

Table 1. Core Competencies for Graduate Students in Technical Communication: Descriptors

(1/06)

Trait	Descriptor	NJIT Descriptor
Writing and editing	Style, correctness, organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates accurate, thorough, relevant, and coherent content and ideas • Demonstrates accurate language (usage, grammar, punctuation, spelling) • Exhibits clear style (readable, euphonious, concise, cohesive) • Is capable of adapting tone for audience and purpose • Demonstrates cohesion by graphic means (headings, white space) • Demonstrates ability to develop content for web-based applications • Can produce multiple drafts • Is capable of integrating Instructor and peer review comments • Is able to incorporate macro/micro editing
Document design	Visual communication, format, graphics, usability, user-centered design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employs technical and aesthetic artistic appreciation • Demonstrates command of print format, graphics, visual communication and assurance of their usability • Demonstrates ability to discern appropriate design elements for web communication (color, white space, navigation structure, contiguity) • Exhibits ability to incorporate multimedia into online presentations • Demonstrates ability to create user-centered layout and design • Demonstrates understanding of typography nuances
Rhetoric	Audience analysis, ability to adapt communication to situation, genre knowledge, understanding of rhetorical situation, rhetorical problem solving, cultural interpretation, reflective practice, disciplinary history, general, transferable skills in analyzing texts, communicating effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of rhetorical strategies and communication theory or learning theory • Capable of conducting user and task analyses in the field and needs analysis for training • Is able to develop and adapt content for audiences • Demonstrates knowledge of persuasive techniques • Exhibits knowledge of disciplinary history
Problem solving, personal traits, work skills	Critical thinking, analysis, flexibility, ethics, organization, humor, ability to learn, professionalism, attention to detail, time management, cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of diversity and capable of cross cultural and gender communication • Demonstrates competent decision-making and problem-solving

Trait	Descriptor	NJIT Descriptor
	awareness, diversity, lifelong learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capable of understanding complex ideas and written analyses • Shows ability to plan using time line and Gantt chart • Integrates understanding of professional ethics • Capable of analyzing various professional contexts • Understands author-editor relationships • Understands strategies and skills for long-term learning
Collaboration and team work	Group leadership within complex organizational settings	Demonstrates group leadership within complex organizational settings : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team projects • Online class discussions • Consensus building • Web projects • Conflict resolution
Interpersonal or oral communication	Presentation skills, interviews, listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to interview subject-matter expert • Demonstrates command of interpersonal communication • Capable of making informal presentations • Understands interview as tool in needs analysis • Develops "alternate" synchronous and asynchronous communication skills using the various WebCT tools like chat, discussion, email
Specialized expertise	Research skills (ability to do research; familiarity with research literature), project management, knowledge management, business practices, scientific and technical knowledge	Demonstrates research skills in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation methods • Literature review • Bibliographic review • Research funding sources • Content research for manual • Content research for editing • Business practices
Technology	Facility with, critical understanding of, and ability to learn technologies	Exhibits competencies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Office applications (including Visio, Excel for statistics), web design tools, and graphics programs • Website building, XML, HTML • Web-based training and online help authoring tools

© Coppola, N.W. & Elliot, N. (Forthcoming 2006). Assessment of Graduate Programs in Technical Communication A Model. In M. Hundleby & J. (Eds.), *Assessment in Technical Communication*. New York: State University of New York Press.