**ME 297**

**Engineering Writing**

# Spring 2018 (3 credits)

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MWF: 1:25-2:15  
 MWF: 3:35-4:25

Office Hours: By Appointment 201 Hammond Bldg

**Welcome**

ME 297, which is a 3-credit substitute for English 202c, shadows the writing assignments in ME 340 (ME Design Methodology) to teach you how to write the most important types of engineering documents: correspondence, reports, and proposals. The intention of this course is to prepare you to write as a professional engineer in industry or in research labs. In addition, this course teaches you how to edit as an engineering manager would. Although ME 297 will not be easier than English 202c is, the instruction and assignments in ME 297 will likely be more in line with what you experience as an engineer in industry or research.

#### Course Goals

1. To be able to communicate engineering messages to varied audiences
2. To be able to structure emails, proposals, and reports so that they are logical, achieve an appropriate depth, and emphasize important details
3. To be able to craft sentences that are both precise and clear and to be able to connect those sentences into paragraphs that maintain energy
4. To be able to incorporate effective illustrations and equations into an engineering document
5. To be able to design documents such that they are professionally formatted and free of distracting grammar, punctuation, and usage errors
6. To be able to plan, draft, revise, and finish documents in a timely manner
7. To learn strategies for writing other common types of technical documents: instructions, posters, and web pages
8. To create a portfolio of your own engineering writing

**Texts and Course Materials**

1. Michael Alley, *The Craft of Scientific Writing,* 4th ed.(New York: Springer, 1996). As long as this book is in press, I will supply the text on Canvas.
2. *Writing Guidelines for Engineering and Science*, ed. by Michael Alley <http://www.craftofscientificwriting.com> (University Park: Penn State, 1997).

**Co-requisite**

Enrollment in ME 340

**Writing Assignments**

In the course, you will have four out-of-class writing assignments, of which the last three will arise from your project in ME 340.

***1. Job Application Email.*** Write an email to secure an entry-level job, internship, or research position. To allow us to make edits, use the provided email template in Microsoft Word. To this email, attach a resume.

***2. Handout for Initial Research Presentation****.* For the initial research presentation that your team created for ME 340, use the Notes Pages of PowerPoint to create a handout that allows the presentation to stand alone. Note that the presentations are to follow the assertion-evidence structure.

***3. Proposal.*** Write a proposal for the design concept that your ME 340 team will prototype. Follow the proposal guidelines of ME 340. This proposal will also be submitted for a content grade in ME 340.

***4. Final Report****.* Write a report that documents your team’s final design in ME 340. Follow the report guidelines of ME 340. This report will also be submitted for a content grade in ME 340.

**Grading**

Final course grades will be determined as follows:

Correspondence 100 pts

Handout for Initial Research Presentation 100 pts

Proposal 300 pts

Final Report 200 pts

Peer critiques and assignment corrections 150 pts

Quizzes 150 pts

Total Points **1000 pts**

**Policies**

**Late Assignments:** Assignments are due on the dates specified in the syllabus. *Late work will be penalized 10 percent for each day that the assignment is late***.** Part of learning to write as an engineer is learning to meet deadlines.

**Attendance:** Because much of the class time is devoted to developing your critiquing skills, attendance is expected. To that end, we will have a quiz each day, and you will be allowed to drop only two quizzes.