Course Schedule
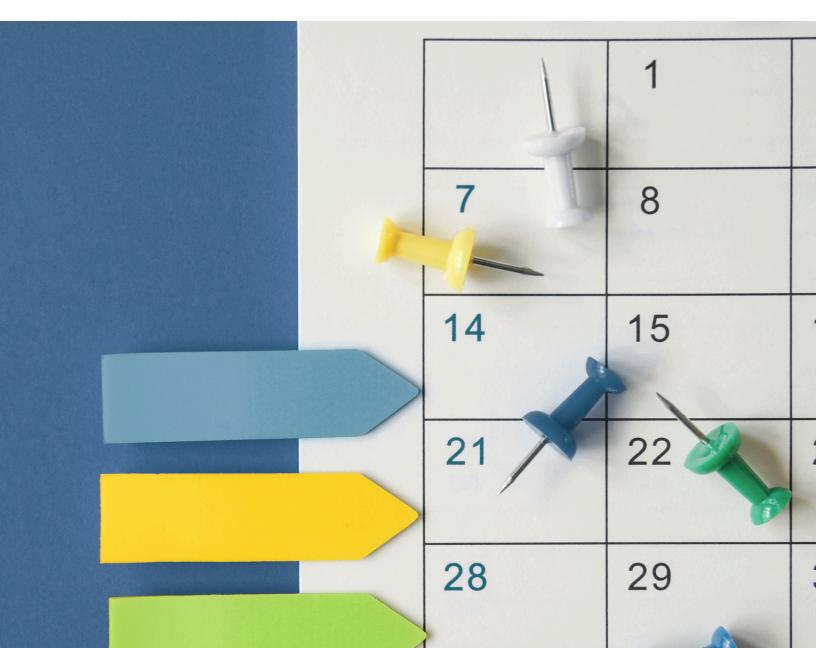
ENL 620
Writing Computer-User Documentation

ENL 620: Writing Computer-User Documentation Course Schedule

Course Schedule

The readings are listed in the order you should read them. Also, know that our schedule is subject to change.

Unit 1: Intro to Design Thinking, Usability Studies, & User Experience	
Week 1 **M 9.1**	No Class Labor Day
Week 2	**Class Intro: Your Interests & How You Can Study Them**
M 9.8 *In person*	**In-Class Guiding Questions** • Common misconceptions • What is research? • What is user research? • What are your interests in Professional Writing & Communication? • How can we study our interests? **Homework** • Optional – Intro to Perusall
Week 3	**Research Methods, Defining Design Thinking, Usability, & Wicked Problems**
M 9.15 *In person*	**Before Class – Read & Annotate with Perusall** • Clary-Lemon, J., Mueller, D. & Pantelides, K. (2022). Chapter 1. What are research methods? *Try this: Research methods for writers* (pp. 3–20). The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado. https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/try/chapter1.pdf • Tham, J. & Thominet, L. (2022). Introduction to design thinking & keywords. In J. Tham (Ed.), *Keywords in design thinking: A lexical primer for technical communicators & designers* (pp. 3–17). The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado. https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/design/intro.pdf • Rose, E. J. (2022). 27. Usability. In J. C. K Tham (Ed.), *Keywords in design thinking: A lexical primer for technical communicators & designers* (pp. 147–150). The WAC Clearinghouse; University

	Press of Colorado. https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/design/chapter27.pdf • Garskie, L. (2022). 29. Wicked problems. In J. C. K Tham (Ed.), *Keywords in design thinking: A lexical primer for technical communicators & designers* (pp. 155–159). The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado. https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/design/chapter29.pdf
Week 4	**Wicked Problem Example, Forming Teams, & Research Proposal Drafting Day 1**
M 9.22 *In person*	**Before Class – Read & Annotate with Perusall** *Choose 3 articles to read and annotate* • Dighton, D., Abel, B., & Bikmohammadi, M. (2025). Localizing with GAI in the archives: Exploring practitioner attitudes on challenges and opportunities. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 319–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/10572252.2024.2445302 • Graham, S. S., & Hopkins, H. R. (2022). AI for social justice: New methodological horizons in technical communication. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 89–102. https://doi.org/10.1080/10572252.2021.1955151 • Jiang, J. & Verhulsdonck, G. (2025). Augmenting user experience design with multimodal generative artificial intelligence: A study of technical communication students. *Technical Communication Quarterly,* 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/10572252.2025.2473503 • Jiang, J., Vetter, M. A., & Lucia, B. (2024). From hype to practice: Reinterpreting the writing process through technical writing students' engagement with ChatGPT. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 1–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/10572252.2024.2445302 **Homework** • Discussion – Finalize usability teams
Week 5	**Choosing a Wicked Problem & Research Proposal Drafting Day 2**
M 9.29 *In person*	**Before Class – Read & Annotate with Perusall** • Laubheimer, P. (2016, January 3). *How UX professionals collaborate on deliverables*. NN/g.

	https://www.nngroup.com/articles/ux-deliverables-collaboration/ • Clary-Lemon, J., Mueller, D. & Pantelides, K. (2022). Chapter 4. Working with words. *Try this: Research methods for writers* (pp. 69–87). The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado. https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/try/chapter4.pdf • Clary-Lemon, J., Mueller, D. & Pantelides, K. (2022). Chapter 5. Working with people. *Try this: Research methods for writers* (pp. 89–107). The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado. https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/try/chapter5.pdf

Unit 2: Understanding & Researching Users	
Week 6	**Researching Users**
M 10.6 *In person*	**Unit 1: Research Proposal due by 11:59 p.m.** **Before Class – Read & Annotate with Perusall** • Wible, S. (2022). 1. Empathy. In J. C. K Tham (Ed.), *Keywords in design thinking: A lexical primer for technical communicators & designers* (pp. 21–24). The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado. https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/design/chapter1.pdf • Tham, J. C. K., Howard, T. & Verhulsdonck, G. (2024). 4. Empathizing with and assessing user needs. *UX writing: Designing user-centered content* (pp. 58–87). Routledge. • Tham, J. C. K., Howard, T. & Verhulsdonck, G. (2024). 5. Defining problems and opportunities. *UX writing: Designing user-centered content* (pp. 88–109). Routledge.
Week 7 **M 10.13**	No Class Indigenous Peoples' Day
Week 8	**Peer Review: User Research Summary & User Personas**
M 10.20 *Independent work*	**Before Class – Post Draft** Upload your Unit 2 deliverables (User Research Summary Draft & 2 User Personas) to the peer review activity before class. Post peer review feedback by 11:59 p.m.

Unit 3: Designing, Testing, & Conducting a Usability Study

Week 9	Designing a Usability Study
M 10.27 *In person*	**Unit 2: User Research due by 11:59 p.m.** **Before Class – Read & Annotate with Perusall** • Nielsen, J. (2012). *Usability 101: Introduction to usability*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/usability-101-introduction-to-usability/ • Rosala, M. (2024, November 1). *Research plans: organize, document, inform*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/pm-research-plan/ • Loranger, H. (2016, April 17). *Checklist for planning usability studies*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/usability-test-checklist/ • Moran, K. (2021, February 7). *How to test content with users*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/testing-content-websites/?lm=user-quotes&pt=youtubevideo • *Facilitator guide*. (n.d.). NN/g. https://media.nngroup.com/media/editor/2022/05/12/nng-example-facilitator-guide.pdf
Week 10	Creating Questions & Interviewing Users
M 11.3 *In person*	**Before Class – Read & Annotate with Perusall** • Moran, K. (2024, July 24). *Qualitative usability testing: Study guide*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/qual-usability-testing-study-guide/?lm=test-5-users-qual-vs-quant&pt=youtubevideo • Nielsen, J. (2010, July 24). *Interviewing users*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/interviewing-users/ • Rosala, M. (2024, January 26). *Open-ended vs. Closed questions in user research*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/open-ended-questions/?lm=interviewing-users&pt=article • Rosala. M. (2021, February 28). *Writing an effective guide for a UX interview*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/interview-guide/
Week 11	Workday
M 11.10	**Unit 3: Usability Study Plan Draft due by 11:59 p.m.**

Independent work	Work with your team to finish and submit your Usability Study Plan Draft. Dr. B will be available for questions during class time via Discord.
Week 12	**Pilot Testing Your Usability Study Plan**
M 11.17 *In person*	Bring your revised usability study plan, including moderator script, to class for a pilot testing session. **Before Class – Read & Annotate with Perusall** • Fessenden, T. (2021, June 6). *5 facilitation mistakes to avoid during user interviews*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/interview-facilitation-mistakes/

Unit 4: Reporting Your Findings

Week 13	**Writing a Usability Report**
M 11.24 *In person*	**Unit 3: Final Usability Study Plan due by 11:59 p.m.** **Before Class – Read & Annotate with Perusall** • Interaction Design Foundation. (n.d.). *Usability reports*. https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/usability-reports?srsltid=AfmBOorc5X_MkuSFSpCIX_amGSBpLx4j-X7bImT_gM7lwaqMm-7UiwT- • Schade, A. (2013, September 14). *Making usability findings actionable: 5 tips for writing better reports*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/actionable-usability-findings/ • Krause, R. (2020, July 19). *Turning complex data into compelling stories: A 5-step process*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/complex-data-compelling-stories/ • Rosala, M. (2022, August 17). *How to analyze qualitative data from UX research: Thematic analysis*. NN/g. https://www.nngroup.com/articles/thematic-analysis/
Week 14	**Run Your Usability Test**
M 12.1 *Independent work*	This week is dedicated to working with your team to run your usability test. Afterward, begin drafting the Usability Report in preparation for team meetings.

Week 15	Usability Team Workday & Team Meetings
M 12.8 *Group meetings*	Teams must schedule a 10–20-minute meeting (in-person, Zoom, or live Discord group chat) with Dr. B for this week to discuss your usability test and usability report. *All team members must attend. One teammate can schedule the meeting on the group's behalf.*
Week 16	Final Usability Report Due
Sat 12.13	Unit 4: Usability Report Due Sat 12.13 at 2:30 p.m.