

UAHuntsville Technical Communication



The Program

The English Department hosts a **Business and Technical Writing Program** that offers a **Technical Writing Cognate** (similar to the minor) for undergraduate students and a **Graduate Certificate in Technical Communication** for graduate students. Both programs provide an interdisciplinary curriculum that prepares students for careers as technical communicators by giving them a strong theoretical and practical background in technical writing and editing plus skills in project management, software programs, and document design. Students also improve their technical communication skills by customizing their degree with technical courses that fit their interests and make them more marketable to potential employers.

What is Technical Communication?

Technical communication (also called “technical writing”) explains technical processes and products to users. Technical communicators translate highly technical concepts into language and images that everyday users can understand. These writers produce user manuals and instructions, edit complex manuscripts, design documents and websites, write proposals and reports, and conduct usability tests of websites, software, and products.

Technical Writing Cognate and Certificate

Technical Writing Cognate

The technical writing cognate draws courses from several disciplines into a coherent minor that prepares students for multi-faceted careers in technical communication. The English Department offers a 22-hour (seven-course) cognate open to students from any major. For Liberal Arts majors, the cognate combines academic preparation in writing and editing with technical courses in science, computer science, or engineering. For students majoring in technical disciplines, the cognate offers additional English or Communications courses. All students complete an internship that provides practical, hands-on experience supervised by a professional technical communicator.

Graduate Certificate in Technical Communication

The Graduate Certificate in Technical Communication is a six-course graduate program that helps students develop and refine skills necessary for a technical communication career. The certificate contains two core courses and two electives in the English department. Additionally, students choose two courses from an allied field that will provide them with technical knowledge in the area of their choice. The program is open to graduate students in any discipline, and it offers many evening courses to accommodate students who work full time. The six courses taken in the Certificate can be combined with another six classes in the English graduate program to complete an M.A. in English.



Technical Communication

Careers in Technical Communication

Technical communicators find jobs in many different industries. They work for hardware and software companies, engineering and aerospace firms, manufacturing plants, telecommunications companies, research institutions, the military, and government agencies. Graduates from the UAHuntsville technical communication program have worked at companies such as Intergraph, NASA, Avocent, Northrop Grumman, SAIC, the US Space and Rocket Center, and Yulista Management Services. The program also has a strong connection with the Society for Technical Communication in Huntsville/North Alabama, which provides networking opportunities, training, and events for local technical communicators.

Internships

Technical communication students have several opportunities to participate in internships with local companies. As part of the technical writing cognate, all students are required to complete a 150-hour internship. Students taking the Graduate Certificate in Technical Communication also have the option of completing an internship that unites workplace experience with an academic research project.

Program Courses

Cognate in Technical Writing

Liberal Arts Majors

EH 301: Technical Writing	3 credits
EH 302: Technical Editing	4 credits
EH 320: Practicum in Writing	3 credits
Directed Elective	3 credits
<u>Technical Electives</u>	<u>9 credits</u>
TOTAL	22 credits

Technical Majors

EH 301: Technical Writing	3 credits
EH 302: Technical Editing	4 credits
EH 320: Practicum in Writing	3 credits
Directed Elective	3 credits
<u>Humanities Electives</u>	<u>9 credits</u>
TOTAL	22 Credits

Graduate Certificate in Technical Communication

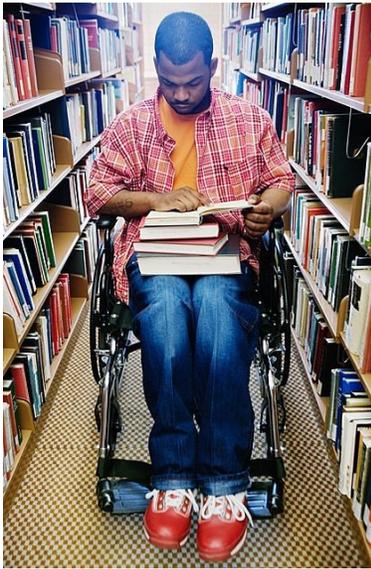
EH 501: Theory and Practice of Technical Communication	3 credits
EH 502: Technical Editing	3 credits
Approved 600-Level English Elective	3 credits
Approved English Elective	3 credits
<u>Allied Field Electives</u>	<u>6 credits</u>
TOTAL	18 Credits

Potential Allied Fields

Business Administration	Linguistics
Computer Science	Management
Education	Marketing
Engineering Management	Psychology
Information Systems	Nursing

Program Information and Resources

The program hosts a blog at uahtechcomm.com featuring event information, program paperwork, and technical communication resources, articles and links. Students can also like "UAH Technical Communication" on Facebook for announcements and updates.



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