

Eng 352 Outline Of Assignments And Projects—Fall 2010

This course strives to teach the basics of good communication and the importance of understanding and using specialized forms and formats when interfacing with different targets in a variety of situations to understand and accomplish specified goals. It uses real-world situations to both learn and have students produce final packages. Material is drawn from the course text, *Fundamentals of Undergraduate Education and Learning* (FUEL) as well as the Internet in the form of web pages, PDFs and videos. One of the core ideas of the course is that there is not a single correct answer that is sought for all things encountered in technical communication at all times. Instead students are asked to develop a sense of the range of results (better to worse) to develop the ability to critique the work of others as well as themselves. This understanding will allow students to create a range of packages that suits the needs of each particular situation in order to meet a specified goal for a desired target. By the end of the course, each student will demonstrate his or her development by presenting final packages that are designed to accomplish a specified goal in a particular situation for the designated target of the technical communication process.

As the semester progresses students are asked to complete a number of small steps along the way to the final packages that will assist them to work on these packages and refine both the understanding of course content as well as improve their ability to communicate effectively in different situations. In the beginning of the semester, small activities and posts on Moodle are used to explore course content and help students understand the core ideas. At the same time, larger projects are used to have students demonstrate his or her mastery of course materials: The outline of the tasks is given below as well as posted on Moodle.

The initial assignments are focused on small reading, viewing, and writing assignments that build an understanding of the central ideas of technical communication. The first major working piece is your own resume. Several videos and exercises are used to illustrate points and serve as teaching objects. Each of these is available on Moodle, the web, or will be posted as the class progresses. Though a final date for each assignment is given, please work on the material sooner and post when you are finished. Also, note that the major assignments should be worked on as you progress through the class not just at the end. You will have the opportunity to respond to my comments and improve your work as you go along with the parts of the process.

The major projects for the class are listed in detail at the end of this file but at a minimum the major assignments for the course must be submitted in order to earn a grade in the course. These assignments are: Resume Package, WISER Project Proposal, WISER Peer Report, and the Usability Critique.

About the course text

Initially, you need to start reading my text *Fundamentals Of Undergraduate Education and Learning* (FUEL) ISBN: 978-0757562006 and consult it throughout the semester. Chapter 1 of FUEL talks about self-directed learning and will help you to work better on your own and understand your own learning styles. Chapter 2 discusses making clear definitions, word choice, and clarifying your language and ideas. Chapter 3 deals with critical thinking, research, and decision-making. Chapter 5 is all about the process of communication and will serve as the main instructional material for the course along with various web pages and audiovisual lectures that are posted on Moodle. Please start by reviewing the text and completing the initial assignments.

Moodle Participation

Moodle homeworks are short and simple things to get your opinion and help you reflect on the work being covered in the text and videos. The Moodle Forums are designed to encourage discussion by all class members and will be graded on both your post and your replies to the posts of others. A discussion forum is designed for the group to post and discuss what was presented. Each forum is graded on the following scale:

- 0 No Post or Reply
- 1 Post made no replies to others made
- 2 Post and Reply with limited information and discussion
- 3 Post and reply with details and good content
- 4 Posts and more than 1 reply with details and discussion
- 5 Post and several replies all with good discussion and details on topic including evidence and examples to support ideas in discussion

The most important thing is for you to participate and present ideas that are relevant to the questions asked so you are adding to the discussion and learning of others.

The tasks on Moodle should be progressed through in order as each assignment ties into the next. I will provide feedback for each assignment along the way as we move through the class. I may not engage in all the forums as I do not want to force my ideas on the class but I am reading what is written. You are asked to work at your own pace but there are deadlines for each section so that you do not fall too far behind.

Class Outline.

Every attempt has been made to give specific dates for submissions as well as the detailed assignments for the task along with the criteria used for grading on Moodle. Grades are earned for each specified task as the class moves forward. Be sure to work on these things as the semester passes as late work is penalized and in some cases not accepted. Meeting deadlines is a vital part of the real world situations presented and vital to success in one's career. Be sure to read the assignments carefully and follow directions. At the end is a list of the dates in a table to aid you in keeping track of when things are due. It is your responsibility to keep up with course materials and complete assignments. The dates given are the last possible time to complete the work. Please start early and submit work before this deadline as quizzes close automatically at 11:55 PM on the dates listed.

Resume Package Project

This major assignment deals with you creating a resume package based upon your own goals, the target you select, and the situation in which you will use the package. *Note: Due to privacy issues, you do not have to list all of your information when creating the resume or cover letter (feel free to use 123 Fake Street etc.)* However, the edits I make will be done as if this is your true situation and focused on the correct target to attain your goal of obtaining a job. Please make every attempt to be consistent with this. The goal of this exercise is not just to have you create an acceptable resume but rather use the resume to teach you core ideas of this class.

The final product for this assignment will be a resume package that is consistent and connect to your real experiences at school and an internship, coop, and/or job you wish to obtain. You will be asked to identify the goal, target, and situation for this assignment that are suited to your particular circumstances currently. The package you create should then reflect these choices and decisions. More details and resources are provided on Moodle

Task 5: Initial Technical Communication Sample--Your Resume

The first step will be to submit a sample resume that represents your current experiences along with a brief written description about how it was created and why you have included the items in the resume and formatted it in the way it is presented. I will make edits and comments based on what you send me initially.

Task 13: Resume Package Elements Explanation Memo

After reviewing the class materials, you will need to choose a specific situation and explain the elements of the package you create. You will be asked to review videos on resume preparation and the NJIT Career Development Services (CDS) Resume handout to understand what it suggests and how this relates to your particular needs and goals. Based on the class materials, you will need to write Dr Lipuma a properly formatted memo that clearly lists out a specific goal, target(s), and situation that has led to the resume package you created. Along with this, you will be asked to create a set of resume elements based on what they have given and what is listed in FUEL to identify the necessary pieces of information that should appear on your resume for the given target and situation to accomplish your goal. This refined set of information should be reflected in the package for your final resume.

This memo will accompany your final resume package so I can understand the elements you have included and why you feel they will lead to a positive end result and eventual successful attainment of your goal. The memo along with the complete resume package that is consistent with your goal, target, and situation as well as responds to any comments and critiques that have been given should be submitted using the assignment tool given in Moodle.

Process Description—Usability Assessment

As you work through the class, I am asking you to keep a log of things you find difficult to do, would like tutorials for, or feel is poorly designed for you to use. Each one of these items should be posted in the forum provided in **Task 11—“Usability Critique of Communication Package--Due November 1, 2010”**. If someone else has already listed something you felt needed improvement, you can add a note about your agreement or add in details for clarification. Though this task is later in the semester, please feel free to start posting along the way as you find problems or difficulties.

Task 15: Usability Report & Process Description

You are asked to choose one of the issues encountered and make a report about how it might be improved. For this assignment, you are asked to make an official report to me that will be submitted to the appropriate department at NJIT or the Wikimedia Foundation explaining a problem you had while using these Educational technology objects. This needs to be an official report explaining the problem you encountered along with your suggestions for how it might be remedied. You should begin by describing the item you chose to report on, along with why you chose it and what the problem is with it. Then, you need to explicitly explain why it is a problem for you and for the larger set of users in the community. After that, you should explain the importance of this item and how many users might experience the same type of problem. Finally you need to provide some suggestions for how it can be improved and what type of materials might remedy the problem—a user page, a video tutorial, a better description a change in programming, better graphics and illustrations etc. For extra credit, you can also include a sample workaround or solution to the problem such as a new process description or explanation to be used by the responsible party. More details about this report will be given via Moodle

during the semester. **The final Usability Assessment report must be submitted to the ‘assignment given on Moodle.**

Wikipedia Improvement with Supported Expert Revisions (WISER) Project

Wikipedia.org has become a major source of information and means of finding answers for many people. In addition, it is often used as a way to become familiar with a topic that you do not know much about and find routes to new and more detailed information on the topic as a start for research. Unfortunately, it does not always have the highest quality support and presentation for the information listed and is not always the easiest to navigate and edit. . The class projects ask you to understand the basics of proper form and content in a variety of situations and targets to attain the goal of improving Wikipedia.

There are many ways to improve a Wikipedia article depending on the current state of the package that exists when you first encounter the page. For the WISER project, you are asked to draw on your own expertise and interest to find a page that needs work to improve the level of expert knowledge presented with support. As a student you have a tremendous amount of access to authoritative texts and journals as well as expert knowledge. It is this knowledge base that the WISER project taps to make the improvement.

The project begins by teaching how to assess the quality of sources especially those on the Internet. It then goes on to explain what makes a good Wikipedia package. After this, you are asked to critique the quality of an existing Wikipedia page to show that it is in need of expert knowledge support and revision as a response to a request for proposals (RFP). Finally you will present a written/multimedia explanation that pitches the results of the WISER project and explains why your WISER Project is good and worthwhile that will be critiqued by the entire class so that feedback can be given. To make it easier to understand and accomplish, the entire project has been broken into multiple parts:

Task 1: Create a Wikipedia User ID and Profile

Task 8: WISER Project Topic Selection

Task 12: WISER Project Proposal

Task 14: WISER Project Peer Review

More details on each of these tasks is provided in Moodle

Final Showcase

For the Final showcase you are asked to make an argument about what you have done in class this semester that meets the goals set out in the mission for the class as detailed in the rubric for the final showcase included on Moodle. It is common in the Technical Communication field along with many others to create a portfolio of work that demonstrates what you have done. The final showcase asks you to do just that. The target is Dr. Lipuma and his audience (those who might influence him) the other ENG 352 faculty members at NJIT who teach the course this semester. The situation for viewing this will be a computer lab in Cullimore hall. We will use NJIT desktop PCs with speakers and the basic NJIT software packages provided by the school such as MS word, PowerPoint, Internet Explorer, Adobe Reader etc..

The key parts of the Final Showcase are:

1. All your graded work along with any other versions of the work for the class you have completed and want me to consider as I determine your final grade. You do not have to include Moodle posts and quizzes as they are available in the online system. This should be posted in the Final Showcase Assignment tool on Moodle

2. You need to fill in the Final Showcase Rubric with explanations for why you feel you have done well on each criterion. You should also mention the assignment(s) that can be used to demonstrate your accomplishment on the aspect of the rubric you are discussing.
3. You need to provide a short narrative description of the showcase rubric that explains to me why you feel you have attained the level of accomplishment for each item.
4. You also have the option of making a PowerPoint file to act as an index and means of explaining what is included in the showcase. This is not required but the PowerPoint can be used to insert samples of your work or provide links to the assignments you feel show your ability in the class to help make your points for your argument.

I have included a sample from last semester to show a general outline of a PowerPoint index file. I have created this as a sample showcase template. If you decide to use this option, it needs to be personalized so that your work is presented and your own style comes through. Please add in graphics, transitions, themes, animations, and other things that you feel make it clearer. You **DO NOT** have to use any of this but it is provided as a way to show how you might go about creating a showcase to demonstrate what was accomplished in the class. I have used sample work from class to illustrate points but this is not the only way or best way to do this. Please feel free to ask questions. If you use this file as a starting point, please delete the first slide and insert your information on the next as your own title slide. Also, delete any text box that I have shown in Yellow and insert your own relevant content. I am not trying to make you do it my way but want to give you some basic methods of doing this as well as giving you a way to see how to link files. It is necessary to place all the files with your main PowerPoint when you link them.

Once you have finished adding all your assignments from class, the script and the completed rubric to the folder (along with the optional PowerPoint if desired), be sure to name the folder with your Lastname_FirstName_class-sec#. The folder should then be compressed (.ZIP) and submitted to the assignment tool in Moodle. This needs to be completed by December 12, 2010 so that I have sufficient time to ensure it opens correctly and grade it.

Final Thoughts and Grade Argument--Due December 13, 2010

Your last assignment is to make an argument for the grade you feel you earned in the class along with any comments about the usefulness of the course and how it might be improved in future semesters. At a minimum, you need to specifically list the grade you feel you earned and provide your evidence and arguments for that grade.

ENG 352 Fall 2010 Class Calendar of Assignments

August 30	Class Begins
September 5	Task 1: Getting Started
September 6	Labor Day - University Closed
September 7	Last day to Add Classes
September 8	Task 2: Forum Post: Introductory Assignment
September 10	Task 3: Forum Post: Definitions Initial
September 17	Forum Post: Definitions Reply
September 21	Task 4: Forum Post: View of Communication
September 25	Task 5: Submit Assignment—Resume Sample
September 30	Task 6: Quiz: Word Choice
October 5	Task 7: Quiz: Green Page Reflection
October 10	Task 8: Initial WISER Project Topic Selection
October 17	Task 9: Submit Assignment: Database Article Critique
October 22	Task10: Forum Post: Reflection on Style of Communication
November 1	Task 11: Forum Post: Critique of Teaching Packages
November 1	Last Day to Withdrawal Deadline
November 2	Task 12: WISER Project Proposal
November 15	Task 13: Resume Package Explanations
November 23	Task 14: WISER Project Peer Review
December 5	Task 15: Usability Report & Process Description
December 9	Reading Day
December 12	Task 16--Final Showcase Submissions
December 17	Grades Due in the Registrars Office

Creating PowerPoint according to NJIT ITMS

http://www.njit.edu/tlt/resources/animations/tutorial.php?title=Creating%20Powerpoints%20For%20Distance%20Learning&path=multimedia/camtasia/creating_powerpoints_for_distance_learning

See the attached file with the Moodle Page in Word format.