

University of North Texas at Dallas
Fall 2016
SYLLABUS

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| TECM 2700-001 | |
| Technical Writing (3 hrs) | |
| Department of Languages and Communication | School of Liberal Arts and Sciences |
| Instructor Name: | Dr. Christopher Dickman |
| Office Location: | Founders Hall (Building #2) #258 |
| Email Address: | Christopher.Dickman@untdallas.edu (preferred contact) |
| Office Phone | (972) 338-1537 |
| Office Hours: | M 2:30-3:30 in office, W 9-10 in office, W 2:30-3:30 virtual |
| Classroom: | DAL 1, 201D |
| Class Dates: | MW 11:30-12:50 |
| Course Catalog Description: | Expository writing, especially for science, pre-engineering, and business students. May be substituted for ENGL 1323 in some programs; students should consult advisers in their majors. |
| Required Texts and Software: | <i>Technical Communication: A Practical Approach, 8th ed.</i> , William Pfeiffer and Kaye Adkins (also available as a digital text via CourseSmart.com) |
| Recommended Texts: | Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) , found free online at https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/ |
| Access to Learning Resources: | UNT Dallas Library: web: http://www.untdallas.edu/library UNT Dallas Bookstore: phone: (972) 780-3652; |

Course Overview:

TECM 2700 is designed to help develop foundational writing knowledge for work in your future majors and professions. Whereas the purpose of much academic writing is to showcase your acquisition of knowledge to an expert (your teacher), in technical writing, you will be the expert, tasked with clearly communicating information and ideas to an audience who needs to learn something or do something based on your work.

This class is not designed to teach you every kind of writing you will do in your major or career, and it is not designed for any one particular major. Instead, our interest is in developing skills, strategies, and awareness of writing that takes place in professional and technical settings. We will look at how to clearly, effectively, and efficiently provide many different audiences with the information they need to complete tasks or make decisions. Thus, much of our work will be in learning how to adapt our writing to fit the demands of changing situations through some representative professional genres; we'll refer to this in the class as a "rhetorical approach" to writing.

In addition, we will spend time developing one of the more important skills for 21st-century workers: information literacy. Throughout the course, we will develop skills in searching, evaluating, synthesizing, recording, organizing, and citing information. Formatting and organizing our work to ease reader effort and understanding is a central component of technical writing, and citing and recording information is a pillar of academic and professional work as well.

Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students should expect to gain significant experience in the following areas:

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| Critical Thinking and Rhetorical Strategy | Understanding contexts in which professional and technical writing takes place |
| | Adapting writing to the demands of specific professional situations and audiences |
| | Understanding how professional and technical documents are composed to meet the needs of workplace tasks and audiences |
| Communication and Presentation | Formatting professional documents effectively through the use of software |
| | Communicating in written, visual, and web-mediated modes of writing |
| | Understanding the writing process strategies of experienced writers |
| Ethics/ Personal Responsibility | Understanding the ethical and legal implications of various professional genres and tasks |
| | Reflecting on and assessing progress in the course and individual assignments |
| Information Literacy | Understanding and using relevant citation practices in professional fields |
| | Searching for and evaluating appropriate information for technical communication |
| Teamwork | Working effectively and productively with peers of different backgrounds |

Course Schedule

- *Schedule is subject to change by the instructor; any changes to this schedule will be communicated on the Announcements page of the class Blackboard site.*
- *All projects and drafts are due by midnight on the days specified below, unless otherwise noted.*
- *“TCAPA” = Technical Communication: A Practical Approach, required class text; “BB” = Blackboard.*

| Date | Weekly Topics & Readings | Assignments Due |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Week 1 8/22-8/28 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read syllabus closely & thoroughly • Introduction to Project 1 – Job Application Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read Project 1 Description ○ Read Chapter 16 in <i>TCAPA</i> • Introduction to Rhetoric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read Chapters 2, 4, and pp. 167-172 in <i>TCAPA</i> ○ Watch videos under Project 1 resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus Quiz completed by Wednesday, 8/24 by midnight • Quiz over Chapters 2, 4 and pp. 167-172 (email) completed by Sunday, 8/28 by midnight • Quiz over Chapter 16 completed by Sunday, 8/28 by midnight |
| Week 2 8/29-9/4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover Letters and Résumés <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read + Watch Supplemental Materials For Project 1 on BB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board #1 replied to by Wednesday before class |
| Week 3 9/5-9/11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Class on Monday, September 5th for Labor Day • Peer Review Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See schedule on BB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete First Draft of Project 1 due Tuesday, 12 pm (noon) – submit to BB • Final Draft of Project 1 due on BB by Sunday, 9/11 by midnight |
| Week 4 9/12-9/18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Project 2 – Innovation Prospectus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read Project 2 Description ○ Read + Watch Supplemental Material for Project 2 on BB ○ Read Chapters 10, and 11 in <i>TCAPA</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board #2 replied to by Wednesday before class • Quiz over Chapter 10 due by Sunday, 9/18 by midnight • Quiz over Chapter 11 due by Sunday, 9/18 by midnight |
| Week 5 9/19-9/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Reports and Report Formatting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read Chapter 17 in <i>TCAPA</i> • Research and Citation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resources under Project 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board # 3 replied to by Wednesday before class • Quiz over Chapter 17 due by Sunday, 9/25 by midnight |

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| Week 6 9/26- 10/2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and Citation • Style in Technical Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board #4 replied to by Wednesday before class • Annotated Bibliography due by Wednesday, 9/28 by midnight • Complete First Draft of Project 2 due Sunday, 10/2, by 12 pm (noon) – submit to BB |
| Week 7 10/3- 10/9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See schedule on BB ○ Read Chapter 12 in <i>TCAPA</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz over Chapter 12 due by Sunday, 10/9 by midnight • Final Draft of Project 2 due on BB by Sunday, 10/9 by midnight |
| Week 8 10/10- 10/16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Project 3 – Proposal Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read Project 3 Description ○ Read + Watch Supplemental Material for Project 3 on BB ○ Read Chapters 5 and 13 in <i>TCAPA</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board #5 replied to by Wednesday before class • Quiz over Chapter 5 due by Sunday, 10/16 by midnight • Quiz over Chapter 13 due by Sunday, 10/16 by midnight |
| Week 9 10/17- 10/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals and persuasion • Report Design | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board # 6 replied to by Wednesday before class |
| Week 10 10/24- 10/30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal Construction and Critique <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resources for Project 3 on BB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board #7 replied to by Wednesday before class • Complete First Draft of Project 3 due Sunday, 10/30, by 12 pm (noon) – submit to BB |
| Week 11 10/31- 11/6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See schedule on BB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Draft of Project 2 due on BB by Sunday, 11/6 by midnight |
| Week 12 11/7- 11/13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Project 4 – Consumer/User Website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read Project 4 Description ○ Read + Watch Supplemental Material for Project 4 on BB • Read Chapter 14 in <i>TCAPA</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz over Chapter 14 due by Sunday, 11/13 by midnight • Discussion Board #8 replied to by Wednesday before class |
| Week 13 11/14- 11/20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer audiences and needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resources for Project 4 on BB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board #9 replied to by Wednesday before class |
| Week 14 11/21- 11/27 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website construction and critique <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resources for Project 4 on BB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete First Draft of Project 4 due Sunday, 11/27, by 12 pm (noon) – submit to BB |
| Week 15 11/28- 12/4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review Week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ See schedule on BB | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Draft of Project 4 due on BB by Sunday, 12/4 by midnight |
| Week 16 12/5- 12/11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course wrap-up | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board #10 replied to by Wednesday before class |

Grade Breakdown

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| Project 1 – Job Application Materials | First Draft + Peer Review | 50 |
| | Final Draft | 100 |
| Project 2 – Innovation Prospectus | Annotated Bibliography | 50 |
| | First Draft + Peer Review | 50 |
| | Final Draft | 100 |
| Project 3 – Proposal Report | First Draft + Peer Review | 50 |
| | Final Draft | 100 |
| Project 4 – Consumer/User Website | First Draft + Peer Review | 50 |
| | Final Draft | 100 |
| Discussion Boards | 10 Discussion Boards at 15 points each | 150 |
| Quizzes | 10 quizzes at 20 points each | 200 |
| Total | | 1000 |

Course Evaluation Methods

Student performance in this course will be evaluated by the following:

Major Projects – This course is primarily project-based, and four major projects will be the most significant measure of success in the class. Major projects will consist of several smaller assignments. Students should **very carefully** consult the project descriptions and the course materials (textbook and Blackboard) for details about how to complete each project.

Peer Review – Each major project in the class will undergo a peer review. Successful completion of a draft of the assignment and active participation in the review will constitute the grade for this.

Discussion Boards – Periodically throughout the term, students will reply to prompts and engage their classmates in discussion about course topics. Discussion boards will open on Monday morning of the week they are due and should be responded to by the due date on the schedule above. See each board posting for specific instructions.

Quizzes – Students are responsible for reading material from the course text and any supplementary material in order to learn the basic concepts of the course. Students will be quizzed over assigned reading. See above for the schedule and dates of quizzes.

Grade Determination:

A = 90% or greater, or 900-1000 total points

B = 80 – 89 %, or 800-899 total points

C = 70 – 79 %, or 700-799 total points

D = 60 – 69 %, or 600-699 total points

F = Less than 60%, or 0-599 total points

General Course Policies and Procedures

Participation/Professionalism Policy

Students should conduct themselves professionally throughout the course, and this includes several major categories. 1) Students should treat each other with courtesy and professionalism in any interaction throughout the course; please see the Openness/Constructive Criticism and Diversity/Tolerance policies below. 2) Student communication should always strive to meet professional standards of grammar, mechanics, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, etc. All communication should be treated as if your job (or grade) depended on it. 3) Students need to complete their work for me and for each other in a timely manner, and students should be responsive to requests from their peers or myself.

Attendance

Part of professionalism is showing up; thus, attendance in class is mandatory. In each 15-week semester, students may have up to four (4) unexcused absences. After these four unexcused absences, a student's final grade may be reduced at the discretion of the instructor. After six (6) unexcused absences, the student may fail the class due to an absence failure. Any student more than 10 minutes late to class will be marked with an unexcused absence.

For absences to be excused, students must provide document of the event, appointment, illness, etc. that caused the absence.

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, due dates, etc. You may of course 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.

Instructor Response Times

I will do my utmost to get back to you in a timely manner. In general, you can expect a response to emails within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on the weekend and on holidays; the best time to reach me is during business hours – Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm.

Office phone and voicemail is **not** the best method for contacting me; voicemails will generally take longer to respond to than emails.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education. You are expected to abide by the University's code of Academic Integrity 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 Academic Integrity (Policy 7.002) at

[http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/pdf/policy/7.002%20Code%20of%20Academic_Integrity.p](http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/pdf/policy/7.002%20Code%20of%20Academic_Integrity.pdf)

[df](http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/hds0041/pdf/7_001_student_code_of_conduct_may_2014.pdf) Refer to the Student Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct at

[http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/hds0041/pdf/7_001_student_code_of_conduct_may_2014.](http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/hds0041/pdf/7_001_student_code_of_conduct_may_2014.pdf)

[pdf](http://www.untdallas.edu/sites/default/files/page_level2/hds0041/pdf/7_001_student_code_of_conduct_may_2014.pdf) Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabrication of information or citations, facilitating acts of dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. In addition, all academic work turned in for this class, including exams, papers and written assignments must include the following statement: "*On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witnessed any unauthorized assistance that violates the UNTD Academic Integrity Policy.*"

In short, **plagiarism** is the use of someone else's material – written text, images, or ideas – as your own work. This can happen when if you copy and paste material you find elsewhere into your own work, borrow work from other students' in a non-collaborative project, or fail to properly cite research you've done. **Plagiarism of other work will result in a zero on the assignment plagiarized and a permanent record of the offense in your student file. Repeated or egregious offenses of plagiarism may result in university sanctions, such as suspension or expulsion.**

In this class, we'll talk about the ethical codes and standards that guide work in various professions. These standards give professions their integrity, and serious legal consequences can happen if they are broken. One ethical standard

practiced in all professions, as well as all academic disciplines, is the avoidance of plagiarism. Plagiarism is the use of any other person's words or ideas without giving them credit through a system of citation and giving credit. Instances of plagiarism may result in zeroes on assignments, failure of the course, or other academic discipline such as suspension or expulsion from the university. 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.

Technology Policies

Email

You must check your UNT Dallas or UNT email daily, as this will be my primary method of communication with the class and is the default email account for Blackboard; make sure you can log into this email from day one. **You will also need to send emails from your UNT or UNTDallas account**; emails sent from other addresses regularly land in spam, and I am not responsible for delayed or missing replies if this occurs.

Blackboard

Course materials will be posted to the course Blackboard site, accessible through *Learn.untdallas.edu* or *Learn.unt.edu*. Class announcements will also come through Blackboard, so **log on at least once a day**.

Grading and Assignment Policies

Late Policy

No late work is accepted in the course. If you feel you are falling behind in the course or struggling to meet deadlines, please come speak to me **before** assignments are due.

Writing Center Bonus Points

Good writers do not write in a vacuum; rather, they seek feedback and assistance from many people and groups. One of the best resources to use on campus is the Writing Center, where a trained writing consultant can help students review and revise their papers, no matter what stage they're at.

Students who voluntarily visit the Writing Center beyond any instructor or course requirements will receive a bonus equivalent to 1% of their total final grade, and may receive a maximum of 5% of their total grade in bonus through these voluntarily visits.

Revision Policy

For each major project in the course, students have the option to revise and resubmit the project one more time after the instructor has given feedback and a grade on it. Revisions that substantially improve the project will earn new grades, and those grades will replace the older score.

To qualify, revisions must change the paper in significant and substantial ways; revisions that only correct mechanical errors will not be eligible for new grades.

Additional Policies

Openness and Constructive Criticism

A good deal of the work in this class may involve reviewing and critiquing each others' drafts as we proceed through assignments. While we will discuss peer review in more detail, 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 in Founder's Hall, room 204, or call Cindy Suarez at 972-338-1777.

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.