

Networks of Technical Communication

ATTW 2011 – Call for Proposals

The Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) invites proposals for papers, posters, and workshops to be given at its annual conference immediately preceding the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). The fourteenth annual ATTW conference will be held in Atlanta, GA, on Wednesday, April 6, 2011. The full-day event includes concurrent sessions, poster presentations, workshops, book exhibits, and opportunities for exchanging ideas and networking in an academic environment.

The theme for this year's conference is networks of technical communication. We increasingly live and work in a world mediated by layers of writing and other inscription that stand in for people, institutions, procedures, and decisions. Technical communication plays an important role, as an activity that solidifies and moves information into culture via various products, documents, interfaces, technologies, and practices. The information manifests, concretely, as facts, concepts, and more tangibly as roads that get designed and built, medical care that gets delivered, crops that get raised, etc., all of which play mediating roles in even broader networks of activity. In this sense, we can understand the work of technical communication in the context of networks: both those they help build and sustain and those out of which they arise.

Technical communication is also becoming more of a networked practice, as the efforts of technical communicators are distributed physically, geographically, culturally, and temporally. More people are involved in the production of technical communication, articulated together in strategic assemblages of people and technologies, connected, at least temporarily, by common interests and motivations. Maintaining these networks can be tricky business, often requiring technical communication skills of those not accustomed to practicing them. Such work also pushes on what we typically understand the content and skill base of technical communication to entail.

Given this backdrop, two questions central to this conference are:

1. How can we trace and understand the constructive work of technical communication through different networks?
2. How can we see technical communication providing the building blocks of those networks?

Answers to these questions will raise many related issues of theory, research, pedagogy, and program development.

Submissions on all topics are welcome, but we especially encourage submissions on the following:

- skills for networked technical communicators - organization, classification, articulation, archiving, tagging, etc.,
- new sites of technical communication,
- impacts on the role of technical communicators in the workplace,
- impacts on pedagogy and course development,
- areas of research and research methods for studying networked technical communication,
- opportunities for interdisciplinary intersections -- productive collaborations/areas for learning,
- shifting roles of writers and readers,
- impacts of new technologies,
- issues of ethics in networked communication.

300 word proposals are due by October 8, 2010. We accept proposals for three different formats:

1. **Regular Session:** Individuals may submit proposals for 15-minute talks on panels created by the conference organizers. Groups may submit proposals for 45-minute panel presentations.
2. **Poster Presentation:** Posters will be on display throughout the day with special times dedicated for conversations about this work.
3. **Workshop Session:** The conference will include two 90-minute workshops overlapping with the regular sessions. Workshops that would help newcomers enter the field are especially welcome.

To submit proposals, follow the link soon to appear at <http://cms.english.ttu.edu/attw/Conference>. All proposals will be peer reviewed.

For additional information, contact the conference chair, Jason Swarts at North Carolina State University (Jason_Swarts@ncsu.edu). New teachers of technical and professional communication are particularly invited to attend the conference, as are graduate students and CCCC attendees with interests in technical and professional communication.