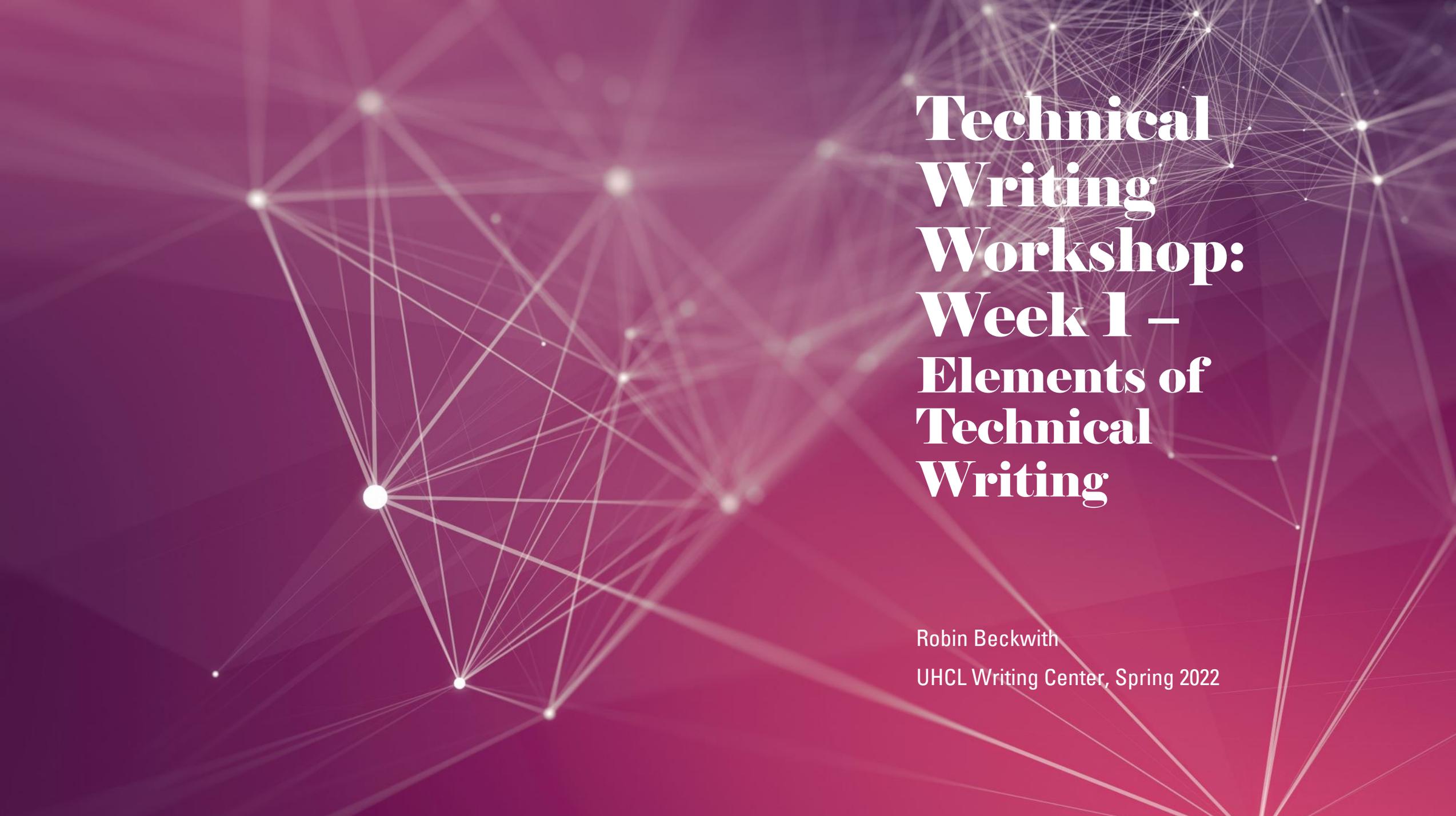# Technical Writing Workshop: The Quest for Breakthrough Writing

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UHCL Writing Center, Spring 2022

Technical Writing Workshop: Week 1 – Elements of Technical Writing

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What Is Technical Writing?

Most writing can be considered "technical."

It depends on your point of view.

In this workshop, we'll look at technical writing from the point of view of its logic.

The root of the word "logic" is the Greek word "logos" which means "word."

Quick, fun logic exercise: What are the odds you'll win the Texas Lotto? With one ticket? With two tickets?

One in 25,827,165 if you buy one ticket. What if you buy two tickets? Do you increase your odds 100%?

What Is Technical Writing?

Although most people consider something "logical" to be devoid of emotion, that doesn't make logical sense. All ideas—all words—have their basis in human experience. To a greater or lesser degree, human experience incorporates emotion all the time. Emotion can be cool and calm. Emotion can be warm and raw.

Although most people consider something "emotional" to be devoid of logic, that doesn't make logical sense either. Logic is not perfect. People can be equally confounded or persuaded by words that emphasize either emotion or rationality.

Technical Writing: Where Are One's Senses?

They're always there!

All ideas—all words—have their basis in human experience. Human experience incorporates one's senses all the time. Objectivity is rooted in the senses, as are both emotion and subjectivity. What is subjectivity?

Logic is imperfect. All writers are limited by their experience. How can you focus your attention such that you free yourself from bias and prejudice? What can you learn?

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Technical Writing: Cultivating Objectivity

What is objectivity? Understanding that is beyond your experience. How can you write such that you are as objective as possible? That is one of the key aspects of technical writing.

Objectivity is rooted in the senses, as are both emotion and subjectivity.

Logic is imperfect. All writers are limited by their experience. The key is to learn as one writes—through asking questions, research, and thinking—so your writing reflects growth in understanding.

Technical Writing: Cultivating Objectivity and Flow

Comprehensive writing:
Writing to understand and be understood.

Writing that covers the subject.

Writing within the flow of time. We'll pause for the 5-minute flow test.

Awareness of the flow of time pervades your writing.

Awareness of the flow of time guides your writing time management.

The writing continuum: From verifiable fact to unverifiable fiction or belief.

During this workshop, you'll discover the various writing elements the answers to which will help your writing nudge closer to verifiable fact.

Elements of Technical Writing: Review

Point of View (POV): Grounding—Who are you talking to? Who are you? What is your voice? What is the purpose of your writing? What is your time limit/word limit?

Sensory Elements: Sight, hearing, smell, taste, feeling/touch.

Relative Physical Elements: Scale/time, dimension/time, mass/time, speed/time, temperature/time, pressure/time.

Narrative Focus Elements: What, who, where, when, why, and how.

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