AI and Automation in Technical Communication

Class & Section Number: 4010.001
Term: Fall 2025
Location: AUDB 312
Time: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-12:30 PM

Instructor Information

Name: Dr. Ashley Rea-Maharaj (you can call me Dr. Rea!)
Office: LANG #407K
Student Hours: Tuesday 12:30-1:30, Wednesday 10:00-12:00, and by appointment
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Course Description, Structure, and Objectives

Explores the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation on professional and technical communication. Skills in using AI-assisted tools for content creation, project management, and user-experience design.

Learning Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course, you will demonstrate your competence in these areas.
- **Analyze** the impact of AI and automation on the field of technical communication, including its ethical implications and evolving role of the technical communicator.
- **Evaluate** the capabilities and limitations of various AI tools and platforms for specific technical communication tasks, such as content generation, optimization, analysis, and distribution.
- **Apply** AI tools and techniques to enhance content workflows, improve efficiency, and address specific "work problems" within the technical communication domain.
- **Design** AI-integrated content strategies that leverage automation while maintaining human oversight and ethical considerations.
- **Create** a capstone project that demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of AI's transformative potential in technical communication through a self-directed, practical application.

Office Hours & Conferences
Office hours offer you an opportunity to ask for clarification or find support with understanding class material. Come visit me! I encourage you to connect with me and/or my TA, Mai Nguyen, for support. Additional office hours, in person and virtually, will be offered as the semester concludes. Your success is our goal.

See me when you have questions about an assignment, when you would like to try out some ideas before a document is due, or when you have questions about a comment. You should also see me to get help with particular writing problems, to resolve differences about grades, or to suggest ways to improve the course.

Required Materials

To fully participate in this class, students will be required to have access to the following:

- **Readings:** No textbooks are required for this course. Given how quickly AI is developing, we'll rely on carefully curated weekly materials. These readings will provide diverse perspectives on AI and its impact on content lifecycle management.
- **AI Tools:** This course is designed to introduce you to the vast and rapidly changing landscape of AI tools. You are not required to purchase a subscription to any of these tools. However, many of these platforms offer premium features through paid subscriptions that you may find beneficial for your current learning and future career. You'll have the chance to experiment with many different tools, and I recommend exploring a paid subscription to at least one LLM during the semester. Consider this an investment in your discovery process, allowing you to experience the cutting edge of AI technology!
- **Technology:** This is a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) class. **Please bring a laptop or tablet to every class session.** This will allow you to fully participate in hands-on activities and access AI tools using your preferred settings and security configurations. While OpenAI (ChatGPT), Anthropic (Claude), and Google (Gemini) offer mobile apps, you may find them less convenient for the type of in-class work we'll be doing.

Assignments

Students achieve the learning goals of the course through four major assignments and eight smaller case study activities. All assignment instructions, including evaluation criteria and due dates, are found on Canvas. Assignment instructions include an estimate of the hours required to successfully complete them.

- Case Study 1: AI Tool Presentation
- Case Study 2: Markov Chains & Predictive Text Technologies
- Case Study 3: Algorithm Audit
- Case Study 4: Reverse Engineering Your Writing
- Case Study 5: AI vs. Human Editing Showdown
- Case Study 6: Chatbot Conversation Story
- Case Study 7: Designing an AI-Powered Chatbot
- Case Study 8: Chatbot Usability Test

Assignment 1: Learning with AI Microcredential
Complete targeted AI skill-building activities. Curate evidence of learning. Reflect on applications to technical communication.

Assignment 2: AI-Enhanced Self-Evaluation of Technical Writing
Use AI tools to evaluate your own technical writing samples against established criteria. Compare the AI feedback to your self-assessment and reflect on how to leverage AI for continued writing improvement.

Assignment 3: AI-Powered Workflow Innovation
Identify a future "work problem," research AI solutions, and propose an AI-integrated workflow. Create a tangible demonstration of your solution and reflect on its ethical implications.

Assignment 4: AI Capstone
Design and execute a self-directed project showcasing AI's impact on technical communication and content strategy. Create a tangible deliverable, present your project, and reflect on your learning journey.

Assessing Your Work

This class uses labor-based contract grading. Therefore, the default grade for the course is a "B" (3.0). In a nutshell, if you do all that is asked of you in the manner and spirit it is asked, if you work through the processes we establish and the work we assign ourselves in the labor instructions during the quarter, if you do all the labor asked of you, then you'll get a "B" course grade. It will not matter what I or your colleagues think of your writing, only that you are listening to our feedback compassionately. We may disagree or misunderstand your writing, but if you put in the labor, you are guaranteed a B course grade. If you miss class (do not participate fully), turn in assignments late, forget to do assignments, or do not follow the labor instructions precisely, you will get a lower course grade (see the final breakdown grade table on the last page of the grading contract on Canvas).

"B" Grades
You are guaranteed a course grade of "B" (3.0) if you meet all of the following conditions.
1. **Presence and Participation.** You agree to fully participate in at least 86.6% (21 of 24) of our scheduled class sessions and their activities and assignments, which means you will need to be present in class, as most activities cannot be done before or after class and require your colleagues to complete. So, you cannot miss more than 3 class sessions and still meet our contract's guidelines. Usually, attendance in class equates to participation.

   NOTE: Assignments not turned in because of an absence, either ones assigned on the schedule or ones assigned on earlier days in class, will be late, missed, or ignored (depending on when you turn it in finally, see the guidelines #4, #5, and #6 below).

   Any absence due to a university-sponsored group activity (e.g., sporting event, band, another class field trip, etc.), military-related absences (e.g., deployment, work, duty, etc.), or documented illness will be considered independently of the above attendance policy, as long as the student has FIRST provided written documentation as soon as they are aware of the days they will be absent. This will allow us to determine how he/she will meet assignments and our contract, despite being absent. This may include absences due to illness that has a medical/doctor's note confirming the illness. Each of these circumstances will be determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation between the student and me (Ashley) in a manner that is fair to all parties involved.

2. **Lateness.** You agree to come on time or early to class. Walking into class late 1-2 times in a semester is understandable.

3. **Sharing and Collaboration.** You agree to work cooperatively and collegially in groups. This may be the easiest of all our course expectations to figure out, but we should have some discussions on what we expect from each other.

4. **Late/Incomplete Work.** You agree to turn in properly and on time all work and assignments expected of you in the spirit they are assigned, which means you'll complete all of the labor instructions for each assignment. During the semester, you may, however, turn in a few assignments late. The exact number of those late assignments is stipulated in the table on the last page of this contract, which we negotiate. Late or incomplete work is defined as any work

or document due that is turned in AFTER the due date/time BUT within 48 hours of the deadline. For example, if some work (say a written reflective piece) was due on Thursday, February 15 at 11:59 pm, that piece must be turned in by 11:59 pm on Saturday the 17th.

5. **Missed Work.** If you turn in late work AFTER the 48 hours stipulated in #4 above (Late/Incomplete Work), then it will be considered "missed work," which is a more serious mark against your grading contract. This is due to the fact that all assignments are used in class when they are due, so turning in something beyond 48 hours after it is due means it is assured to be less useful, and its absence has hurt your colleagues in class (since they depended on you to turn in your work for their use).

6. **Ignored Work.** You agree not to ignore any work expected of you. Ignored work is any work unaccounted for in the quarter – that is, I have no record of you doing it or turning it in. My sense is that ignoring the work so crucial to one's development as a learner in our community is bad and unacceptable, so accumulating any "ignored work" will keep you from meeting our contract expectations (see table below).

7. **All Work/Labor needs to meet the following conditions. To** be *complete and On Time*, you agree to turn in on time and in the appropriate manner complete essays, writing, or other labor assigned that meet all of our agreed upon expectations. (See #4 above for details on late assignments).

Knowing Where You Stand
This system is better than regular grading for giving you a clear idea of what your final grade looks like at any moment. If you are doing everything as directed and turning things in on time (no matter what anyone says), you're getting a B. As for participation in class, you'll have to keep track of it, but you can check with me at any time. I'll tell you what I have recorded. If I mark you absent / non-participatory, I'll always email you and let you know.

Improving Your Contracted Grade
The grade of B (3.0) depends primarily on *behavior* and *labor*. Have you shown responsible effort and consistency in our class? Have you done what was asked of you in the spirit it was asked? Have you put in the appropriate amount of labor? Higher grades than the default, the grade of A (4.0), however, require *more labor that helps or supports the class* in its mutual discussions and work. To raise your grade, you may complete as many of the following items of labor as you like. Each item completed fully and in the appropriate manner will raise your final course grade by one grade category (see Breakdown table below).

- **A lesson/activity/handout.** These handouts are on a topic and material that you research for the class's benefit and will need at least 2 weeks lead time, working with me (Ashley) on the materials. While we'll determine together the scope of your lesson, the main elements of your labor will be to produce: (1) a 1-2 page handout for the class's benefit in our writing and thinking; (2) some outline for our in-class activity that introduces your handout; and (3) a short reflective essay to me (Ashley) of about 1-2 pages (300-600 words) on what you learned in the process of doing this labor and what you feel the class stands to gain from the lesson you offered us.

- **Revised Drafts**. You may do the optional labor instructions for revising your Assignments 2 or 3. You may turn these in to me (Ashley) any time before week 14.

- **Some other labor that benefits the class and our mutual learning.** Do you want to write about and report to us on a cultural event related to the class? Or maybe you would like to read an article for us and summarize some of its findings or ideas that you think will help us do our work in class? If you have an idea, come to me (Ashley) early. We will plan it; while making sure the amount of labor is commensurate with the other items above, and schedule it.

For every item you complete on the above list, your contracted grade will improve by one grade category on the breakdown table below. So if you meet all the conditions for a B-contract (3.0), then your grade can improve in the following ways:

- 1 item completed = course grade of 4.0 (A)
- 2 items completed = just you being awesome :)

If you only meet the requirements for a C-contract (2.0) or lower, the same movement up the grade ladder applies by completing items on the list above. You may even do more than two items and continue to raise your grade regardless of what grade you are qualified for. For example, if you only meet the requirements for a C (2.0) contract in the table below, but do 2 extra labors above (the max), then your final course grade will be an A (4.0).

In accordance with FERPA regulations, I am not allowed to discuss your grades via email or in public settings. Similarly, I cannot discuss final grades via email once the semester concludes. These policies are in place to protect your privacy. If you have questions about your grade, please reach out to me to set up an in-person meeting in my office to discuss my evaluation of your performance in the class.

Final Exam
Students will submit their final reflection on Canvas as the final exam for the class. There will not be an in-person final exam. Final drafts are due by the end of our scheduled final exam period.

Course Policies and Procedures

These policies provide you with the formal regulations governing this course. Submission of your first assignment indicates you have read, understood, and agreed to these policies.

Drop Dates
Please be aware of the UNT drop dates.

Medical Withdrawals
If you must withdraw due to medical reasons, prior to the withdrawal deadline as indicated in the academic calendar, you may do so through the regular withdrawal process. If you are incapacitated or unable to make the request on your own, please contact the Dean of Students Office for assistance at 940-565-2648. For details regarding the withdrawal process, go to http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/withdrawals.

Computer Operations and Access Requirements
You are expected to be familiar with the day-to-day operation of computers including UNT email (and sending attachments), Canvas, and standard software. You are also expected to have regular access to computing technology, whether it be your personal computer or the computers provided by UNT. There are 14 computer labs on campus, including one 24-hour lab.

Device Requirements
Your TECM classroom is a collaborative BYOD lab (bring your own device). Therefore, you must either bring your own device to every class period or reserve a device from our TECM TechLab.

If you bring your own device, it must be equipped with a non-web-based word processor and internet access capabilities via the UNT Wifi network. Tablets or devices with cloud-based word processors, such as GoogleDocs, are not recommended because they do not give you the full capabilities required in this TECM course. As a UNT student, you can install a free version of MS Office Suite on your personal computer. Visit https://it.unt.edu/installoffice365 for more information.

For students who cannot bring a device to class, the TECM TechLab provides laptops that can be checked out at the main service desk in AUDB307. Reserve your device early and through the WebCheckout link: http://checkout.unt.edu/patron. If you think you will need a device throughout the semester, WebCheckout allows you to make recurring reservations. These reservations are not to exceed your scheduled class time.

Hardware and Disk Media Requirements
It is your responsibility to ensure that the computer(s) and disk(s) you use are functional and that you have backed up your data in the case of technological failure. As a student at UNT, you can back up data, up to 25 GB, through OneDrive. A corrupted disk or crashed hard drive does not constitute an excuse for late or unsubmitted work. If you need to bring electronic files to class, please email them to yourself as attachments or use the OneDrive available through your EagleConnect account.

Email Requirement
All students must have a valid UNT email address, as it is the only email address I can use to communicate with you. You can forward your UNT email to your regular account (Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.), should you not wish to directly check your UNT account. It is also your responsibility to check your email regularly. I often use email to send class emails, including notices, updates, and advisories.

Classroom Behavior
I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and belonging. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.

Our class is structured around in-person discussion, so it's especially important you to come to our class prepared with your materials and ready to discuss the day's content. For more information about UNT's expectations, you can consult the Code of Student Conduct (https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012).

Generative AI (GenAI) Use

TECM 4010 explores the intersection of AI and tech comm/content strategy. The use of AI tools is encouraged as a means to enhance learning, improve productivity, and explore the capabilities of these technologies. However, transparency and ethical considerations are paramount.

1. **Acknowledgment:** All use of AI tools must be explicitly acknowledged.

    o **Chat Transcripts:** When using AI for any part of an assignment, you must submit the complete chat transcripts of your interactions with the AI.

    o **Methodology:** Briefly describe how you used AI tools in your work, including the specific tools/models used and your reasons for using them. Include any reflections you might have about the outputs.

2. **Human Input:** AI should be used as a tool to augment your work, not replace it. Your assignments must demonstrate your own critical thinking, analysis, and creative input. AI-generated content often lacks the specificity, depth, and personal reflection required in this course.

3. **Academic Integrity:** Submitting AI-generated work without proper acknowledgment, or presenting AI-generated work as your own original work, constitutes plagiarism.

4. **Limitations:** Be aware of AI's limitations, including potential bias and inaccuracies. Critically evaluate all AI outputs.

5. **Questions:** If you are unsure about how to use or acknowledge AI appropriately, please ask for clarification.

I use GenAI to generate examples and refine my pedagogical materials. I will always disclose how I use GenAI, and I expect the same from you. In accordance with the UNT Honor Code, unauthorized use of GenAI tools is prohibited. Using GenAI content without proper credit or substituting your own work with GenAI undermines the learning process and violates academic integrity. If you're unsure whether something is allowed, please seek clarification.

AI Exploration Zone Policy

This class is designated an **AI Exploration Zone.** A judgment-free environment designed to encourage open-minded experimentation, learning, and discussion about AI technologies. The purpose of this approach is to provide you with a comprehensive understanding of AI's capabilities, limitations, and ethical considerations, specifically within the context of professional and technical communication.

AI is a transformative tool that is often misunderstood or stigmatized. This course is an **AI-positive space** where you are encouraged to engage with AI technologies critically and creatively. Here are the key principles that define this approach:

1. **Exploration Without Judgment:**
   Every student comes to this course with their own beliefs, experiences, and comfort levels regarding AI. Throughout the semester, you will have the opportunity to explore a range of

AI tools and applications. The goal is to broaden your understanding, not to prescribe a specific stance.

- o **What happens in this classroom stays in this classroom**—experimentation is encouraged, and no one will be judged for the tools they choose to try or avoid.

2. **Informed Opinions:**
   By engaging with AI tools in a hands-on way, you'll gain the knowledge necessary to form your own educated perspective on how (or if) you might integrate AI into your professional practice. A key part of this process is learning what aligns—or conflicts—with your ethical framework.

3. **Gut Checks & Reflection:**
   After exploring AI tools and completing activities, we will pause for "gut checks" to reflect on what we've learned. These discussions will help you assess your comfort level, uncover any ethical concerns, and refine your personal approach to using AI.

4. **Ethical Engagement:**
   While this is an AI-positive course, all experimentation must align with ethical guidelines and responsible usage. This includes documenting AI use transparently and critically evaluating its outputs.

5. **Personal Growth:**
   Your perception of AI may evolve throughout the semester. Embrace this growth as part of the learning process. This space is about helping you discover what works for you, what doesn't, and why.

The **AI Exploration Zone** is not about advocating for AI use—it's about helping you make informed decisions through firsthand experience. Whether you leave this course as an advocate for AI or with a preference for non-AI approaches, you will have developed a deeper understanding of this rapidly evolving field.

Academic Integrity
I follow UNT's academic integrity and dishonesty policies. UNT defines six acts of academic dishonesty (see [UNT Policy 06.003](#)). Below is a brief description of these acts and the related 2700 penalty for committing each act:
- *Cheating* —using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves cheating.

- *Plagiarism* – the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgment. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves plagiarism.

- *Forgery* – altering a score, grade, or official academic university record or forging the signature of an instructor or other student. You will receive a final grade of F in the course for any act of forgery.

- *Fabrication* – intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves fabrication.

- *Facilitating academic dishonesty* – intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves facilitating academic dishonesty.

- *Sabotage* – acting to prevent others from completing their work or willfully disrupting the academic work of others. You will receive a final grade of F in the course for any act of sabotage.

All acts of academic dishonesty will be reported to UNT's Academic Integrity Office. At the beginning of the semester, we will review the six acts of academic dishonesty and their related penalties. You must also complete a quiz on the subject, which will certify that you understand the policies and procedures.

How to Succeed in this Course

UNT strives to offer a high-quality education in a supportive environment where you can learn, grow, and thrive. As a faculty member, I am committed to supporting you, and I want to remind you that UNT offers a range of mental health and wellness services to help maintain balance and well-being. Utilizing these resources is a proactive way to support your academic and personal success. To explore campus resources designed to support you, check out mental health services (https://clear.unt.edu/student-support-services-policies), visit unt.edu/success, and explore unt.edu/wellness. To get all your enrollment and student financial-related questions answered, go to scrappysays.unt.edu.

Accommodations
The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. To request accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) by completing an application for services and providing documentation to verify your eligibility each semester. Once your eligibility is confirmed, you may request your letter of accommodation. ODA will then email your faculty a letter of reasonable accommodation, initiating a private discussion about your specific needs in the course.

You can request accommodations at any time, but it's important to provide ODA notice to your faculty as early as possible in the semester to avoid delays in implementation. Keep in mind that you must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and meet with each faculty member before accommodations can be implemented in each class. You are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding your accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty have the authority to ask you to discuss your letter during their designated office hours to protect your privacy. For more information and to access resources that can support your needs, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access).

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault
UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or

someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. (See UNT Policy 16.005)

UNT's Dean of Students website offers a range of <u>on-campus and off-campus resources</u> to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs.

Religious Holidays
If you will miss class due to the observance of an officially recognized religious holy day, please consult with me at least one week in advance so we can schedule missed work accordingly.

Course Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule for this section of 4010. The schedule is subject to change pending our progress this semester. You will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact a class and describe that the calendar is subject to change. For more information, see the <u>Campus Closures Policy</u> (<u>https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006</u>).

Date	Agenda	Readings Due	Assignments Due
Week 1: Introduction to AI & Automation			
Aug. 19	Class introduction		
Aug. 21	Why should TPC professionals care about AI?	Read <u>"An AI Manifesto for Technical Communication Programs"</u> (Parts 1-5) by Stuart Selber	Introduction Letter
Week 2: AI Literacy & Surveying the AI Landscape			
Aug. 26	How have researchers theorized AI literacy?	Read <u>"Understanding Computer Programming as a Literacy"</u> by Annette Vee	
Aug. 28	What does the AI landscape look like currently?	Read "<u>Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools and Resources</u>" by The Chicago School University Library	Case Study 1: Exploring Large Language Models
Week 3: Understanding & Historicizing AI			
Sept. 2	What are the historical roots of contemporary AI?	Explore the <u>"Chatbots Decoded"</u> exhibit at the Computer History Museum	
Sept. 4	How do LLMs work?	Read <u>"Bomb Parts: What is a Model?"</u> by Cathy O'Neil (from the Weapons of Math Destruction ebook available from library)	Case Study 2: Markov Chains & Text Prediction
Week 4: Evaluating AI Applications			

Sept. 9	What constitutes effective design for LLMs?	Read "Intelligent Algorithms: Evaluating the Design of Chatbots and Search" by Nupoor Ranade and Alexandra Cata	
Sept. 11	How do we assess the usability of AI tools?	Read "The User Experience of Chatbots" by Nielsen Norman Group	Assignment 1: Learning with AI Microcredential
Week 5: Ethical AI Design			
Sept. 16	How can bias become encoded into AI?	Read "Toward a Sociology of Artificial Intelligence" by Joyce et al.	
Sept. 18	What strategies can we use to mitigate algorithmic bias?	Read "Explainable Fairness in Regulatory Algorithmic Auditing" by O'Neil, Sargeant, and Appel	Case Study 3: Algorithmic Auditing
Week 6: Prompt Engineering			
Sept. 23	How can we use prompting more effectively?	Read "Prompt Engineering with ChatGPT: A Guide for Academic Writers" by Louie Giray	
Sept. 25	What are practitioners doing with prompt engineering?	Read ""Wayfinding" through the AI wilderness: Mapping rhetorics of ChatGPT prompt writing on X (formerly Twitter) to promote critical AI literacies" by Ann Shivers-McNair & Anuj Gupta	Case Study 4: Reverse Engineering Your Writing with AI
Week 7: Editing with AI			
Sept. 30	How might we integrate AI into our existing editing practices?	Read "Preparing Future Technical Editors for an Artificial Intelligence-Enabled Workplace" by Jennifer Mallette	
Oct. 2	Can AI "beat" humans in editing tasks?	Read "Peer and AI Review + Reflection (PAIRR): A Human-Centered Approach to Formative Assessment" by Sperber et al.	Case Study 5: Human vs. AI Editing Showdown
Week 8: Authorship and AI			
Oct. 7	What are the currently accepted best practices for TPC professionals using AI?	Read "AI Standards" by the National Institute of Standards and Technology Read "Guiding Principles for the Ethical Use of AI by Communication Professionals" by the International Association of Business Communicators	
Oct. 9	What are the ethical implications of composing with LLMs?	Read "When Collaborating Turns Into Dishonesty: A Data-Driven Heuristic Comparing Human and AI	Assignment 2: AI-Enhanced Self-Evaluation of Technical Writing

		Collaborators" by Gallagher, Wagner, and Canzonetta	
Week 9: Microcontent & AI Chatbots			
Oct. 14	What is the role of TPC professionals with personalized chatbots?	Read "Localizing Content: The Roles of Technical & Professional Communicators and Machine Learning in Personalized Chatbot Responses" by Hocutt, Ranade, & Verhulsdonck	
Oct. 16	How can we design microcontent for conversational agents?	Read "Conveying chatbot personality through conversational cues in social media messages" by Heppner	Case Study 6: Chatbot Conversation Story
Week 10: Human-in-the-Loop Approaches to AI			
Oct. 21	How can a rhetorical framework facilitate better AI output?	Read "Using rhetorical strategies to design prompts: A human-in-the-loop approach to make AI useful" by Ranade, Saravia & Johri	
Oct. 23	What models for distributed authorship currently exist?	Read "Machine-in-the-loop writing: Optimizing the rhetorical load" by Alan Knowles	Case Study 7: Designing an AI-Powered Chatbot
Week 11: Accessibility and AI			
Oct. 28	How should human-centered design inform the development of AI tools?	Read "What is Human-Centered AI (HCAI)?" by the Interaction Design Foundation	
Oct. 30	How can chatbots exemplify accessible design?	Read "5 Key Accessibility Considerations for Chatbots" by the Bureau of Internet Accessibility	Case Study 8: Chatbot Usability Test
Week 12: Automating Workflows			
Nov. 4	In what ways might you automate your workflow with AI?	Read "How to Write With GenAI: A Framework for Using Generative AI to Automate Writing Tasks in Technical Communication" by Getto, Kelley, and Vance	
Nov. 6	How is AI reshaping TPC as an industry?	Read "AI and technical communication: enemy or ally?" by Nupoor Ranade and Daniela Straub	Assignment 3: AI Workflow Innovation
Week 13: Researching with AI			
Nov. 11	To what extent can AI be used in data analysis for TPC professionals?	Read "The Second Coder was a Robot: Generative AI Tools in Establishing Intercoder Reliability" by Erin Friess	

Nov. 13	What AI tools currently exist to support researchers?	Read "Introducing Deep Research" by OpenAI	Assignment 4: AI Capstone Proposal
Week 14: Reflecting with AI			
Nov. 18	How does AI impact students' critical thinking?	Read "AI Tools in Society: Impacts on Cognitive Offloading and the Future of Critical Thinking" by Michael Gerlich	
Nov. 20	In what ways has your exploration of AI this semester influenced your own learning?		Assignment 4: AI Capstone Rough Draft
Thanksgiving Holiday–No Class 11.24 to 11.30			
Week 15: Full Stack Rhetoric			
Dec. 2	Circling Back: Why should TPC professionals care about AI?	Read "Full Stack Rhetoric" by Annette Vee (PDF on Canvas)	
Dec. 4	What can we learn from your AI capstone projects?		Assignment 4: AI Capstone Roundtable
Week 16: Finals Week			
Dec. 11			Assignment 4: AI Capstone Final Draft