tablets are recommended for the tutorials since some activities will require their use.

Important Links

- [Mosaic](#)
- [Avenue to Learn](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services - Accommodations](#)
- [McMaster University Library](#)
- [eReserves](#)

Course Learning Outcomes

For accreditation reasons, these learning outcome statements must be tied back to CEAB graduate attributes (GAs), including those that are measured in this course. If you are unsure how to do this, please contact the Associate Chair Undergraduate in your department.

- Develop business and technical writing skills through various exercises and assignments, leveraging the use of Generative AI where appropriate
- Judge the credibility of various sources of information (for research, etc.) and apply appropriate styles of referencing and citation using automated tools where appropriate
- Deliver an individual oral presentation with confidence and with effective and appropriate visual aids
- Discover their personality type (and the personalities of others) and leverage this knowledge to improve their interpersonal skills
- Apply the McMaster Six-Step Problem Solving framework to solving problems both individually and in a group setting
- Improve their group performance through deliberate management of both the group's "task" and "morale" - discover the advantages of working as a group using a case exercise
- Experience the challenges of group decision making through a case study - creating an awareness of 'groupthink', and appreciating the importance of some engineering decisions
- Apply the correct style and structure to the creation of a formal engineering report both individually and as part of a group

Required Materials and Texts

Textbook Listing: <https://textbooks.mcmaster.ca>

There is no required textbook for this course.

Class Format

In Person

Course Evaluation

Activity	Grade	Due
Assignment 1		
1.1 Impromptu Writing	2.5%	In week 1 tutorial
1.2 Use AI and writing tools	5.0%	Before week 3 tutorial
Assignment 2		
2.1 Submit a structure & proposal	2.5%	Before week 4 tutorial
2.2 Produce a methodology	2.5%	Before week 5 tutorial
2.3 Write report (individual)	10.0%	Before week 6 tutorial
2.4 Presentation (individual in-person)	7.5%	In week 7 & 8 tutorial
Assignment 3		
3.1 Upload the True Color PDF	2.5%	Before week 9 tutorial
3.2 Self reflection (True Colours)	5.0%	Before week 10 tutorial
Assignment 4		
4.1 Group presentation (recording)	7.5%	December 6th deadline
4.2 Group report	10.0%	December 6th deadline
In Class Participation		
Weekly (12) Top Hat counting top 10 1% each	10.0%	During lectures
Subtotal	65.0%	
FINAL EXAM	35.0%	
TOTAL	100%	

Grading Scale

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	0-49

Course Schedule

Date	Week	Lecture Topic	Tutorial Topic
11-Sep	1	General Course Intro, Writing like a 'professional'	1 hour: Introductions and personal writing activity 1 hour: First half of assignment 1
18-Sep	2	Guest Speaker Panel on workplace norms, conduct, and communications	1 hour: Credible sources, references & academic integrity 1 hour: Activity, Citations, word, Mendely scavenger hunt
25-Sep	3	Technical writing & personal branding	1 hour: Overview of types and purposes of documents/reports 1 hour: Activity, Identify errors in written documents/emails/files
02-Oct	4	AI & technical writing	1 hour: Intro AI and understanding the different types 1 hour: Activity, Seeing AI's potential with prompts (groups)
Reading Week			
16-Oct	5	AI & research	1 hour: Using AI for Research 1 hour: Assignment 2.3 Working Period (Report)
23-Oct	6	Listening & speaking	2 hour: Power point karaoke, Confidence and audience
30-Oct	7	Technical presentations & powerpoint	2 hour: Assignment 2 Presentations
06-Nov	8	Problem solving / Group problem	2 hour: Assignment 2 Presentations
13-Nov	9	Interpersonal skills	2 hour: True Colors Workshop (Online Assessment to be completed before tutorial)
20-Nov	10	Working in groups / 6-Step Problem Solving	2 hour: Group meetings and decisions / Group Formation / Group Problem Solving Exercises
27-Nov	11	Working in groups	2 hour: Group meetings and decisions / Group Decision Making Workshop
04-Dec	12	Review for final exam	No tutorial

Late Assignments

Late Assignments will incur a penalty of **10% per day, to a maximum of 30% (for 3 days)**. **After 3-days the submission will not be accepted and a grade of zero will be given.**

NOTE: If an assignment is due at 11:59 PM and you submit at 12:00 AM (i.e. - a minute late), this will counts as 1-day late! Please plan accordingly.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work. A link is provided near the end of this document.

Turnitin.com

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Generative AI: Some Use Permitted

Students may use generative AI for editing/translating/outlining/brainstorming/revising/etc. their work throughout the course so long as the use of generative AI is **referenced and cited following citation instructions given in the course lectures and tutorials**. Use of generative AI outside the stated use of editing/translating/outlining/brainstorming/revising/etc. without citation will constitute academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to be clear on the limitations for use and to be clear on the expectations for citation and reference and to do so appropriately.

APPROVED ADVISORY STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and

academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-proceduresguidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-proceduresguidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity / Plagiarism

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. Avenue to Learn, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

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Courses with an On-line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn, LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Academic Advising

For any academic inquires please reach out to the Office of the Associate Dean (Academic) in Engineering located in JHE-Hatch 301.

Details on academic supports and contact information are available from:

<https://www.eng.mcmaster.ca/programs/academic-advising>

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the [Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](#).

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous, or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office ***normally within 10 working days*** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.