TECM 2700D-091
Technical Writing (3 hrs)

Department of Languages and Communication	Division of Liberal arts and Life Sciences

Instructor Name:	**Christopher Dickman**
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Office Hours:	**M/W: 12:30 – 3:30, T/Th: 2:00-3:30, and by appointment**

Classroom:	**DAL 1 201D**
Class Days & Times:	**T/Th 4:00 – 5:20**

Course Catalog Description:	Expository writing, especially for science, pre-engineering, and business students. May be substituted for ENGL 1320 in some programs; students should consult advisers in their majors.

Required Text:	**Tebeaux and Dragga,** *Essentials of Technical Communication;* Textbook will also be supplemented with readings outlined on course homepage.

Recommended	*Writing Spaces, vols 1 and 2* **– found free online at writingspaces.org**

Access to Learning Resources:	UNT Dallas Library:
	     phone: (972) 780-3625;
	     web: http://www.unt.edu/unt-dallas/library.htm
	UNT Dallas Bookstore:
	     phone: (972) 780-3652;
	     e-mail: 1012mgr@fheg.follett.com

Course Overview:

Overview: Technical Writing is a broad field, but in general this course will concern itself with developing skills, strategies, and communicative awareness for writing done in professional settings. A strong focus will be placed on understanding the rhetorical concerns specific to the kind of writing done in these settings – that is, considering how the audience, author, text, and purpose should affect how our writing is composed in various workplace settings. Through a series of major projects, in-class activities, workshopping, and reflection, students will work to develop clear, concise, and appropriate writing that fulfills the goals of representative professional tasks and assignments. Throughout the course, an emphasis will also be placed on developing a writing process and the creation of multiple drafts that help the writer develop, expand, and clarify the ideas they want to communicate.

Workshop format: Students should expect to do a good deal of work on their assignments during class time, including planning, revising, rewriting, peer editing, etc. Out of class time should be dedicated to reviewing class texts as well as more revision of course assignments.

	Learning Objectives/Outcomes:			

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At the end of this course, students should expect to:

1	Understand the contexts in which professional and technical writing takes place
2	Adapt their writing to the demands of professional situations
3	Understand how professional and technical documents are designed and formatted to meet the needs of workplace tasks and audiences
3a	Be able to format professional documents to effectively convey messages and information
3b	Be able to use professional software to design and format documents
4	Understand the ethical and legal implications of various professional genres
5	Understand the writing process strategies of experienced writers
5b	Use writing to think through and develop their ideas

Course Outline

This schedule is subject to change by the instructor. Any changes to this schedule will be communicated by UNTD Email and/or during class time.

DATE	TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS	TEXT
Th, 8/29	Course Introduction; Syllabus; Technical/Professional Writing and its Demands	
T, 9/3	*Introduce Project 1 – Instruction Set;* Writing Process and Rhetorical Situations	*ETC* 12-22
Th, 9/5	Practice Instruction Set 1	
T, 9/10	**Instruction Set idea due via email by end of day**; Instruction formatting options and strategies	*ETC* 239-264
Th, 9/12	Instruction set rhetorical and legal considerations; Document design	*ETC* 3-9; 71-89
T, 9/17	Practice Instruction Set 2	
Th, 9/19	User Testing protocols	
T, 9/24	**Project 1 Due;** User Testing Day 1	
Th, 9/26	User Testing Day 2	
T, 10/1	**Project 1 Memo due;** *Introduce Project 2 – Crime Report Form;* Writing Style	*ETC* 45-62
Th, 10/3	Crime reports and document circulation	
T, 10/8	Creating forms	
Th, 10/10	Writing ethically	*ETC* 32-42
T, 10/15	Observation methods; practice observations	
Th, 10/17	**Project 2 Due;** Crime Report Form User Test Day 1	
T, 10/22	Crime Report Form User Test Day 2	
Th, 10/24	**Project 2 Memo due;** *Introduce Project 3 – Damage Control;* Business documentation	*ETC 129-148*
T, 10/29	Damage Control Case Studies	

Th, 10/31	Press releases; Legal issues in PR communications	
T, 11/5	CEO communications	
Th, 11/7	Social Media response	
T, 11/12	**Project 3 Due**; *Introduce Project 4 – Job Application Materials*	*ETC* 303
Th, 11/14	Résumés	*ETC* 308-316
T, 11/19	**Project 3 Memo Due**; Cover Letters	*ETC* 303-308
Th, 11/21	Interviews	*ETC* 318-322
T, 11/26	**Project 4 Due;** Interviews	
Th, 11/28	NO CLASS - Thanksgiving	
T, 12/3	Mock Interviews	
Th, 12/5	**Project 4 Memo Due;** Mock interviews	

Course Evaluation Methods

This course will utilize the following instruments to determine student grades and proficiency of the learning outcomes for the course.

Major Projects – Students will compose four (4) writing projects during the course of the semester. These projects will vary widely in their expectations, and students should pay close attention to each individual assignment description.

Project Memos – After each project, students will submit a substantial memo that describes their composing process for that project. Each memo will be a detailed account of the specific decisions and reflections made during the composition of the project. See individual memo descriptions for more details.

Class Participation – Students will be expected to attend daily classes, participate in discussions, constructively add to the class, and work on projects for *this class only* when given time in class.

Grade Determination:
A = 900-1000 pts; i.e. 90% or better
B = 800-899 pts; i.e. 80 – 89 %
C = 700-799 pts; i.e. 70 – 79 %
D = 600-699 pts; i.e. 60 – 69 %
F = 599 pts or below; i.e. less than 60%

Grade Breakdown

Project 1 – Instruction Set	125
Project 1 Memo	100
Project 2 – Incident Report Form	125
Project 2 Memo	100
Project 3 – Damage Control	125
Project 3 Memo	100
Project 4 – Job Application Materials	125
Project 4 Memo	100
Participation	100
Total	**1000**

Course Policies and Procedures

Attendance and Participation Policy

Due to the workshop format of this class, the University attendance policy is in effect for this course. Students may have up to four (4) maximum unexcused absences for the semester without penalty. After these four absences, the instructor reserves the right to reduce the student's participation grade significantly. More than six (6) unexcused absences may be grounds for failure of the course. Students more than 10 minutes late will be considered absent for that day.

Absences may be excused for emergency circumstances or school-sponsored activities and only with written documentation of the reason for the absence. Students are responsible of notifying the instructor if they are missing class and for what reason. Students are also responsible to make up any work covered in class. It is recommended that each student coordinate with a student colleague to obtain a copy of the class notes if they are absent.

Technology Policies

Cell phones

No use of cell phones is permitted during class time unless specifically allowed by the instructor. Cell phones should be turned off and put away throughout the duration of the class.

Computers and Laptops

Any computer use needs to be strictly for the purposes of this course; any use outside of those purposes will result in a reduced participation grade. If you own a laptop and prefer to use that in class, you may. The same technology policies as above apply to use of your personal laptops as well when in class. Please note that some days we may need to print materials, so documents on your laptop may need to be transferred to a desktop for those purposes.

Email

I will regularly communicate with you via your UNT email. Please make sure to check it regularly, and at least once a day. Please note that I cannot communicate with you via a personal email address for legal reasons.

Student responsibility

It is the responsibility of the student to be familiar with all of the rules and policies set forth in this syllabus and to keep track of their progress in the class, including their grades, assignment submission, tardies, and absences. I will not tell you every time you are late, have an unexcused absence, or lose participation points. Of course, you are encouraged to ask me about any of these concerns at any point in the class, and I will be happy to let you know your progress. However, students need to exercise self-monitoring throughout the term.

Openness and Constructive Criticism

A good deal of the work in this class will involve talking to each other about our work and reviewing and critiquing each others' drafts as we proceed through assignments. While we will discuss peer review in more detail in class, it should be said here that to make these processes useful, students need to keep an attitude of openness about their work in progress. We are all learning in this class - or else we wouldn't be here – and no one is expected to have perfect work in the drafts we'll be looking at. The purpose of peer review, critique, and revision is to change inevitably weak drafts into stronger papers not by saying what's wrong, but what can be improved. In this class, each student needs to be open and willing to have their work reviewed by others. The other side of this is that those who critique need to always be in the mindset of providing constructive – and not harsh or attacking – criticism.

Diversity/Tolerance Policy

Students are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and insights to class discussions. However, offensive & inappropriate language (swearing) and remarks offensive to others of particular nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders, or other ascribed statuses will not be tolerated. Disruptions which violate the Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities as the instructor deems appropriate.

Students with Disabilities (ADA Compliance)

The University of North Texas Dallas faculty is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students' with documented disabilities are responsible for informing faculty of their needs for

reasonable accommodations and providing written authorized documentation. For more information, you may visit the Office of Disability Accommodation/Student Development Office, Suite 115 or call Laura Smith at 972-780-3632.

Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) Policy:

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education. You are expected to abide by the University's code of conduct and Academic Dishonesty policy. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating or plagiarism) will be handled in accordance with the University's policies and procedures. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct at http://www.unt.edu/csrr/student_conduct/index.html for complete provisions of this code.

Bad Weather Policy:

On those days that present severe weather and driving conditions, a decision may be made to close the campus. In case of inclement weather, call UNT Dallas Campuses main voicemail number (972) 780-3600 or search postings on the campus website www.unt.edu/dallas. Students are encouraged to update their Eagle Alert contact information, so they will receive this information automatically.

Grading and Assignment Policies

Project Formatting

Formatting of the major projects will vary widely from assignment to assignment due to the nature of the course; students should pay close attention to the formatting details in each assignment description.

Each project memo should be composed in a traditional memo format, examples of which are on the course homepage. Memos should be composed in regular Times New Roman, 12-point font, with 1" margins on all sides.

Submitting Projects and File Naming System

Projects should be submitted through the link on the course home page. Files can be in a format of your choice, but I recommend converting files to PDFs, as that will preserve any specific formatting.

Files should be named in a standard format as follows: Lastname_Projectname. For example, a student named John Smith submitting the first project for this class would name their file "Smith – Project1". The same student submitting the Memo for Project 2 would name their file "Smith – Project 2 Memo".

Late Policy

Late work will be reduced the equivalent of one-half letter grade for every day past the due date.

Revision Policy

Students who would like to revise their projects once a grade has been given have the option of doing so in this course. Any revisions submitted will fully replace the grade for the assignment or project. Any revisions are due **no later than one week after the assignment is turned back to the student.** Students need to change their writing **significantly** in order to expect an increased grade on their revisions. That is, students need to do much more than fix grammatical, spelling, punctuation, and mechanical errors to have their grade lifted. Reconceiving sections of the paper, responding thoroughly to instructor comments, and rewriting and reformatting documents is needed.

Writing Center

The Writing Center offers students the opportunity to meet with a professional tutor to discuss their writing assignments for any course. Students can utilize the center for any stage of the writing process (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing). During a writing conference, tutors will assist students in identifying their weaknesses and will work together with the student to improve the assignment. The Writing Center's most important goal is to help UNT Dallas students become better writers, which means that the Writing Center tutors will not proofread or edit papers; instead, they will help students develop the skills they need in order to successfully proofread and edit their own work.

The center is open Monday – Thursday from 8am -7 pm in Room 301N in Building 1.