



Technical Communication

M e r c e r U n i v e r s i t y

What Can TCO Do for You?

Exciting Career Field

Technical communication (TCO) is a broad, rapidly expanding career field. Every type of business or organization uses technologies and needs to communicate information well, so they all can use technical communicators!

Preparation for Jobs

The starting salary for technical communicators in the most recent STC survey was above \$43,000.

Technical communication graduates are in demand in a wide variety of job areas, such as:

- Multimedia—web & graphic design, video production, instructional design
- Documentation—computer software, business processes, research, corporate policies, ISO 9000
- Marketing & Public Relations—brochures, newsletters, product materials, advertising
- IT Support—help desks, instructions & manuals, training, IT support, technology management
- Knowledge Management—intranet development, knowledge capture, best practices
- Manufacturing—quality assurance, testing & design, organizational communication
- Instructional Design & Training—corporate training, process development, instructional products
- Education & Public Service—course & media development, public health information, training
- Defense-related Industries—proposals, reports, documentation, electronic performance support
- Usability—task analysis, user advocacy, usability testing, product improvement, interface design

By careful advising, the faculty helps students select courses that will provide not only a broad foundation, but also some specialization within the field. Students may select a minor in business, information technology systems, languages, graphic arts, and many other areas.

In the past few years, a growing number of TCO students have studied abroad. Many of them acquire expertise in one or two languages in addition to English. As technology and business become more and more global, this international focus is much in demand.

Recognized Program

Mercer University School of Engineering's Bachelor of Science degree in technical communication, established in 1991, was the first in the Southeast. It received national recognition as a model program in *Education in Scientific and Technical Communication: Academic Programs That Work* (Keene, 1997). TCO also offers a respected Master of Science degree in technical communication management. Targeted towards working professionals who want to be leaders in their companies, the MS degree is offered entirely by distance learning to students from around the world.

Every TCO faculty member holds a doctorate and is active in professional societies and scholarship. They serve in leadership roles and have received recognition from the IEEE Professional Communication Society and the Society for Technical Communication.

Ties to Industry

Mercer's TCO Department maintains close ties with industries and practitioners around the country.

- Faculty members have work and consulting experience
- Alumni form a diverse, active network
- Students complete industry internships
- Employers actively seek our graduates for job opportunities

More than 150 companies have hired interns and graduates of the BS and MS programs. Keeping up to date with scholarship while maintaining close ties with industry, the TCO department provides exemplary education and superior resources. Graduates are universally rated by their employers as having high levels of communication skills, work ethic, knowledge of technology, and teamwork.

Grounded in Engineering

Though many technical communication programs are located in English or humanities, Mercer's TCO Department is located within the School of Engineering. Just as engineers take science and mathematics and apply them to solving real-world problems, so technical communicators take principles of communication and apply them to solving real-world information problems.

Being located within engineering provides many benefits to students:

1. Strong foundation in mathematics, sciences, and engineering
2. Real-world problems for class projects
3. Rigorous analysis and problem-solving strategies
4. Mastery of a wide array of technologies
5. Experience serving on teams with engineers and computer specialists
6. Expectations of excellence

Real-world Class Projects

Students have designed newsletters and brochures for industries; developed instructional materials for clients; created and edited web sites; developed CDs and videos; completed technical editing of articles for professionals; tested industry-developed products for usability; prepared research reports on knowledge management; and developed and presented training for clients and faculty. Because of this experience, students graduate with an impressive portfolio of products to demonstrate their skills. Professionals must know how to work effectively in teams, and class projects provide this experience.

Pre-Professional Options

TCO a flexible major that is excellent for pre-professional careers, such as:

- Medicine
- MBA
- Law

Because of the breadth of the field, students have the freedom to specialize at the master's or doctoral levels. Highly motivated and well prepared, TCO graduates excel in graduate programs.

Interested?

Plan a campus visit or telephone interview soon.

Contact: Dr. Marjorie T. Davis, Chair, TCO Department 478.301.2356

E-mail: davis_mt@mercerc.edu

Website: www.mercerc.edu/tco