

# ENGL 3764: Technical Writing (Online)

Summer II (July 7 - August 15, 2015)

**ASSIGNMENT:** Group Project Proposal **DUE DATE:** TBA

## Learning Objectives

1. To identify a real-world problem that can be addressed with technical communication
2. To better understand the genre conventions of a proposal
3. To develop content and design a project proposal
4. To work on a group project with remote collaborators

## The Scenario

This assignment requires you to work with remote team members to identify a problem on the Virginia Tech campus, the New River Valley, or Northern Virginia. (I will do my best to create geographically similar groups so that you have the same frame of reference.)

In the course of our daily lives, we all notice situations, processes, things, etc. that are either dangerous, inefficient, or lacking in some way. Your job as a group is to identify one of these situations, decide how it can be rectified, and propose your problem and solution to me in the form of a memo.

This will be a challenge because this class does not meet face-to-face. However, you have numerous technologies at your disposal to communicate and coauthor a document. I will let each team decide on how it will negotiate this logistical challenge. If you would like advice, please feel free to ask me for some remote collaboration strategies.

## The Deliverable

The final proposal should be uploaded to Scholar as a single file. That means groups will have to choose one person to deliver the document to me. The proposal should be in the form of a 5-7 page (single-spaced) memo addressed to me. Submit your proposal as a PDF with your group's name and the title of this assignment. The memo should include the these sections:

1. **Background.** What information does your reader need to know to understand your proposal? This can be a basic introduction to your subject, to its geographic location, users, and history. After reading this section, your audience should be able to situate the problem and understand what it is a problem.
2. **Problem.** What is the problem or opportunity you have identified? Why is it a problem? How big of a problem is it? To whom is it a problem?
3. **Purpose.** Briefly (in no more than three sentences) describe the purpose of your proposal. Think of this as your "elevator pitch" to me.
4. **Audience.** To whom would you have to submit this proposal to make a change? What factors are likely to persuade them?
5. **Research.** What will you have to know to write a convincing report about this problem or opportunity? What are your research questions? Where will you find the answers to these questions? Identify primary and secondary resources.
6. **Budget.** It costs money to solve problems. What type of materials and funding will you need to solve the problem? Where will you seek funds? What type of staff will you need to accomplish the project?
7. **Appendices.** This is where other information that is important but does not neatly fit in the proposal goes. It could be references to news stories or governmental data or charts and graphs.

Be sure to review Chapter 11 in *Practical Strategies for Technical Communication*. You will find an excellent example of a proposal on p. 290 and a proposal writer's checklist on p. 296.

## Reflection Memo

After your group completes and delivers the proposal, EACH group member must write a short (250-word) memo to me stating:

1. The aspects of the proposal for which you are responsible.
2. Your experience of working with your team mates to create this document.