



# Course syllabus

## VG500

### Technical Communication

### Fall 2018

#### Course description

The focus of this course will be the understanding of technical communication, that is learning how to write and present scientific articles.

This course has been tailored with three main goals in mind:

- Learn how to clearly organize ideas;
- Learn how to clearly share ideas;
- Become familiar with  $\text{\LaTeX}$ ;

Hence, at the end of this course, students should be provided with a solid basis for writing scientific articles or thesis; In particular they should have developed the necessary skills to engage in the writing, presentation, and reviewing of papers.

Refer to the course information on [Canvas](#) for more details.

#### Instructor

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Office: 437A

Office hours: Tuesday 15:40 – 17:50

#### Textbooks

The following references and links can be used to find information relevant to the course.

- W. Strunk and E. White, *The elements of style*, Value Classic Reprints, 978-1945644016;
- A. Wallwor, *English for writing research papers*, Springer, 78-3319260921;
- P. Halmos, *How to write mathematics*, L'Enseignement mathématique 16: 123 152;
- $\text{\LaTeX}$  book: <https://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/LaTeX>



## Course website

All the course related materials will be made available on <http://umjicanvas.com/login>

## Grading policy

The final average will be composed of three “sub-grades”, apportioned as follows:

- Assignments: 25%
- Presentations: 30%
- Quizzes: 15%
- Personal work: 10%
- Project: 20%

The common article submission policies apply to all the assignments. In particular, **late or misplaced** submissions will be rejected, while **low quality homework**, clearly showing a lack of efforts, will not be graded. This can for instance be the case of an assignment featuring more than two or three misspellings.

The passing grade will be set to 60%, i.e. any student with a final grade lower than 60% will receive the failing grade F. Any missed lecture will incur a  $-2\%$  deduction on the final grade, unless an email with clear explanations on why the lecture is missed and the corresponding document (e.g. doctor’s note) is emailed to the instructor **before the lecture**. Unless impossible the instructor must know of the missed lecture **before** the beginning of the actual lecture.

Refer to the course information on [Canvas](#) for more details.

## Exams

The course features three graded presentations and several quizzes, but not midterm or final exam.

## Honor code policy

It is of a major importance for any submitted work to be the result of one own research and understanding. In particular it is not acceptable to reuse the work from another student, or downloaded from the internet. Students can however help each others in an up-building way by sharing ideas and understanding on the course.

If in any case, part of the course, a textbook, or any other material is reused, its source should be clearly stated such as not to induce any possible confusion.

Copying the work of others will result in **severe penalties**, according to the [JI Honor Code Policy](#).

Plagiarism being discussed over the first lecture in Chapter 0, **anybody found plagiarising the work of others will be sent to Honor Council.**

Refer to the course information on [Canvas](#) for more details.



## Teaching schedule

| Week | No. | Date  | Lectures' content                                            | Comments                                       |
|------|-----|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | 1   | 09-11 | Course information                                           |                                                |
|      | 2   | 09-13 | Creating professional documents                              | L <sup>A</sup> T <sub>E</sub> X documents      |
| 2    | 3   | 09-18 | Avoiding plagiarism                                          |                                                |
|      | 4   | 09-20 | Writing mathematics                                          | Grammar and L <sup>A</sup> T <sub>E</sub> X    |
| 3    | 5   | 09-25 | Valid and sound reasoning                                    |                                                |
|      | 6   | 09-27 | Constructive discussions, presentations, and public speaking |                                                |
| 4    | 7   | 10-02 | National holidays                                            | No class                                       |
|      | 8   | 10-04 | National holidays                                            | No class                                       |
| 5    | 9   | 10-09 | Seminar: literature search and endnote                       | Location: library                              |
|      | 10  | 10-11 | High quality figures                                         |                                                |
| 6    | 11  | 10-16 | History of English and grammatical reminders                 |                                                |
|      | 12  | 10-18 | Concept diagrams                                             |                                                |
| 7    | 13  | 10-23 | Constructing clear arguments                                 |                                                |
|      | 14  | 10-25 | Concept diagram presentations                                | <b>Graded</b>                                  |
| 8    | 15  | 10-30 | Presenting the methodology                                   |                                                |
|      | 16  | 11-01 | Designing professional tables                                | Guidelines and L <sup>A</sup> T <sub>E</sub> X |
| 9    | 17  | 11-06 | Highlighting the significance of the results                 |                                                |
|      | 18  | 11-08 | Bibliography and slides                                      | Guidelines and L <sup>A</sup> T <sub>E</sub> X |
| 10   | 19  | 11-13 | Conclusion and introduction                                  |                                                |
|      | 20  | 11-15 | Posters                                                      |                                                |
| 11   | 21  | 11-20 | Abstract and improving the writing style                     |                                                |
|      | 22  | 11-22 | Answering and writing reviews                                |                                                |
| 12   | 23  | 11-27 | Writing a thesis                                             |                                                |
|      | 24  | 11-29 | Slide presentation of a research project                     | <b>Graded</b>                                  |
| 13   | 25  | 12-04 | Slide presentation of a research project                     | <b>Graded</b>                                  |
|      | 26  | 12-06 | Poster presentation and project evaluation                   | <b>Graded</b>                                  |