

EE 501: Academic Writing

Winter 2025 syllabus

W UNIVERSITY of
WASHINGTON
Electrical & Computer Engineering

REFINE YOUR ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS AND PREPARE TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Course Information

Course Overview

The purpose of this course is to refine the academic writing skills of students involved in the research. The course teaches you how to organize the process of writing, find and analyze publishing opportunities, and review publications with a critical eye. Topics will include writing high-quality journal papers, conference papers, grant proposals, and theses. This course will give you the tools to structure your work appropriately, satisfying all language, syntax, style, and appearance requirements.

Course content

The following four areas will be covered throughout the course:

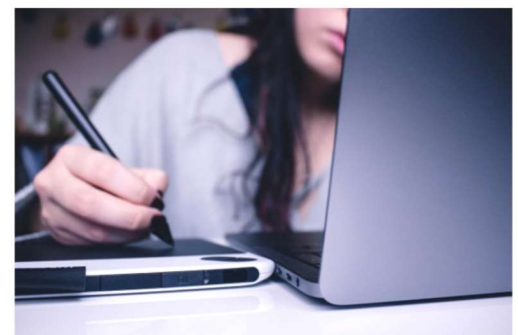
- **Writing fundamentals:** Organization, language
- **Writing processes:** Editing, proofreading, reviewing, and collaborating.
- **Software tools:** Formatting, cross-referencing, automatic numbering project management.
- **AI tools:** AI's role in technical writing, effectiveness, and pitfalls

Learning goals

- Prepare and publish both formal and informal technical documents
- Offer quality writing-focused feedback
- Present your work to formal and informal audiences
- Effectively communicate complex ideas using clear, precise, and concise language
- Use common writing software and AI tools effectively



Course Number and Title
EE 501 – Academic Writing



Instructor

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Credits: 4

Approximately list of topics (to be altered base on feedback and observations)

Topic 1 - Introduction

- Course introduction, expectations, and syllabus overview.
- Overview of journals and conferences in electrical engineering, discussion of impact factors, h-factors, and related topics.

Topic 2 - Structure, Organization, and Anatomy of a Technical Paper

- 100-Minute Paper - A in-class real-time writing exercises to identify main trouble points for the currently enrolled students.
- Overview and initial setup of Yellow Brick Road process, a step by step process to writing a paper/proposal

Topic 3 - Production Stage: Precise Language, Clarity, Style, and Implementation

- Consider the formula for a successful document: Proper

formatting, appropriate language, consistent tense, and perspective (i.e. third-person perspective in the abstract), length, equations, figures, context

- Investigating submission process, completing relevant registration, and supplemental documents

Topic 4 – Writing Process: Grammar, Syntax, and References

- A highly individualized section that focuses on students' weaknesses identified during earlier homework assignments
- Overview and exploration of modern tools that assist in effective writing (Endnote, ChatGPT, Perplexity AI, Grammarly, etc)
- Discuss of AI's role in technical writing, how to use it effectively, and its pitfalls

- Dedicated sessions to the formatting of graphics within technical writing

Topic 5 – Analysis Stage and Post-Submission Steps

- Analyzing reviewer feedback and strategizing next steps
- Performing final process reviews and improvement checks

Topic 6 – General Technical Writing Guidance Tips

- Discuss steps to successfully draft and write a paper, mitigating writer's block, and the importance of using a layered editing approach to refine content
- Discussion of books, theses, proposals, larger group projects, and collaborative team writing. How to approach being a team leader, especially for collaborative writing projects

Assignment Team Logistics

Teams of 3-5 will be randomly assigned at the beginning of the quarter within internal documentation. Students are free to switch teams both initially and between assignments, as long as the team remains between 3-5.

Grade submission policy

The due dates for all assignments, exams and midterms will be listed at the start of the quarter. Assignments assigned as group work will be submitted through canvas based on assigned groups.

The class additionally has an automatic extension of one week tied to each assignment. This automatic extension is reflected on Canvas by the "available until" date.

Each student may use up to three automatic extensions, no questions asked. Subsequent late submissions will require student justification and will have half of its points automatically deducted.

Lecture Logistics

Lecture attendance is not required. Some lectures will be pre-recorded, and class time will be shortened accordingly. The balance between pre-recorded and live lectures will be maintained based on student reaction and feedback.

Class Participation

While lecture attendance is not required, your class participation element of the grade is likely to benefit if you attend frequently. To supplement this, a Health Point (HP)

system is implemented within the course helping visualize student engagement. All students start at 5 HP. If your HP becomes 0 or below, you will not earn the participation points for the class Everyone needs 10HP by the end of the quarter for full participation points.



Grading	
40%	Assignments
25%	Midterm
10%	Participation HP
25%	Final Paper