

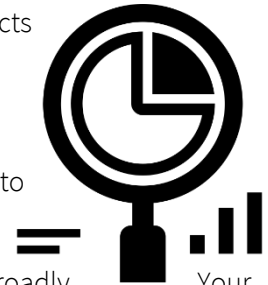
WRITING PROJECT 4

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

Final Technical Description (image or PDF) + Project Evaluation Memo Due Thursday, 8/6, at 11:59pm

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

Your textbook defines “technical description” as a document used to describe products in precise detail for manufacturing and marketing. These descriptions could involve definitions, specifications, patents field notes, or observations, and are used across the life cycle of a product or service. No matter its format, a technical description must introduce the object, place, or process that is being described, break it down into major and minor parts, and conclude with some kind of closing thought.



For the purpose of this project, we'll think about technical description a little more broadly. Your writing projects before have been designed for a specific individual reader (correspondence), set of interested partners (proposals), or end users (documentation): now it's time to put your writing to work for an even broader goal. Consider this project as a capstone for the class that takes the research, writing, and design skills that you've been developing and leverages them to educate the public.

GETTING STARTED

For WP4, you will create an appropriate technical product or process description about something related to your field of study or an area of interest that you care about. This needs to be a topic that you can write about with both authority *and* concision after a little research, and something that a general public audience could benefit from learning more about. Sample topics could include...

- **Agribusiness:** What does a 21st-century family farm look like? How can drones be used in farming to maximize crop yields?
- **e-learning:** What does virtual schooling look like at different levels of education? How could you allay parents' fears that e-learning won't be as beneficial for their children as face-to-face instruction?
- **Engineering:** How does [insert your product, technology, or innovation of choice here] work?
- **Health & Medicine:** Why is the ketogenic diet a good or bad idea? What benefits does laparoscopic surgery afford over more invasive traditional procedures? How do antibiotics work? (Patient education materials provide great examples of technical descriptions)
- **Renewable energy:** How do wind turbines or solar panels work? What is the return on investment for an individual or a firm that converts from fossil fuels to renewable sources?
- **Wearable technology:** What are emerging applications for wearables, or biometric sensors, in fields of health and medicine, sports and leisure, fashion, transportation, etc.?

To begin, you'll need to conduct some basic research to locate information about your topic. You should be locating, synthesizing, and paraphrasing information with elaboration in your own words as needed. For this project, you'll need to use **at least three outside sources** and cite them appropriately in your technical description.

Your technical description should be a designed document, organized and presented in a way that's interesting and usable for your audience. You might use a free online page layout tool like [Canva](#) or [Piktochart](#) to design your work. You could also create your technical description using the advanced Microsoft Word features tutorial from WP3. You may use any relevant technology or design you want to create this description, but **it cannot exceed two pages total**, and you must be able to justify your design choices in your final project evaluation memo (e.g., don't just use a template and turn it in—you must make original decisions in service of your goals as a communicator and as a professional). Examples of the types of work that could satisfy the requirements for this project are included in the Week 7 folder on Brightspace.

WHAT WILL I TURN IN?

The deliverables and deadlines for WP4 are...

Week 7	Weds 7/29	Proposal / ideas for WP4 due to discussion board for peer feedback by 11:59pm
	Fri 7/31	Peer feedback on classmates' ideas due by 11:59pm
Week 8	Thurs 8/6	Final technical description due (as a single image file or PDF), with project evaluation memo, by 11:59pm

WHAT WILL I BE GRADED ON?

- Adequate division of the product or process being described into **major and minor parts**, and ample description of these parts
- Use of **descriptive, concrete language** in an appropriate **tone** for the targeted audience
- Synthesis and presentation of information gathered through **research**, and appropriate **citation** of at least three external sources
- Integration of **images or graphics** that educate the reader and are **accessible**
- Clear attention to **visual design principles and usability**, including typography, images, use of space, and emphasis of critical information through formatting cues
- **Document preparation** that includes attention to detail, consistency, and careful editing/proofreading
- A completed **project evaluation memo** explaining the goals you had for this project and the deliberate rhetorical, visual, and methodological choices that you made in service of those goals.

WP4 meets Purdue Professional Writing Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 4, and 5. For more information, see the [Professional Writing Program website](#). "diagram" icon by Noun Project contributor popcornarts. Some project description language has been adapted from Jamie May, Kristen Moore, Dan Liddle, John Sherrill, and Patrick Love.