According to “Writing: A Ticket to Work” (2007), a recent report by The National Commission on Writing, there is a direct correlation between the quality of writing in the workplace and compensation. The role of technical communication in workplace writing has become a “core competency” due to increasing job competition in the global economy. Employees with advanced writing skills, particularly with a background in technical communications, have an advantage in the corporate world. Moreover, the study stresses that writing is considered a value-added skill set, a necessary condition for “high-wage work,” and is a “gatekeeper” for job seekers. Over eighty percent of Fortune 400 companies place writing in the workplace as their highest job skill (Markel 3).

Writing for the Workplace is designed to help students gain a competitive edge in the core competencies of workplace and technical writing. Students will be introduced to the types of document applications in use today by technical communicators. We will address the needs of document planning, design, and organization for an increasingly multicultural and collaborative workplace. Workplace culture today demands writers attuned to ethics and excellence and who can communicate effectively across cultures. We will emphasize workplace writing and communication strategies that support project knowledge management, document-design issues, and the attendant concerns of audience, purpose, research, and presentation. Moreover, the course will cover issues of online intellectual property, and working and collaborating in a global marketplace, covering rhetorical issues as they arise in persuasive situations impacting corporate culture and globalism, as well. We also address the practical matters of writing definitions and descriptions, considerations for global readers, coherence and style, and the implementation of visual design elements in documentation and media. The emphasis on design focuses on document usability. We will cover software tools, generic applications from letters, memos, and email to the writing of proposals and reports, instructional manuals, and websites. Students will also gain experience in presentation.

Texts: