

Course Outline

1. COURSE INFORMATION

Session Offered	Fall 2019	
Course Name	Technical Communication: Concepts and Practices	
Course Code	GENTECH 1CS3	
Date(s) and Time(s) of lectures	C01: Mondays 9:30 - 11:20am (BSB 106); Fridays 11:30am - 12:20pm (online) C02: Mondays 12:30 – 2:20pm (PC155); Thursdays 11:30am - 12:20pm (online) C03: Mondays 2:30pm - 4:20pm (BSB 106); Fridays 3:30 pm - 4:20pm (online)	
Program Name	One of the following: Automotive and Vehicle Engineering Technology/ Biotechnology/ Automation Engineering Technology	
Calendar Description	The purpose of this course is to provide students with the foundations of sound technical communication skills, with an emphasis on applying principles of style, structure, and strategy to a variety of documents	
Instructor(s)	Dr. Michael D. Lutz lutzmd@mcmaster.ca	Office hour: Thursdays 1 - 2pm; Fridays 12:30 - 1:30pm ETB 226
	Dr. Zobia Jawed jawedz@mcmaster.ca	Office hour: Monday 1:30 to 2:30 PM

2. COURSE SPECIFICS

Course Description	Communication skills are critical to a successful career in engineering and technology. This course introduces students to the unique and varied communication challenges of their profession. Through a combination of lectures, readings, active learning activities and assignments, students are exposed to the types of communication they will engage in as professionals and are given the opportunity to develop their oral and written communication skills, as well as their analytical and teamwork skills. Throughout this course, students will study and apply oral and written communication principles specific to modern technical workplaces and environments.		
Instruction Type	Code	Type	Hours per term
	C	Classroom instruction	26
	L	Laboratory, workshop or fieldwork	
	T	Tutorial	
	DE	Distance education (Online)	13
	Total Hours		39
Resources	ISBN	Textbook Title & Edition	Author & Publisher
	ISBN: 978-0-13-431083-1	Technical Communication, Seventh Canadian Ed.	Lannon, Klepp and Kelly (Pearson Canada)
	Other Supplies	Source	
	PowerPoint slides and supporting material	All material will be provided via electronic files on the course A2L site	
Prerequisite(s)	Registration in B.Tech. I		
Corequisite(s)	None		

Antirequisite(s)	None
Departmental Policies	<p>Students must maintain a GPA of 3.5/12 to continue in the program.</p> <p>In order to achieve the required learning objectives, on average, B.Tech. students can expect to do at least 3 hours of “out-of-class” work for every scheduled hour in class. “Out-of-class” work includes reading, research, assignments and preparation for tests and examinations.</p> <p>Where group work is indicated in the course outline, such collaborative work is mandatory.</p> <p>The use of cell phones, iPods, laptops and other personal electronic devices are prohibited from the classroom during the class time, unless the instructor makes an explicit exception.</p> <p>Announcements made in class or placed on Avenue are considered to have been communicated to all students including those individuals that are not in class.</p> <p>Instructor has the right to submit work to software to identify plagiarism.</p>
Course Specific Policies	<p>1. Course Organization (2 + 1) This course follows a blended learning format. Students are expected to attend both the 2-hour lecture period in class and, a 1-hour online session each week. The timing of the in-class and online hour will be the same every week.</p> <p>2. Weekly Readings: Students are expected to complete assigned textbook readings before class. Students will be quizzed at the beginning of class on each week’s readings. Keeping up with readings and attending class are vital components of student success. Lectures will cover the assigned materials but not exhaustively; students are responsible for all assigned textbook readings, regardless of depth of coverage offered in class.</p> <p>3. Avenue to Learn: Instructors will post on Avenue to Learn, insofar as feasible, lecture notes and classroom materials; however, some materials presented in the classroom cannot be made available electronically for your “home use.” This course will be using a range of software. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, 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 this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor. Instructors will also use other software: McMaster e-mail and Avenue to Learn.</p> <p>4. Final Exam <u>Students must take the final exam to pass the course.</u> The final exam consists of two sections: 1) Multiple choice questions of cumulative course content; and 2) Written responses based on lecture content and readings. No aids are allowed.</p> <p>5. Labs There are 5 lab assignments of which students must complete a total of 4. The first online lab submission, the writing diagnostic, is mandatory to complete.</p>

Students then have a choice of 4 other labs in which to complete 3 labs for grades.

6. Submitting work from other courses

All assignments submitted for grading must be new work. Assignments containing work completed in other courses (previous or concurrent) will not be accepted.

7. Turnitin

This course will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to identify cases of plagiarism. Please see Turnitin Policy under Section 6: Policies. If a student wishes to opt out of Turnitin, then he/she must notify the instructor by the third week of classes, so that alternate arrangements may be made.

Corrupt Files: Any files uploaded to Turnitin or Avenue that the instructor cannot open will be treated as late, regardless of when the instructor attempts to open the file. Make sure your files are not corrupt and are in a file format approved by the instructor. A2L does not accept Pages documents from Mac Computers – please submit work as a PDF if using a Mac Computer.

8. Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the date scheduled, unless they are scheduled as in-class assignments. Late assignments will receive a penalty of 5% for each day that the assignment is late, up to a maximum of 25%. Assignments that are more than 5 days late will not be accepted.

9. Extra Credit

Extra credit assignments are NOT offered in this course. No exceptions made. If there is an extra credit assignment opportunity, it will be the instructor's initiative and it will be given to ALL students in the class.

10. Use of Electronic Equipment in Class

Use of ANY electronic equipment in class, including but not limited to, personal computers, mobile phones, pagers, calculators, e-readers, digital voice recorders, audiovisual devices (such as cameras and video cameras), electronic translators, and medical devices require prior instructor approval. Such requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The use of mobile phones in class is strictly prohibited. Mobile phones should be either turned off or be put on silent mode, while at all times they should remain out of public site. Students who use their computers outside the scope of class will be reported to the appropriate University authorities.

11. Communicating with your instructor

Please feel free to contact your instructor with questions and/or issues. You may talk to your professor in person during her/his office hours, or arrange an appointment by email. You may also address issues through email. Please use your Avenue email and/or identify your section when sending email inquiries. The instructors will make every effort to respond to email inquiries within 48 hours. Email inquiries sent through your personal email will not be accepted.

12. Weekly In-Class Quizzes

There are weekly in-class quizzes during the two hour lecture portion of the

	<p>course. These quizzes are largely (but not wholly) based on the content from the textbook. These quizzes serve two functions: (1) to ensure students keep up with the readings; (2) to demonstrate individual knowledge of the material.</p> <p>Students must take these quizzes while in class. This requires students to use their laptop or mobile phone to complete these quizzes. If a student does not have access to such resources, please speak with the instructor. If students miss a quiz, they are required to submit an MSAF to have a chance to write it again.</p>		
3. SUB TOPIC(S)	Topic	Reading	Task or Assessment Due
Week 1 September 3	<p>In-class: Introduction to Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • What is Technical Communication? <p>Online Lab: Introduction to Course</p>	Syllabus	This column needs work
Week 2 Sept 9	<p>In-class: Intro to Technical Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Model • Who is your audience? <p>Online Lab: Individual Writing Assessment</p>	Textbook, Chapters 1 & 2	<p><i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Chapters 1 & 2</p> <p>Mandatory Online lab submission: Individual Writing Assessment</p>
Week 3 Sept 16	<p>Organizing & Designing Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlining and sequencing • Page design for the workplace <p>Online Lab: MS Office Suite Workshop I: MS Word</p> <p>Individual Writing Assessment follow-up meetings.</p>	Textbook, Chapter 11	<p><i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Chapter 11</p> <p>Online lab submission: Microsoft Word Lab</p>
Week 4 Sept 23	<p>Everyday Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Action Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workplace communication: Emails Memos, Letters <p>Online Lab: Direct Writing Style</p>	Textbook, Chapter 22	<i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Chapter 22
Week 5 Sept 30	<p>Delivering Bad News</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffer statements • Indirect writing <p>Online Lab: Indirect Writing Style</p>	Avenue to Learn, Chapter	<p><i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Reading from A2L (Meyer)</p> <p>Assignment # 2: Due: one week after day assigned (10%)</p>

Week 6 Oct 7	Visual Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral presentations Presentation progression Online Lab: MS Office Suite Workshop II: MS Power Point	Textbook, Chapter 24	<i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Chapter 24 <i>Online lab submission:</i> Microsoft Power Point Lab
Oct 14 - 20	Midterm Recess: NO CLASSES		
Week 7 Oct 21	Applications: Descriptive Writing - Process Analyses, Instructions & Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do these forms of descriptive writing differ from one another? Online Lab: Writing Instructions	Textbook, Chapters 16	<i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Chapters 16 <i>Online lab submission:</i> Writing Instruction Set
Week 8 Oct 28	Applications: Proposals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Proposal Process Proposal Templates Responding to RFPs Online Lab: Recording MS Power Point Presentations	Textbook, Chapter 18	<i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Chapter 18 Assignment #3: Due: one week after day assigned (10%)
Week 9 Nov 4	Applications: Short Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A structure for all purposes Short Reports for Everyday Communication Online Lab: Responding to RFPs & Case scenarios for short reports	Textbook, Chapter 21	<i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Chapter 21
Week 10 Nov 11	Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback Online Lab: Giving and receiving constructive feedback scenarios	<i>Assignment 5:</i> <i>Peer Feedback Instructions</i>	Assignment #4: Due: one week after day assigned (10%)
Week 11 Nov 18	Collaboration & Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborating at work: operating in groups Collaborative writing Online Lab: MS Office Suite Workshop III: MS Excel	Textbook, Chapter 4	<i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Chapter 4 <i>Online lab submission:</i> Microsoft Excel Lab
Week 12 Nov 25	Contemporary Workplace Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional uses of social media – personal branding 	Textbook, Chapter 25	<i>In-Class Quiz:</i> Chapter 25 Assignment #5:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designing webpages Online Lab: Critiquing Webpages		Due: one week after day assigned (10%)
Week 13 Dec 2	Exam Review	no readings/quizzes	
Classes end: Wednesday, December 4, 2019 Final examination period: Friday, December 6 to Thursday, December 19, 2019 All examinations MUST be written during the scheduled examination period.			
Note that this structure represents a plan and is subject to adjustment term by term. The instructor and the University reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The University may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes.			
4. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING		Weight	Date
In-Class Quizzes (10) & Participation (These occur in class during lecture hours)		15%	Weeks 2 – 12 (exception, week 10)
Assignment 1: Four Online Lab Submissions <i>*The Online Lab for Week 2 is mandatory</i> <i>*then choose 3 of next 4</i>		20%	Week 2 (mandatory) + Choice of: Week 3, 6, 7, or 11
Assignment 2: Routine Workplace Communication – Email		10%	Week 5
Assignment 3: Routine Workplace Communication – Letter		10%	Week 8
Assignment 4: Recorded Pecha Kucha Presentation		10%	Week 10
Assignment 5: Peer Feedback		10%	Week 12
Comprehensive Final Exam		25%	TBD
TOTAL		100%	
Percentage grades will be converted to letter grades and grade points per the University calendar.			
5. LEARNING OUTCOMES			
1. Recognize and apply fundamental technical communication principles and techniques			
2. Present ideas confidently in front of peers			
3. Apply best practices of everyday, professional communication in contemporary Canadian workplace case study			
4. Integrate the indirect writing style to deliver unfavourable news in response to a workplace scenario			
5. Reflect on and identify your own competencies as a team member			
6. Demonstrate a clear understanding of conflict resolution techniques and the ability to arrive at a consensus			
6. POLICIES			
Anti-Discrimination			
The Faculty of Engineering is concerned with ensuring an environment that is free of all discrimination. If there is a problem, individuals are reminded that they should contact the Department Chair, the Sexual Harassment Officer or the Human Rights Consultant, as soon as possible. http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/General/HR/Discrimination_Harassment_Sexual_Harassment-Prevention&Response.pdf			
Academic Integrity			
You are required to exhibit honestly and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process.			

Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

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.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism. E.g. the submission of work that is not own or for which other credit has been obtained
2. Improper collaboration in group work

Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work (Assignments, Mid-Terms, etc.)

The McMaster Student Absence Form is an on-line self-reporting tool for **Undergraduate Students** to report absences for:

- 1) Relief for missed academic work worth less than 25% of the final grade resulting from medical or personal situations lasting up to three calendar days:
 - Students may submit a maximum of one academic work missed request per term. It is the responsibility of the student to follow up with instructors immediately (within the 3 day period that is specified in the MSAF) regarding the nature of the accommodation. All work due in that time period however can be covered by one MSAF.
 - MSAF cannot be used to meet religious obligation or celebration of an important religious holiday, for that has already been completed or attempted or to apply for relief for any final examination or its equivalent.
- 2) For medical or personal situations lasting more than three calendar days, and/or for missed academic work worth 25% or more of the final grade, and/or for any request for relief in a term where the MSAF has not been used previously in that term:
 - Students must visit their Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office) and provide supporting documentation.

E-Learning Policy

Consistent with the Bachelor of Technology's policy to utilize e-learning as a complement to traditional classroom instruction, students are expected to obtain appropriate passwords and accounts to access Avenue To Learn for this course. Materials will be posted by class for student download. It is expected that students will avail themselves of these materials prior to class. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail account, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about this disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor. Avenue can be accessed via

<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>.

Communications

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Maintain current contact information with the University, including address, phone numbers, and emergency contact information.
- Use the University provided e-mail address or maintain a valid forwarding e-mail address.
- Regularly check the official University communications channels. Official University communications are considered received if sent by postal mail, by fax, or by e-mail to the student's designated primary e-mail account via their @mcmaster.ca alias.

- Accept that forwarded e-mails may be lost and that e-mail is considered received if sent via the student's @mcmaster.ca alias.
- Check the McMaster/Avenue email and course websites on a regular basis during the term

Turnitin (Optional)

This course will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students submit their assignment/work electronically to Turnitin.com where it is checked against the internet, published works and Turnitin's database for similar or identical work. If Turnitin finds similar or identical work that has not been properly cited, a report is sent to the instructor showing the student's work and the original source. The instructor reviews what Turnitin has found and then determines if he/she thinks there is a problem with the work. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to <http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/turnitin/students/>

Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) applies to universities. Instructors should take care to protect student names, student numbers, grades and all other personal information at all times. For example, the submission and return of assignments and posting of grades must be done in a manner that ensures confidentiality. <http://www.mcmaster.ca/univsec/fippa/fippa.cfm>

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities Policy

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information consult McMaster's policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

Students must forward a copy of the SAS accommodation to the instructor of each course and to the Program Administrator of the B.Tech. Program immediately upon receipt. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of a SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. <http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

Student Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct (SCC) exists to promote the safety and security of all the students in the McMaster community and to encourage respect for others, their property and the laws of the land. McMaster University is a community which values mutual respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others. The purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to outline accepted standards of behavior that are harmonious with the goals and the well-being of the University community, and to define the procedures to be followed when students fail to meet the accepted standards of behavior. All students have the responsibility to familiarize themselves with the University regulations and the conduct expected of them while studying at McMaster University.

<http://judicialaffairs.mcmaster.ca/pdf/SCC.pdf> and <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/StudentCode.pdf>