



ASSIGNMENTS: EGR 3350 TECHNICAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR ENGINEERS

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WEEK 1

Read **Chapter 1: Introduction, Chapter 2: Ethical Considerations, Chapter 3: Technical Definition and Chapter 15: Visuals.**

This is the longest and most important reading assignment of the semester. It will ground you in the principles of technical writing and communications. Summarize each chapter, highlighting the main themes and ideas. 250 words apiece; 1000 words total. As with all written assignments in the course, be sure to revise and polish your work while writing clearly and in sufficient detail.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Jan. 18, 9 a.m.

WEEK 2

Read **Chapter 13: Grammar, Style, and Punctuation.**

Write a short personal essay in which you explain your strengths and weaknesses as a writer, citing details from Chapter 13. Be sure to foreground a thesis statement that you proceed to support throughout the essay. 500-750 words.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Jan. 25, 9 a.m.

WEEK 3

Read **Chapter 4: Description of a Mechanism.**

Choose a mechanism with three to five parts that function together to achieve some purpose. The mechanism should be relatively simple to explain and describe, closely associated with or related to your major field of study, and capable of being physically handled, observed, measured and described. The function of your mechanism should be observable; that is, the main function should not take place internally where it cannot be observed and described.

The mechanism description must be precise and technically correct, include one visual, and emphasize the mechanism's physical characteristics (size, shape, material, finish and color).

Follow **Outline 4.1** and pattern your work after the sample on pages 47-49. Visuals should not occupy more than 1/3 of one page. You are not required to use secondary sources, but if you do, document the sources intertextually and include a Works Cited page. Be sure to edit and review your paper using the **Mechanism Description Checklist** on page 56 before submitting it. 500-750 words.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Feb. 1, 9 a.m.

WEEK 4

Read **Chapter 12: Abstracts and Summaries.**

Write a descriptive abstract on “Analysis of Cylinder Head Gasket Ceiling Under Engine Operation Conditions.” Remember that, unlike informative abstracts, descriptive abstracts summarize the structure (not the substance) of a report. Format the document according to APA guidelines. 250-500 words.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Feb. 8, 9 a.m.

WEEK 5

Read **Chapter 5: Description of a Process.**

Choose a process including three to five steps that does the following: takes place over time to accomplish an objective; is a physical process, a conceptual process, or a mechanism in operation; is relatively simple to explain and describe; occurs over a relatively short period of time; and is closely associated with or related to your major field of study. In the case of a *conceptual process*, you do not need to observe the process. In the case of a mechanism in operation, you will describe what occurs within a mechanism. If you cannot observe the process, you might need to rely on sources to describe what occurs. In the case of a *physical process*, you must choose a process that you can observe. You may describe the physical operation of a mechanism from the user’s point of view.

The process description document must be precise and technically correct, include at least one visual, and emphasize the steps of a process (not material attributes). Follow **Outline 5.1** or **Outline 5.2**, depending on the subject, and pattern your work after the respective samples in the text. Visuals should not occupy more than 1/2 of one page. You are not required to use secondary sources, but if you do, document the sources intertextually and include a Works Cited page. Be sure to edit and review your paper using the **Process Description Checklist** before submitting it. 500-750 words.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Feb. 15, 9 a.m.

WEEK 6

Read **Chapter 7: Progress Reports.**

For this assignment, you will write a report in which you itemize what you have accomplished so far in the first five weeks of this course as well as what you will accomplish from this point

onwards. Follow **Outline 7.1** and pattern your work after the examples on pages 117-119. 500-750 words.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Feb. 22, 9 a.m.

WEEK 7

Read **Chapter 16: Electronic Publishing**.

Based on your reading of the chapter, write a short personal reflection about your experience with electronic publishing. What sort of background did you receive in school? What knowledge and/or skills do you expect to use in the field of engineering and technical writing? What kinds of electronic publishing do you think are more important and useful than others? 500-750 words.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Mar. 1, 9 a.m.

WEEK 8

SPRING BREAK. No assignments due.

WEEK 9

Read **Chapter 18: Business Communications**.

Summarize the chapter, highlighting the main themes and ideas. 250-500 words.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Mar. 15, 9 a.m.

WEEK 10

Based on your reading of **Chapter 18**, write a professional memo about an appliance manual. The manual can belong to any appliance, and the memo should synthesize the information in the manual while foregrounding the most important information regarding the operation of the appliance. Address the memo to a hypothetical recipient for a hypothetical reason of your choice. Follow **Outline 18.2** and pattern your memo after the sample on page 329, bearing in mind that your memo should be longer and more detailed than the sample. 250-500 words.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Mar. 22, 9 a.m.

WEEK 11

Read **Chapter 11: Research Reports**.

For this assignment, you will not write a formal research report but rather develop some of the tools you might need to produce a report.

Find, explain and include documentation for the items below. You must use WSU Libraries (**libraries.wright.edu**) as your primary resource. Upload the finished product to Pilot, saving your work on the same document and numbering your responses accordingly. Word counts will vary.

Finding Research Guides: [1] What is the url for the WSU Libraries Research Guide for Engineering? [2] What is the url for the Mechanical and Materials Engineering Research Guide? [3] What is the url for the Electrical Engineering Research Guide? [4] What is the name and email address of the Engineering librarian?

Finding Scholarly Works: [5] Define “scholarly article.” [6] How does a scholarly article differ from something published in a trade journal? [7] How can you access scholarly articles? [8] List at least three library databases you could use to perform research. [9] What are your options if you find a listing for a scholarly article but can’t find the full text? [10] How can you access library resources if you are off campus?

Citing Sources: [11] What are three software programs that the library recommends you use to generate your Works Cited page? [12] Which of the three programs do you like best and why?

Scholarly Communication: [13] Define “scholarly communication.” [14] Define “impact factor.” [15] What does it mean if a journal is open access? [16] What is a predatory publisher? [17] Why should you make sure that you are not using articles published in a predatory journal?

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Mar. 29, 9 a.m.

WEEK 12

Read **Chapter 14: Documentation.**

Complete the following four writing prompts, each of which deals with research and documentation. Upload the finished product to Pilot, saving your work on the same document. Word counts will vary.

All of the items below involve research on the same control subject. You can only use sources once. Be sure to format each source according to APA style.

- [1] Find three reliable Internet sources dealing with the subject of alternative energy and list the websites below.
- [2] Go to WSU Libraries (libraries.wright.edu) and click **RESEARCH > Databases > Academic Search Complete**. Find two articles on alternative energy and list the citations below.
- [3] Go to WSU Libraries (libraries.wright.edu) and click **RESEARCH > eJournals > Engineering**. Find two articles on alternative energy and list the citations below.
- [4] Find two articles from **Electronic Journal Center** on alternative energy and list the citations below.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Apr. 5, 9 a.m.

WEEK 13

Read **Chapter 19: Resumes, Cover Letters, and Interviews.**

Imagine you have graduated from WSU with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering and compose a cover letter for a desired position in your field that you would hypothetically submit to an actual company or place of business. Pattern your letter after **Example 19.1**, limiting it to one, single-spaced page and including pertinent details in every paragraph. Each sentence should further distinguish you as a viable candidate for the job—so make every sentence count. There is no set word count, but generally the text should fill the page.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Apr. 12, 9 a.m.

WEEK 14

Compose a resume to accompany the cover letter that you wrote for last week's assignment. Follow **Outline 19.1** as well as the steps under **Ten Tips for Creating a Good Resume** in **Chapter 19** during the drafting and revision process. Pattern the resume after **Example 19.2** while at the same time making some effort to stylize the document. As with the cover letter, words counts will vary, but generally the text should fill the page.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Apr. 19, 9 a.m.

WEEK 15

Read **Chapter 17: Presentations and Briefings**.

Summarize the chapter, highlighting the main themes and ideas. 250-500 words.

DUE DATE & TIME: Friday, Apr. 26, 9 a.m.

EXAM WEEK

This assignment will be formatted with PowerPoint. As English 3350 is an online class, you will not actually present the material in person; rather, you will use PowerPoint to construct a presentation as if you were to enact it in front of an audience.

To do this assignment, you should imagine that you have landed a job in the engineering field. Your task is to prepare a 10-15 slide PowerPoint presentation on a topic that is pertinent to the job. What topic you choose is up to you, but it must be substantive and useful for your co-workers, who will be your hypothetical audience. Assume your co-workers will assess your ability to explain the topic concretely, intelligently and, if need be, persuasively. You will be evaluated based on the content as well as the style of your slides, which should integrate text, image and other appropriate media.

The first PowerPoint slide should explain the scope of your presentation, describing its **PURPOSE** (what is your thesis?), **AUDIENCE** (what is the demographic of your listeners?), and **DIRECTION** (how will the presentation unfold from beginning to end). Naturally it is a prerequisite that you are familiar with PowerPoint software.

DUE DATE & TIME: Wednesday, May 1, 9 a.m.