

LMC 3403 SYLLABUS

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Title LMC 3403 - Technical Communication, Theory and Practice

Section C28

Credits 3 credits

Semester and Academic Year Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor Dr. Galen David Bunting

Email gbunting7@gatech.edu

Office Hours: Monday 11am-1pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to workplace document genres, to develop visual and verbal skills in critical analysis and document development.

COURSE THEME/TOPIC DESCRIPTION

This course is different from other technical communication classes you might take here at Georgia Tech. This class is a community-based learning class, meaning that we'll be working with an existing community partner, and your communication will have real-world application.

Community-Based Learning is an educational approach that integrates classroom instruction with meaningful community engagement. It promotes:

- **active engagement,**
- **collaboration,**
- **and practical application of knowledge,**

fostering a deeper understanding of academic concepts and cultivating civic responsibility among learners.

Our assignments will provide you with opportunities to engage in technical communication through a community partnership. This course bridges professional communication with community learning. Working with a community partner, student teams will translate complex client needs into sustainable, multimodal solutions, as a pilot program for Swamp Gravy (our community partner) as they digitally archive their extensive library of plays and multimedia and find a way to share their history of representing oral history through theatre with the world.

Three professional deliverables, with a metadata diary, offer real-world applicable projects throughout the semester.

Students initiate engagement with our Community Partner by drafting a Community Contact and Outreach Memo, setting rhetorical expectations and project boundaries, so that we're on the right track and we're maintaining communication with the community partner throughout the semester.

To cultivate transparency around process and retain knowledge across groups through class, students should expect to set up and schedule time to contribute to a Group Project Diary throughout the semester, documenting your process as you work with each other to retain your processes. This will be completed via individual logs, which you'll then add to a group discussion board. Think of this as documentation as you work through any problems that arise: this will serve as a form of communication for your teams as well.

In groups, students will conduct an analysis of the material we've been given from our community partner, producing an Annotated Bibliography and Scoping Paper Group Project, establishing the technical and ethical constraints of your intervention for our community partner. In other words, what might meaningful interventions look like as we assist this particular community partner?

The course culminates in a Multimedia Pilot Project, and reflections from each team member, where students integrate visual, electronic, oral, and written modes into a functional deliverable—such as building a digital archive or website for our community partner, creating visual advertising for upcoming performances, or documenting a visual guide on adding materials to a database: you will work in teams and we will hold team meetings to ensure that shared goals are being met throughout the project. We will finish off the course by presenting these pilot projects to the community partner, turning in a 2-3 page reflective paper at the close of the class, through a metacognitive assessment regarding how community-based learning impacted you as a writer.

I am excited to embark on this journey with you, and without further ado, let's get into the overall work breakdown of this class.

-Dr. Galen Bunting

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Category	Outcomes
Rhetoric Rhetoric focuses on available means of persuasion, considering the synergy of factors such as context, audience, purpose, role, argument, organization, design, visuals, and conventions of language.	- Fashion artifacts that address the exigencies of diverse contexts, exhibiting effective persuasive strategies, tact, and sensitivity to theoretical, ethical and legal concerns. - Collect, craft, and present technical information in ways that convey a clear purpose to a specific audience.
Process Processes for communication—for example, creating, planning, drafting, designing, rehearsing, revising, presenting, publishing—are recursive, not linear. Learning	- Construct, select, craft, revise, and repurpose information to reflect individual, cultural, and/or organizational values. - Collaborate on artifacts that meet the needs of the specific audiences.

productive processes is as important as creating products.	
Modes and Media Activities and assignments should use a variety of modes and media—written, oral, visual, electronic, and nonverbal—singly and in combination. The context and culture of multimodality and multimedia are critical.	• Create WOVEN (Written, Oral, Visual, Electronic, and Nonverbal) artifacts— such as memos, emails, proposals, reports, instructions, manuals, websites, and short and long presentations— that display strategic uses of generic and stylistic conventions.
Design Documents and other artifacts should arrange visual elements according to consistent, efficient, and effective principles.	• Use theories and principles of document design to create and present accessible, comprehensible, and usable artifacts. • Integrate graphics to achieve maximum clarity in print documents, presentation slides, websites, and other artifacts.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

☐ Our reference text: Handbook of Technical Writing by Gerald J. Alred; Walter E. Oliu; Charles T. Brusaw, 12th edition

GRADING POLICY

A: 90-100 Superior performance—rhetorically, aesthetically, and technically—demonstrating advanced understanding and use of the media in particular contexts. An inventive spark and exceptional execution.

B: 80-89 Above-average, high-quality performance—rhetorically, aesthetically, and technically.

C: 70-79 Average (not inferior) performance. Competent and acceptable—rhetorically, aesthetically, and technically.

D: 60-69 Below-average performance. Less than competent — rhetorically, aesthetically, and/or technically.

F: 0-59 Unacceptable performance. Failure to meet even minimum criteria rhetorically, aesthetically, and/or technically.

DESCRIPTION OF GRADED COMPONENTS

Assignment and Grading Breakdown:

Assignment / Component	Points / % of Grade	Focus Area	Due Dates
Community Contact & Outreach Memo	10 points / 10% Due Fri, Aug 28: Draft + reflection (5 of 10 points)	Rhetoric: Establishes purpose, audience constraints, and professional scope.	Due Fri, Aug 28: Draft + reflection (5 of 10 points)
Metadata Diary (Semester log)	15 pts / 15%	Process: Establishes your choices regarding data, research, and design. Promotes transparency across your teams.	Due various dates throughout semester (TBD)
Annotated Bibliography & Scoping Paper (3-5 pages)	20 pts / 20%	Design, Media: Through secondary research, assesses technical project feasibility by looking at prior models and suggesting some means of representing the media your team has chosen for the community partner.	collaborative annotated bibliography draft due Sept 30, for peer review Annotated bibliography final draft due Oct 16 Scoping Paper Due Nov 2
Multimedia Pilot Project	30 points / 30%	Multimodal: Blends written, visual, and electronic choices into a final tool for our community partner, reflecting their goals and your articulation of those goals.	Due week of November 30
Team Assessments / Peer Review	15 points / 15%	Oral & Nonverbal: Assesses client engagement, professional pace, and active listening.	Due various dates throughout semester (TBD)
Final Reflection and Communication Growth Self-Assessment Paper (2-3 pages)	10 pts / 10%	Process: Evaluates metacognitive awareness and rhetorical growth as you worked with our community partner.	Due Dec 7

Unless communicated otherwise, *team assessments and peer review will generally be in person*, so please make every effort to be present in class for these dates.

Throughout our class, peer review is an important part of providing feedback to one another. Since most forms of writing take place in a community, and most professional forms of writing are intended to address other people, peer review is one way to test out ideas before you finalize them. While a standard form of peer review includes physically marking drafts, we will also contribute by providing feedback on ideas, weighing in on presentations, and generally treat feedback as an ongoing conversation, appropriate to the breadth of media we will address across the course.

For credit, please prepare to give constructive (building up) feedback.

***(if not otherwise specified, assume assignment is due by 11:59pm on Canvas)**

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Please note that this is not an online course, and you should anticipate attending as many classes as possible in person. This class meets on-ground, and students should anticipate attending in person. I do not host class on Zoom. Class participation is essential to success no matter the course format or its delivery; therefore, attendance will be in person. Please note that I do not offer makeup opportunities for material and assignments covered in class. I do not offer makeup opportunities for peer review, field trips, or visitors to our class.

You will be allowed four absences, which you may use as you will. I suggest you conserve these excused absences to use as you need. These absences can be taken without penalty. Any absences beyond these 4 absences need a clear explanation, and without such explanation, will impact your final grade. Each additional absence after the allotted number deducts 2% from a student's final grade.

You have a limited number of excused absences, including absences due to specific university-sponsored activities, religious holidays, military deployment, and jury duty. There may be times when you cannot or should not attend class, such as if you are not feeling well, have an interview, or have family responsibilities. In such situations, please let me know ahead of time, as often as possible. You can take 1 professional absence with just an email to let me know, but beyond that, lack of attendance will impact your ability to meaningfully contribute to the class, as well as your grade.

Other Absences

In the event of unforeseen events or circumstances, including illness, which cause you to miss class, please alert me, so that we can figure out an alternate timetable, make-up work, etc. You will not be penalized for unavoidable events. Just let me know as soon as possible. I cannot provide retroactive assistance for past absences.

Timeliness

It's important to submit your work by the scheduled deadlines so you can benefit from and engage with the conversation of others. Turning in late work affects not only you, but also the others in the community. Without feedback, it's difficult to see where to improve! Please share your insights, ask questions, and assume good faith of your peers. Disagreements are welcome: be open to multiple perspectives, especially regarding writing.

Remember that this is a professional space, and as a professional space, you should expect to contribute to all discussions in a professional manner. For example, when you respond through peer review or on a discussion board, address your peers by name.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review Georgia Tech's Honor Code and the student Code of Conduct.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations. Please note that work produced with LLMs, presented as your own original contribution, is a form of plagiarism and will be treated as such.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs who requires accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. The Student-Faculty Expectations articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

AI Policy

In this course, using generative AI tools (including visual AI, and chat-based agents which I'll refer to as Large Language Models, or LLMs) in the work of the course (including assignments, discussions, ungraded work, etc.) should be avoided or limited entirely, *especially when dealing with community partnership data*.

Under no circumstances should you input community partner data into any LLM, visual or textual, as such circumstances may cause breaches of ethical standards when working with our community partner. Our community partner trusts in our ability to work professionally with them. Please put professional standards first!

Course Completion

Failure to complete any component of the course, including projects, assignments, and stages of projects or assignments, may result in failure of the course, as determined by the instructor of the course in consultation with the Director of the Writing and Communication Program.

Syllabus Modifications

This syllabus may be modified as the semester progresses to meet course outcomes and address the needs of members of the class.

Other Course Specific Policies

If hoping to contact me outside office hours, the fastest way to get a reply is to send me an email, *not* a Canvas message.

Before emailing me, please consider the following:

- Have I already answered the question you have asked on the syllabus?
- Have you included the name of the course and some idea of your question in your subject line? This helps me respond to you in a direct manner!
- Have you properly addressed the email to me? Is your name included in the sign-off? I want to make sure I respond to the right person!
- Is your tone professional and calm?

I try to respond to emails received between 9am-5pm EST on weekdays within twenty-four hours. If you email me outside those hours, you can expect a longer response time. If you email me over the weekend, you can expect a response by Monday. If I don't respond, please be assured that I am not ignoring you. I may be teaching or grading, may be encountering wifi issues, or Outlook may have decided that your email is spam. If you do not receive a response from me, either in-person or via email, and you still need an answer to your question, it is completely fine to follow up!

Late and Missing Work

Class participation is essential to success no matter the course format or its delivery; therefore, turning in material on time is imperative, not only for your success, but for the success of your peers, as we will conduct peer review in class.

Unless you have an accommodation provided by the Office of Disability Resources that allows you extra time to complete an assignment or have discussed an extension with me, you are expected to submit all materials by the assigned due date. It is up to you to make sure to test your files, to make sure you know how to navigate Canvas, and all the other small details of being a student.

Extensions

In my course, you may take one extension (not one per assignment, just one extension), no questions asked. I realize that life sometimes gets in the way of our best-laid plans. However, I do not offer extensions for peer review, because these activities take place in our classroom, and are intended to help one another improve through careful feedback. Being in class to provide peer review is a positive and professional way to participate in class, and more- it helps your fellow students succeed, while giving you a chance to practice and promote the practice of giving and receiving feedback.

Assignment Revision

Please note that I do not allow students to resubmit work for a new grade unless there are extenuating circumstances or if there is an error in calculation (e.g. Canvas rolls out some new calculating system and it affects the grade I sent your way).

