NORTHWESTERN POLYTECHNIC

DEPARTMENT Science

COURSE OUTLINE - Winter 2025

TW1030(A3): Technical Communications and Ethics - 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR:	Hugh Hunter	PHONE:	(780) 539-2823
OFFICE:	C421	E-MAIL:	jhunter@nwpolytech.ca
OFFICE HOURS:	Wednesday from 1:00 to 2:00 PM, or by request		

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: This course aims to enhance students' technical communication skills, covering topics such as grammar, punctuation, and the preparation of various technical documents with proper citation, as well as critique codes of ethics, professional obligations, and apply sustainability principles to technical projects, while also providing opportunities for students to develop public speaking and presentation skills.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE:
English 30-1 or English 30-2 or equivalent

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

Note about texts: You do not need to buy any materials for this course. All texts for this course are either open source, publicly available online or available to students on MyClass.

Main Textbook

- *Technical Writing*, Allison Gross, Annemarie Hamlin, Billy Merck, Chris Rubio, Jodi Naas, Megan Savage, and Michele DeSilva (Open Oregon Educational Resources, 2017). [TW]

Other Readings

- "Environmental Ethics", in *Environmental Biology*, Matthew R. Fisher (Open Oregon Educational Resources, 2021) [EE]
- AIPE Code of Ethics
- ASET Code of Ethics
- Readings found on MyClass

DELIVERY MODE(S): On-Campus

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- After completing this course students will: Develop advanced technical communication skills, both written and oral, with an emphasis on professional and ethical conduct.
- Improve understanding of grammar, punctuation, and the preparation of various technical documents.
- Develop the ability to create cover letters, resumes, emails, and technical summaries.
- Critically evaluate the ASET and AIPE Codes of Ethics.
- Identify legal and professional accountabilities in technical contexts.
- Apply sustainability principles to technical projects.
- Gain knowledge in the preparation and delivery of technical procedures and presentations.
- Enhance public speaking skills for effective communication.
- Learn to use visual aids effectively in technical communication.
- Apply technical communication skills in practical scenarios.
- Improve employability and professional competencies through practical application.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page http://ww.transferalberta.ca
** Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. **Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

5% - Email Exercise – January 20
5% - Ethics Quiz 1 – January 27
5% - Process/Item Description Exercise – February 3
10% - Live in Person Presentation: Focus on Reading – February 12
5% - Ethics Quiz 2 – February 26
10% - Live in Person Presentation: Present with PowerPoint – March 12
5% - Ethics Quiz 3 – March 24
15% - Live in Person Final Report Presentation – April 2
30 % - Final Report (4 double spaced pages – max 1250 words) – April 9
10 % - Participation

Note: the participation grade is based on your active participation in class discussion. You don't have to attend every single class or talk in every single class to get a good participation grade, but you should be a regular contributor.

Note: Students enrolled in the Wastewater Management program must select topics related to Wastewater Management for all presentations/written work.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-.**

Grading Chart

Alpha Grade	4-point	Percentage	Alpha	4-point	Percentage

	Equivalent	Guidelines		Grade	Equivalent	Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100		C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94		C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	00-49

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Date	Topic	Reading	Due
January 6	Introduction		
January 8	Resume Workshop	Employment Materials (TW pages 183-205)	*Bring in your resume*
January 13	Being Professional	Professional Communications (TW pages 5 – 17)	
January 15	Knowing your audience	Audience Analysis (TW pages 19 – 26)	
January 20	Ethics Focus: Consequentialism 1	Utilitarianism - MyClass	Email Exercise (January 20)
January 22	Ethics Focus: Consequentialism 2		
January 27	Proposals	Proposals (TW pages 27-38)	Ethics Quiz 1
January 29	Information Literacy	Information Literacy (TW pages 37-55)	
February 3	Progress Reports	Progress Reports (TW pages 67 – 76)	Process/Item Description Exercise
February 5	Interview Workshop		*Bring in your revised resume*
February 10	Ethics Focus: Deontology 1	Deontology – MyClass	
February 12	Ethics Focus: Deontology 2		Presentation Exercise: Reading (February 12)
February 17	WINTER BREAK		
February 19	WINTER BREAK		
February 24	Showing your Sources	Citations and Plagiarism (TW pages 59-68)	
February 26	Working from Outlines	Outlines (TW pages 77 – 82)	Ethics Quiz 2
March 3	Ethics Focus: Virtue Ethics 1	Virtue Ethics – MyClass	
March 5	Ethics Focus: Virtue Ethics 2		
March 10	Technical Reports 1	Technical Reports: Components and Design (TW pages 103-132)	
March 12	Technical Reports 2		Presentation Exercise: Present with PowerPoint (March 12)
March 17	Graphics	Creating and Integrating Graphics (TW pages 81-94)	

March 19	Ethics Focus: Environmental Ethics	Environmental Ethics (EE pages 21-24)	
March 24	Style and Design 1	Basic Design and Readability in Publications (TW pages 129-184)	Ethics Quiz 3 (March 24)
March 26	Style and Design 2		
March 31	PowerPoint workshop		*Bring in a PowerPoint to work on*
April 2	Ethics Focus: Ethics in a Profession	• AIPE Code of Ethics • ASET Code of Ethics	Final Report Presentations Due
April 7	Ethics Focus: Ethics in Technical Writing	Ethics in Technical Writing (TW pages 91-104)	
April 9	Cultures and Communication	Communicating across Cultures (TW pages 207-215)	Final Report Due

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Responsibilities of all students:

1. Please do not be late for class.
2. You are expected to complete assigned readings before class. Do not fall behind in the assigned readings because it is difficult to catch up.
3. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain the information you missed.
4. Policies regarding final exams are governed by institutional policy. You should consult the Examinations policy in the NWP Calendar. You should consult the NWP Calendar for any questions regarding deferred exams but note that students are required to be available to write exams during the entire final exam period.
5. In cases where submitted work exhibits concerning patterns or raises questions for the instructor about its creation and the student's intellectual effort involved, students may be required to submit to an oral examination regarding the work at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to participate in the oral examination will result in an assigned grade of 0 for the assessment. If, following the oral examination, the instructor still has concerns about the work, the academic misconduct provisions of the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy may be applied.
6. You are adults. Please treat class as you would any professional setting. That means governing your actions so as not to disrupt the class.
    a. Feel free to use your technology discretely so long as it does not distract others.
    b. If you need to take a call, leave to use the bathroom or leave early, do it quietly so as not to disrupt the class on the way out.
    c. Don't start conversations on the side that will disrupt the class (join in class discussion instead!)
7. Please note that questions – philosophical or otherwise – are rarely well answered over email. If you have questions about how to write, course expectations or anything else, please ask during class (it will certainly benefit your fellow students) or come see me after class or in office hours. If you email with these sorts of questions, I will direct you to my office hours. I am happy to discuss your drafts in my office hours, but I will not review them by email.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html
**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

What we do in Philosophy

I like to think of philosophers as product testers for ideas. A product tester doesn't test a product under regular use conditions, but rather puts the product into extreme conditions. For example, if a product is designed to run at -25° Celsius, a product tester might try to see if it works at -35°, because if it works in -35° it's safe to say it will work in -25°. In philosophy, we subject ideas to stress tests by considering the extreme cases. As you read through the readings, you'll find some unlikely and strange scenarios. We want to see if our ideas work in those scenarios, because if our ideas work in weird, extreme scenarios we can be sure they will work in ordinary cases as well.

Just like product testers, the fact that we are testing an idea doesn't mean that we believe it. Sometimes we don't even like the idea! But a product tester is neutral. We run the tests and see how the idea performs. We must always remember that we are testing ideas, not the people who happen to believe in them. As the philosopher Socrates often said, someone who shows you a problem with an idea that you believe in is doing you a favour by showing you that there are better, truer ideas out there to be discovered.