COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this class, you will learn to evaluate audience, purpose, context, and constraints of various technical communication practices and write and design technical communication projects. This particular class will be quite different from other tech writing courses in that we will be 1) focused on strengthening critical thinking skills in every aspect of our course, and 2) we will be...
using some dystopian/speculative fiction as the conceptual framework of our final tech writing project.

Emphasis is placed on teamwork, evaluation, reflection, and communication problem-solving strategies. Planning, working in groups, and evaluating rhetorical situations will feature prominently, and you will be able to take advantage of in-class workshops and peer reviews to get feedback on your projects. Additionally, you will spend considerable time presenting your work to the class.

Additionally, this class is participating in Clemson’s “CT2” campus-wide Quality Enhancement Plan to target undergraduate critical thinking, an invaluable skill for you to develop during your college career (employers highly value this skill!). We will focus on consciously practicing critical thinking skills throughout the semester: in our discussions, assignments, reviews, and reflections. You will complete two versions of the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) and submit an artifact of your progress in critical thinking at the end of the semester.

LEARNING OUTCOMES 
(INCLUSIVE OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS):

1. You will explore complex challenges and analyze multidimensional problems: you will analyze and evaluate diverse audiences, purposes, contexts, and constraints, and write and design technical documents that provide content specific to an audience’s needs.

2. You will extrapolate from one conceptual context to others: you will explore and use appropriate technologies to facilitate communication goals. You will be using themes and issues explored in Ready Player One as a conceptual framework for projects.

3. You will synthesize alternative solutions to multidimensional challenges: you will collaborate with peers to evaluate one another’s work and articulate the projects’ strengths and weaknesses in an effort to appropriately and effectively revise.

4. You will communicate complex ideas effectively: you will present and defend your approaches to subject matter in regards to audience, purpose, context, and constraints. You will effectively communicate complex ideas in various technical communications genres.
COURSE CONTENT

We will use the online learning management system, Canvas, for our course. Grades and feedback will be reported in Canvas.

1. Recommended and Required Text Reading: It’s highly recommended that you purchase and read Practical Strategies for Technical Communication, second edition, by Mike Markel, as a supplement to your classroom lessons and learning.

Toward the middle of the semester, you will begin working in groups to complete a final project and presentation. Each group will read one work of dystopian/speculative fiction that will serve as inspiration/a conceptual framework for the projects. Students will be grouped according to the book that “speaks” most to them from the following books:

2. Individual Assignments: As stated on the schedule, you will complete several individual assignments, which will give you practice writing within a specific tech writing genre prior to our group project.

3. Group Project: You will complete one substantial group project that covers several technical writing genres. The group will do a formal presentation of this project to the class at the end of the semester.

4. In-class Work Labs: You will participate in in-class work labs, wherein you will work within groups to brainstorm, research, write, design, review, edit, and present your work. Of course, all work cannot be completed in class, so, when appropriate, meeting as a group outside of class will be critical to success. These work labs will also be used for in-class peer reviews. Failure to be present on peer review days may result in a lowering of individual project grades.
5. **Group Presentation:** You will be required to give several in-class presentations of your work. The final presentation on our schedule reflects your group’s presentation of projects; each member must participate in the presentation. **Note:** Failure to come to class on presentation days will result in a zero for your project grade, regardless of the effort you put into the project.

6. **Rhetorical Analyses and Reflections:** Throughout the semester, we will reflect upon the work completed, specifically focusing on ideas for further development and how what we learned can be applied in other disciplines. You will also complete rhetorical analyses of your own work, explaining decisions made when completing your projects.

**GRADES AND FEEDBACK**

Grades and feedback are provided generally one to two weeks after the assignment is turned in. Unless otherwise stated, grades and feedback will be available on Canvas. If ever you need to discuss your grade with me, send me an email to set up a time to talk or come see me during office hours.

**GRADING POLICY:**
Final semester grades will be determined based upon the following:

- **Individual Assignments (including reflections):** = 40%
- **Group Project:** = 30%
- **Group Presentation:** = 10%
- **Class Participation:** = 15%
- **CT2 Test Completion** = 5%
- **TOTAL** = 100%

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<td>60-69</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59 or less</td>
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A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
F = 59 or less
In addition to the policies as stated above, this class will adhere to the following:

**CLASS POLICIES**

Absences/Tardies: You are allowed a maximum of five absences. Note: three tardies equals one absence! I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused. For every absence over the maximum, your final grade will be reduced by one letter grade per absence (i.e., You have 7 absences, so the highest possible grade you could make in the class is a C.). There are several compelling reasons for your attendance. One, this class is participatory by nature; absences affect the wellbeing of the entire class. Two, assignments will be explained in class. Three, missing class sessions is likely to put you very far behind, not only in your comprehension of the texts, but also in your grades. And, four, this class will be fun, and you will be totally missing out. With that said, please note: I WILL NOT drop any assignment, writing, or quiz grades. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get class notes, etc., from a fellow classmate. Do NOT email me asking what you missed in class; rather, contact a classmate. Further, absences will affect your class participation grade, as if you are not in class, you cannot participate. Missed in-class writing exercises, activities, and assignments cannot be made up, so be mindful of attendance.

Weather Cancellations: Any assignments due at the time of a class cancellation due to inclement weather will be due at the next class meeting unless contacted by the instructor. Any extension or postponement of assignments or exams must be granted by the instructor via email or Canvas within 24 hours of the weather related cancellation.

Electronic Devices: Laptops, iPads, Kindles, etc., are allowed in class, as your textbook readings, assignments, etc., are available online. On work lab days, you must have your laptop. These devices should only be used for coursework. Cell phones should be turned off and put away while in class. If you choose to use any device for texting, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, or any other online activity during class, your ultimate class participation grade will reflect this without warning. If I have to tell you to put up a cell phone, you can trust that this will be reflected in your grade.

Collaborative Work: Collaborative work is a required component of this course. Students are expected to work collaboratively by participating vigorously in discussions to contribute to the intellectual climate of the classroom. You are expected to talk a lot in this class. Failure to do so will be reflected in your class participation grade. Further, students will participate in a group project toward the end of the semester, and each person’s ability to collaborate within the group is vital.

Late Work: Assignments must be ready, proofed, revised, and turned in on their due dates. If you elect to turn in an assignment late, it will be marked down one grade per day late, up to four days. After four days, the grade will be recorded as zero. Missed in-class writing exercises, activities, and assignments cannot be made up, so be mindful of attendance.

Waiting: If I am not in class 10 minutes after our start time, you may leave.

**ADDITIONAL POLICIES**

In addition to the policies as stated above, this class will adhere to the following:

*NOTE* I will not round up to the next point bracket. I will not add additional points to your grade for any reason. Grades must be earned.
• All assignments are due at the beginning of class or by their due date on Canvas. Hand in all assignments to the instructor, and/or upload to Canvas as indicated. Do NOT leave an assignment on your desk, under my door, in my box, etc.
• **Consistent attendance, punctuality and participation are expected.** If you have a serious and compelling reason for absences, please speak with me in private. In-class activities may not be made up.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**
To view a list of all University student policies, please see [http://www.clemson.edu/administration/student-affairs/student-handbook/universitypolicies/index.html](http://www.clemson.edu/administration/student-affairs/student-handbook/universitypolicies/index.html).

**PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**
As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson’s vision of this institution as a “high seminary of learning.” Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form. When, in the opinion of a faculty member, there is evidence that a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, the faculty member shall make a formal written charge of academic dishonesty, including a description of the misconduct, to the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies. If you have any questions whatsoever about what constitutes plagiarism, see me before you turn in final drafts of your work. Students are not allowed to submit work from other classes for credit in this course.

**DISABILITY ACCESS STATEMENT:** Clemson University values the diversity of our student body as a strength and a critical component of our dynamic community. Students with disabilities or temporary injuries/conditions may require accommodations due to barriers in the structure of facilities, course design, technology used for curricular purposes, or other campus resources. Students who experience a barrier to full access to this class should let the professor know, and make an appointment to meet with a staff member in Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible. You can make an appointment by calling 864-656-6848, by emailing studentaccess@lists.clemson.edu, or by visiting Suite 239 in the Academic Success Center building. Appointments are strongly encouraged – drop-ins will be seen if at all possible, but there could be a significant wait due to scheduled appointments. Students who receive Academic Access Letters are strongly encouraged to request, obtain and present these to their professors as early in the semester as possible so that accommodations can be made in a timely manner. It is the student’s responsibility to follow this process each semester. You can access further information here: [http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/sds/](http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/sds/).

**CLEMSON UNIVERSITY TITLE IX (SEXUAL HARASSMENT):** Clemson University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, veteran’s status, genetic information or protected activity (e.g., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in any complaint process, etc.) in employment, educational programs and activities, admissions and financial aid. This includes a prohibition against sexual harassment and sexual violence as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. This policy is located at
http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/title-ix/. Mr. Jerry Knighton is the Clemson University Title IX Coordinator. He also is the Director of Access and Equity. His office is located at 111 Holtzendorff Hall, 864.656.3181 (voice) or 864.565.0899 (TDD).

SCHEDULE

*NOTE* Have novel read and be ready to discuss by the due date on the schedule!

Week 1 (8/23): Welcome to Technical Writing
- W: Syllabus/Class Overview
- F: Intros/CT2 Test #1

Week 2 (8/28-9/1)
- M: Technical Communications Overview
- W: Resume and Cover Letter Writing
- F: Resume and Cover Letter Writing

Week 3 (9/4-9/8)
- M: In-class Peer Review
- W: In-class Mock Interview
- F: In-class Mock Interview/Final Resumes and Cover Letters Due!

Week 4 (9/11-9/15)
- M: Analyzing Audience and Purpose
- W: Analyzing Audience and Purpose
- F: Analyzing Audience and Purpose

Week 5 (9/18-9/22)
- M: Writing with Clarity
- W: Infographics and Visual Communication
- F: Critical Thinking Session

Week 6 (9/25-9/29)
- M: Proposal Writing
- W: Proposal Writing
- F: Proposal Writing

Week 7 (10/2-10/6)
- M: Proposal Writing/Group Work
- W: Proposal Writing/Group Work
- F: In-class pitches!/Written Proposals Due, along with individual Rhetorical Analyses!

Week 8 (10/9-10/13)
- M: Instructional Writing
- W: Instructional Writing
- F: Instructional Writing/Instructions Due, along with Rhetorical Analyses!
Week 9 (10/16-10/20)
• M: FALL BREAK
• W: TBD
• F: Final Project Overview (All group books should be read by this date!)

Week 10 (10/23-10/27)
• M: Brainstorming Session
• W: Brainstorming Session
• F: Brainstorming Session

Week 10 (10/30-11/3)
• M: Group Work/Group Proposal Due!
• W: Group Work
• F: Group Work

Week 11 (11/6-11/10)
• M: Group Work
• W: Group Work
• F: Group Work

Week 12 (11/13-11/17)
• M: Group Work
• W: Group Work
• F: Group Work

Week 13 (11/20-11/24)
• M: TBD
• W: THANKSGIVING
• F: THANKSGIVING

Week 14 (11/27-12/1)
• M: Presentations/Individual Feedback Reviews Due!
• W: Presentations
• F: Presentations

Week 16 (12/4-12/8)
• M: Presentations
• W: Presentations/Student Evals
• F: Presentations/Student Evals/CT2 Test #2 DUE

There is no final exam for this class.

* The instructor maintains the right to change policies, readings, assignments, and schedules as deemed necessary.