

ENGL-2210-013

Memorandum

Date: April 28th, 2025

To: Dr. Lisa Meyers, Instructor

From: Kristian Pahe

Subject: Portfolio Outcomes Memo

The ENGL-2210 Technical Writing course has nine overall student outcomes. This memorandum serves to present a self-evaluation of how I arrived at the required student outcomes of the course.

The Project Planning Course Outcome is the goal for a student to plan, research, and compose technical writing documents. Throughout the course, a few assignments fall underneath this description of technical documents. One of them is the *Fable Memo* in which we were to adapt a children's fable to be written as a memo. I had done this by creating a scenario in which the frogs were employed in a landscaping service. They were discontent in their CEO, (which was a crane in the fable), and wanted to communicate this with the chairman of the board of the company. I chose this scenario because the function of a memo is to be the internal communication, meaning that both the author and recipient are in the same organizational body, in this case the company. I followed the general layout and included the elements of the memo which were to have the company name (in this case "Frogland Landscaping Services") at the top of the page, followed by "memorandum" and a separating line. Underneath the line was the date, the name and position of the recipient ("To: Jupiter, Chairman of the Board"), a sender line ("From Pahe, Lead Manager"), and a subject line.

I then opened with an introductory paragraph that was short on pleasantries (memos as opposed to letters omit this to be more concise), and stated the purpose of the memo in that the CEO was deemed unfit by the majority of employees. The body of the memo gave two specific examples of the issue followed by a suggestion of action to be taken (reinstatement of a former CEO). The conclusion ended with a time frame for future meeting, and contact information.

The Project Analysis Course Outcome measures the student's ability to increase awareness of how a document will be received by different communities and cultures, and to use this awareness to better reach out to intended audiences.

The first major writing assignment (*MWAI Video Instructions*) was to construct a video of instructions for a process. The group decided on to have our process be the application of nail color and polish. I came to the understanding that the video would be in an accessible style as if it were to be viewed on YouTube. With this in mind and our target audience being children to young adults, I had to make the video able to keep a limited attention span. I employed colorful transitions in a more modern sans serif typeface. I started the video with a brief summary of the steps so that a viewer can easily know what to expect. I wrote the script to be more friendly and more informal way to have the video and steps seem more approachable. I also chose instrumental French House music for the background that would fit the atmosphere of fashion culture, set the tone, and add appeal. At the 0:26 time mark, I included warnings and the recommendation to seek adult supervision as children are at higher risk of ingesting toxic chemicals. I finished the script with a small outro saying to "like and subscribe" with the intention to signal the conclusion of the video.

The Content Development Course Outcome sees the ability for a student to include specific information within a genre as they work within that framework of a genre.

I did this in the *Resume* assignment where I followed the conventions provided by the instructor. The position I was applying for was a lab technician, testing materials subject to radiation damage. I included relevant information at the very top such as the my name, address, and telephone number. I also omitted the bullet points underneath the food service worker in the final version, focusing on skills relevant such as experience as an intern lab assistant. I recognized that my position was in the technical field so accentuated more of the skills to the programming that would usually correlate with that position. The skills were the coding in languages that would be used to handle scientific data such as Python, Matlab, and FORTRAN, and the L^AT_EX typesetting that is usually used for reports.

The Organizational Design Course Outcome is for a student to be able to fine-tune their research questions and practices to obtain the valuable information from firsthand and secondhand sources.

This was employed in the *MWA2 Formal Report* assignment. During research I started to learn more of the significance of public opinion surround the WIPP project and so the questions that naturally arose were as to specifically how the locals viewed the project. I learned that what shaped some of their views was the 2014 incident in which there was a radiation release due to combustion of one of the barrels of waste. I then researched further as to the root cause of this and found that more of the responsibility actually laid on the national laboratory that first generated, and prepared the waste. This led me to the conclusion (Recommendations section, page 7) that it was the communication in principal that was the problem the locals were having. The radiation release was very low and posed no risk to the public after a few days (page 7). The problem was the lack of transparency of the laboratory, which ultimately unfairly lowered public trust in the WIPP site that was not responsible for the cause. My recommendations thereafter were to increase oversight of the lab so that they will employ more meticulous accounting and safety to minimize accidents and address issues arising from simple clerical errors.

The Written Communication Course Outcome indicates how well a student can write in a fashion that is clear, with correct grammar and punctuation, and in a manner that address the audience's needs. An example of doing this outcome was through the *Rewrite Outcomes* assignment. I chose wording closer to colloquial usage while still retaining the original meaning and limitation of one sentence.

The Visual Communication Course Outcome is the reflection of how the student engages the audience through the use of visual aids. I did this best in the *MWA1 Video Instructions* assignment. In the beginning of the video I included general major steps and warnings as text on top of blurred background footage. I did this to have the important warnings to be legible, but chose not to use a static background as that could lower appeal. I also knew spelling could be a hurdle for some children so included text overlaid when the video showcased the products used.

The Reviewing and Editing Course Outcome is the measurement of the student's ability to review and proofread to ensure work is free from spelling, grammatical and other stylistic errors across different contexts and goals. This was done in the *Complaint Letter* in which one was to write a letter complaining about a specific problem on campus. I took the suggestion to introduce the problem (in this case it was inconsistent software) in a new (second) paragraph instead of coupling it in the general introduction.

The Content Management Course Outcome is a measure of a student's ability to utilize programs,

software, and web content to relay information.

I came to this outcome through the *Written Instructions* assignment. In addition to the general steps that were a little too vague, on page two, I included specific instructions so that to minimize mistakes for the reader. I followed the pattern akin to Wikihow in that main steps were broken down to smaller steps, including some optional.

Another example of was in the *MWA2 Formal Report* assignment. For the technical background knowledge I had to consult several print books to allow the reader gain an understanding. In addition I accessed several databases to find scholarly articles and technical reports. In Table I on page four, I had given a table of medium-lived fission products. The measured values in the texts were not up to date so I had to access IAEA's Chart of Nuclides for the latest scientific data for them. I also scoured the official site of WIPP to come across video recordings of community forums that WIPP held where locals presented their complaints.

The Production and Delivery Course Outcome determines the student's ability to process information through multiple modes to construct a cohesive delivery of information.

I followed through with this outcome through the *Postmortem PowerPoint Report* assignment. While giving presentation of the powerpoint, I knew it was to be addressed to fellow classmates in the course so focused my delivery more on the design choices of the assignment itself instead of the scenario in which I was an employee of PETA giving a presentation to colleagues. I pointed out the color coding (slide 5) of the ethics affected through the insensitive advertisement. To be consistent I used these same colors (slide 8) when showing recommendations to be done (red/brown being *personal*, blue being *social* and green being *conservation*). Also I narrowed my speech to what was not already evident through the text on the slides, in an effort to provide something new to the students beyond what they can already read.

My strongest item would be the *MWA1 Video Instructions* assignment. I had done substantial editing to the script so that the wording was friendly approachable, while still relaying the specific information that the viewer needs. Almost all of the outcomes were at the very least implicitly addressed, if not stressed explicitly, with the least stressed outcome being organizational design being that there was little to no research required since the background knowledge of the nail painting techniques were provided by a group member. The predominant outcomes surrounding this assignment were the Project Planning, Project Analysis, Content Development, Visual Communication, Reviewing and Editing, Content Management, and Production and Delivery.

For the project planning, I had trouble thinking of a process that wasn't so obvious nor too complicated so reached out to group members for ideas. When some were cast, I voted for the final one which was nail applicants since it had enough material to merit an entire video while still reasonably accomplished by a viewing of a 5 minute video. I then planned around this idea, deciding that I will film the video and to develop a script in the meantime. I chose to separate the video and audio so that both could be given proper attention so that they were of decent quality before merging them. For the recording of the audio I selected a quiet study room in the library so that noise could disrupt.

The Content Management was stressed in that I had to become familiar with several software programs to splice the audio and integrate them in sync with video elements. I would also have to do multiple conversions of video (downscaling video resolution) to comply with the limitations of my

laptop computer.

The weakest item is the *Resume* since I had little to no experience that was relevant to the hypothetical position I was applying for, even after conflating to general work experience irrelevant to job position. I had trouble constructing the resume due to lack of experience in the field, and ultimately included bullet points to a food service worker position that wouldn't even contribute to the merit of applying for a lab technician position.

Another weak item is the *Rewrite Outcomes* assignment. It doesn't showcase much in terms of the outcomes, only written communication as the assignment was simply interpreting and formulating in new words.

Overall, this course have given me more experience working in different formats which are new to me, namely *Postmortem PPT Report* (analyzing ethics), *Emergency Instructions* (choosing more concise statements as opposed to the verbose), and *MWA1 Video Instructions* (altogether new to me). The most challenging assignment was the *MWA2 Formal Report* in which I was to provide recommendations of actions to take. I have familiarity with technical and lab reports so went in fairly confident. Upon reflection, I am now more aware that I need more experience in prescriptive writing, that is utilizing positive statements (what *ought* or *should* happen) backed by research findings. I have become too accustomed to the descriptive writing, using normative statements to relay observations of experiment results. Through the course, I have learned some of my weaknesses in areas that I would need to improve. One outstanding is oral presentations as I will have to present for other classes as well. I'm available for any questions or comments concerning the portfolio. You can reach me at my e-mail, kpahe@unm.edu.