UC Berkeley Extension Professional Sequence in Technical Communication

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Technical Communication I - *Required*
X465 (2 semester units/30 hours in Journalism)

In this course, you learn the requirements for designing and developing technical documentation from start to finish. As you develop your class project, you practice how to define your audience and purpose, determine appropriate document format and style, improve the clarity and organization of your writing, and review and edit your work more effectively. You also learn about teamwork, oral communication, and presentation skills that can increase your success in the technical communication field.

Technical Communication II - *Required*
X466 (2 semester units/30 hours in Journalism)

This course builds on the skills developed in Technical Communication I or Editorial Workshops I and II, honing your ability to define the audience and purpose of a document and to determine the most appropriate types of documents. You improve your technical writing style and technique while creating writing samples that include a variety of document types for both paper and online presentation. The course includes a brief overview of technical communication tools and technology, as well as current Web content and formatting languages as determined by the instructor.

Technical Editing - *Required*
X437 (2 semester units/30 hours in Journalism)

Editing technical material requires specialized skills. This course focuses on how to edit different types of technical documents for clarity, consistency, cohesiveness, and correctness. You learn to identify and correctly use specialized vocabulary and how to employ editing tools such as proofreader's marks, style sheets, style guides, and standard editorial reference material. You also understand how to distinguish and correct common problems such as inconsistency, ambiguity, and incorrect punctuation. The course requires frequent editing assignments. It assumes proficiency in English and a working knowledge of English grammar.

Technical Writing - *Elective*
X412 (2 semester units/30 hours in Journalism) – *Can be substituted for Technical Communication I*

In this course, you develop your ability to organize and creatively craft information for manuals, journal articles, reports, and other technical publications. You also learn document design and production principles, computerized "interactive" documentation, the use of desktop publishing, and taking your publication to press.

Principles of Information Architecture - *Elective*
X461 (2 semester units/30 hours in Information)

Information architecture determines how information is designed, organized, and labeled, and it specifies the navigation structure that makes it possible for users to find information. This course looks at the traditional architecture of paper-based documents, examines how organizing information for online delivery differs from paper-based, and then focuses on the need to design information that can be delivered in more than one way.

Courses subject to change.

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Project Management For Technical Communicators - *Elective*
X422 (1 semester unit/15 hours in Journalism)

Technical communicators are often expected to manage their own projects or work with others to meet team goals for deliverables, deadlines, and budgets. Nowadays, technical communication project managers are expected to manage resources that may be dispersed around the country or even the world. In this course, technical communicators learn the fundamentals of project management and how they apply to technical communication projects such as documentation and proposal development. Students discuss current approaches to project management and develop individual project management plans.

Visual Design For Technical Communication - *Elective*
X467 (2 semester units/30 hours in Journalism)

Effective design invites readers into a document and makes complex information easier to understand. This course covers a broad range of topics in visual technical communication, including basic design principles applicable to any medium; effective presentation of concepts, procedures, reference information, and numerical data; working with designers and technical illustrators; visual thinking; and interface design. The course is a valuable introduction to visual design in books, reports, newsletters, brochures, online help, Web pages, databases, multimedia presentations, and training programs. *Enrollment is limited.*

Developing Online Help - *Elective*
X448 (2 semester units/30 hours in Journalism)

This course teaches design and development of online help systems and the mechanics of how to create Microsoft HTML Help. It is project-based—you plan and create your own online help system. Class sessions may address additional topics such as single-sourcing, context-sensitive help, and how to select a help authoring tool for the needs of a project. *Note:* You should have access to a computer with Microsoft Windows and the ability to download and install applications from the Web.

Document Design Using Framemaker - *Elective*
X443 (2 semester units/30 hours in Journalism)

FrameMaker, the desktop publishing package of choice for many technical communicators, combines word processing, graphics, indexing, page layout, and book building in one application. As such, it is a complex program and not easy to learn. This course uses the best practices of technical writing and document design combined with hands-on exercises to give the student a firm foundation in the latest version of FrameMaker. Students should purchase the textbook, *Adobe FrameMaker 7.0 Classroom in a Book*, and bring it to the first meeting.

Usability Testing For Technical Communication - *Elective*
X439 (2 semester units/30 hours in Journalism)

How do you know whether the information you create is easy for your target audience to access and use? In a usability test, you observe people using the information. This course provides an overview of tools and techniques you need to set up and conduct a usability test. You learn where usability testing fits in the information development cycle and how it relates to other user-centered design activities. You'll learn to establish test requirements, select participants, develop materials, conduct a test, compile the results, and feed what you have learned back into your information design.

Courses subject to change.

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Effective Presentation Skills for Technology and Sustainability Professionals – *Further Study*
X425 (1 semester unit/15 hours in Engineering)

With today's information overload, the average audience member is inundated with thousands of advertising messages, emails, and calls every day; audiences form opinions about speakers within 30 seconds or less. Students learn how to get and retain listeners' attention, build credibility, liven up dry topics, explain complex concepts, utilize nonverbal communication, overcome stage fright, leave a positive impression, and persuade and inform audiences. Students prepare for and deliver videotaped presentations, receive coaching and feedback.

Publishing with Content Management Systems – *Further Study*
X438 (2 semester units in Journalism)

Content management saves money by delivering content to market faster than traditional authoring techniques. Migrating to CMS from modular publishing reduces the need to install and host authoring tools, master complex markup languages, and access remote databases. Learn how to use products, such as Joomla, to generate appealing websites, wikis, and courses, with an eye toward publishing in virtual worlds. Content management continues the trend of single-source publishing and fulfills the interactive and collaborative promise of Web 2.0 as well.

Digital Authoring For Dynamic Publishing– *Further Study*
X463 (2 semester units/30 hours in Journalism)

Authoring is not the same as it used to be. Methods of writing have changed over the years due to the explosion of Internet publishing. In this course, through lectures, analyses of test cases, relevant texts, and a final project, students will learn how to compose dynamic content using the best practices of Digital Authoring.

Courses subject to change.