

# Michelle Cowan

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## EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

<b>MA in Technical Communication</b> Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX	<b>2019</b>
<b>Certified Usability Analyst</b> Human Factors International	<b>2017</b>
<b>BA in English and Spanish</b> Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX	<b>2005</b>

## WORK EXPERIENCE

**Graduate Part-Time Instructor and PhD Student** **2017-present**  
[Texas Tech University](http://www.ttu.edu), Lubbock, TX

- Led a user testing project to improve the Lubbock Public Library web experience (including paper prototyping, formative and summative testing, and site visits)
- Conducted interviews and focus groups to improve peer mentoring for instructors
- Taught first-year composition, using Blackboard and Eli Review (4 semesters)
- Taught English composition for engineers, using Blackboard (1 semester)
- Participated in Texas Tech University's first-year writing program redesign
- Portfolio of graduate work available at [www.portfoliobymichelle.com](http://www.portfoliobymichelle.com)

**Manager, Digital Content** **2012-2017**  
[NRG](http://www.nrg.com), Houston, TX

- Wrote, edited, and designed marketing and technical content for [reliant.com](http://www.reliant.com), [nrg.com](http://www.nrg.com), [cirro.com](http://www.cirro.com), and other NRG online properties
- Managed a team of writers responsible for all web/mobile platforms and campaigns
- Used SEO, site analytics UX principles, and user testing to assess and optimize pages
- Managed content using SDL Tridion, Adobe Experience Manager, Documentum WordPress, and other homegrown content management systems (CMS)
- Completed three full website redesigns, including two CMS conversions
- Worked as a team to create two new style guides, for web and print
- Trained new employees in NRG systems, CMSs, style guides, and procedures

**Knowledge and Content Management Specialist** **2008-2012**  
[APOC](http://www.apoc.com), Houston, TX

- Researched, wrote, and edited articles, case studies, and white papers related to business process management, innovation, and performance measurement
- Managed web content using Drupal and Interwoven (now OpenText)
- Interviewed subject matter experts and analyzed data to complete projects
- Served on the core team for new 2010 website redesign, writing use cases and content
- Coordinated the planning and production of five newsletters per month

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## Technical Writer/Document Specialist

2006-2008

MTA, Inc., and MEI Technologies (NASA Aircraft Operations Division), Houston, TX

- Wrote and edited user guides for new NASA aircraft maintenance software applications
- Reformatted, updated, and organized complex manuals, procedures, and other documents using Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat Pro
- Made hard copies of manuals, booklets, and wiring diagrams from print to binding
- Maintained Aircraft Operations Division document records/archives
- Learned standard editing symbols and techniques

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- Conducted a comprehensive usability study to improve the Lubbock Public Library web experience, 2019
- Conducted interviews and holistic program reviews to improve peer mentoring and observation programs for instructors at Texas Tech University, 2018
- Conducted survey and interviews to assess undergraduate perceptions of grading and responses to grading contracts, 2017
- Texas Tech Honors College Academic Research Fellow, Microscopy in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century literature, won scholarship for symposium presentation, Dr. Tita Chico advising, 2004-2005

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- “User Contexts: Ethical Design for Large Corporations.” Association of Teachers of Technical Writing conference, Kansas City, KS, March 2018
- “Autism, Technology, and Writing Conventions.” Great Plains Alliance for Computers and Writing conference, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN, October 2017

## HONORS AND AWARDS

- United Supermarkets Graduate Fellowship, 2018-2023
- Texas Tech University Honors College Academic Research Fellowship, 2004-2005
- National Merit Scholar, 2000-2005

## SKILL SUMMARY

- Content management
- Writing/editing
- User-centered design/user experience
- Information architecture
- Teaching and training
- Business process management
- Team management
- Advanced proficiency in Spanish
- CMS: SDL Tridion, Documentum, Adobe Experience Manager, Drupal, WordPress, OpenText, SharePoint, Blackboard
- Other tools: Axure, Adobe InDesign, UXPressia, WebEx, Zoom, Eli Review

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## ADDITIONAL INTERESTS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Indoor cycling instructor—certified by Les Mills RPM™ and Schwinn
- Aqua aerobics instructor
- Professional singer-songwriter (piano, guitar, vocals)
- Navigator for the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA)
- Volunteered as a participant and fundraising mentor for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training program—North Texas triathlon events

## REFERENCES

- Michael Faris, assistant professor at Texas Tech, [michael.faris@ttu.edu](mailto:michael.faris@ttu.edu)
- Justin Jose, digital operations manager at NRG, [justin.jose@nrg.com](mailto:justin.jose@nrg.com), 972-365-4990
- Linda van Nifterik, UX senior manager at NRG, [lvannifl@reliant.com](mailto:lvannifl@reliant.com), 832-431-2074
- Kim Hadden, manager at NRG, [kimhadden99@yahoo.com](mailto:kimhadden99@yahoo.com), 713-385-0209
- Marisa Brown, director of research at APQC, [mbrown@apqc.org](mailto:mbrown@apqc.org), 713-685-4655
- Lauren Trees, coworker/editor at APQC, [ltrees@apqc.org](mailto:ltrees@apqc.org), 713-685-7220