

University of North Texas at Dallas
 Summer 5W2 2015
 SYLLABUS

TECM 2700D-030 (online)
Technical Writing (3 hrs)

Department of Languages and Communication		Division of Liberal arts and Life Sciences
Instructor Name:	Dr. Christopher Dickman	
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Office Phone	(972) 338-1537	
Office Hours:	T, 12-3 or by appointment	
Classroom:	N/A	
Class Dates:	Course begins 7/13/15 and ends 8/14/15	
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:

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 Outline

- *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” denotes **Technical Communication: A Practical Approach**, our required class text; “BB” denotes Blackboard.*

Week	Day	Tasks/Assignments	Work Due (by midnight)
Week 1: 7.13- 7.19	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read all materials under “Course Information and Communication” section on course BB page, especially the syllabus • Read Chapter 2 and read pp. 167-172 (about email) in <i>TCAPA</i> 	
	T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Project 1 Description” for <i>Project 1 – Job Application Materials</i> on BB 	
	W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 16 in <i>TCAPA</i> • Read “Supplementary Material for Project 1” on BB 	Quiz over course syllabus
	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Job Application Materials 	
	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Job Application Materials 	Quizzes on Chapter 2 + email and Chapter 16
Week 2: 7.20- 7.26	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Project 2 Description” for <i>Project 2 – Analytical Report</i> • Read “Supplementary Material for Project 2” on BB • Read Chapters 5, 10, and 11 in <i>TCAPA</i> • Work on Job Application Materials 	Draft of <i>Project 1 – Job Application Materials</i>
	T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on Job Application Materials 	Send instructor email detailing topic for Project 2

	W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin work on <i>Project 2 – Analytical Report</i> 	Revised version of <i>Project 1 – Job Application Materials</i>
	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Analytical Report 	
	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Analytical Report 	Quizzes on Chapters 5, 10, and 11
Week 3: 7.27-8.2	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read “Project 3 Description” for <i>Project 3 – Proposal Report</i> Read Chapters 12 and 13 in <i>TCAPA</i> Work on Analytical Report 	Draft of <i>Project 2 – Analytical Report</i>
	T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Analytical Report 	Send instructor email detailing your topic for Project 3
	W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin work on <i>Project 3 – Proposal Report</i> 	Revised version of <i>Project 2 – Analytical Report</i>
	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Proposal Report 	
	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Proposal Report 	Quizzes on Chapters 12 & 13
Week 4: 8.3-8.9	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Proposal Report 	Draft of <i>Project 3 – Proposal Report</i>
	T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Proposal Report 	
	W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read “Project 4 Description” for <i>Project 4 – Instructions</i> Read Chapters 8 and 17 in <i>TCAPA</i> 	
	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Instructions 	Revised version of <i>Project 3 – Proposal Report</i>
	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Instructions 	Quizzes on Chapters 8 and 17
Week 5: 8.10-8.14	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Instructions 	
	T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Instructions 	Draft of <i>Project 4 – Instructions</i>
	W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Instructions 	
	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Instructions 	
	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Instructions 	Revised version of <i>Project 4 – Instructions</i>

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. Students should **very carefully** consult the project descriptions for details about how to complete each project. For each project, students will complete a **draft** and a **revised version** of the project:

Drafts: Drafts of projects need to be robust and meet any minimum page or word requirements as detailed in the project descriptions. Drafts will be primarily graded for completion; that is, if the draft meets the minimum requirements and is a robust version, it will receive most of the available points (see below for point breakdown).

Revised Versions: The instructor will give general comments on drafts and return them. Students need to use those comments to then revise their papers and resubmit them as **revised versions**. (See policies below about further revision).

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; B = 80 – 89 %; C = 70 – 79 %; D = 60 – 69 %; F = Less than 60%

Grade Breakdown

Major Projects	Draft of Project 1 - Job Application Materials	50
	Revised version of Project 1 - Job Application Materials	100
	Draft of Project 2 - Analytical Report	50
	Revised version of Project 2 - Analytical Report	100
	Draft of Project 3 - Proposal Report	50
	Revised Version of Project 3 – Proposal Report	100
	Draft of Project 4 - Instructions	50
	Revised version of Project 4 – Instructions	100
Quizzes	Ten (10) quizzes at 40 points each	400
Total		1000

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 be 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 myself or their peers.

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. Announcements about the class will also come through Blackboard, so **log on at least once a day**.

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.

Academic Integrity:

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. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct [here](#) for complete provisions of this code.

Grading and Assignment Policies

Writing Assistance and Consultation

Everyone, including – and especially - professional authors, gets advice about their writing to see how it is being understood and how they can improve. Getting others to read your writing should be a standard and frequent part of your process.

For those able to make it to campus, you can get great advice and feedback from the Writing Center, a completely free service that 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, even in initial brainstorming ideas. The Writing Center can also help you with presentations, speeches, etc.

During a writing conference, tutors will assist students in identifying any 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.

Please see the Writing Center's website (search "Writing Center" from UNTDallas.edu) for appointment information.

Project Formatting

Students do not need to submit assignments with a standard paper format or heading (including the MLA headings typically learned in high school). Instead, projects should be made to resemble their real-world, professional counterparts. Thus, 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.

Submitting Projects and Conditional Release

Please check the submission guidelines on each project description, but in general final versions of major projects should be submitted through the link "Turn in Projects" on the course's Blackboard page. When submitting files, I recommend converting them to PDFs, as that will preserve any specific formatting that you see on your computer. Generally, you should be able to do this by doing a "Save As" and choosing PDF as the file type. Make sure to keep the original version for revision and editing.

Please note that quizzes and tests open upon a conditional release. This means that you must turn in the previously assigned quiz or project to be able to turn in the next quiz or project. For example, you will not be able to turn in Project 2 until Project 1 has been submitted. Additionally, you would not be able to turn in the revised version of a project until the draft of that project is submitted. Quizzes also work this way, where the next quiz will only open once the previous one had been attempted.

Late Policy

In fairness to all students, no late work is accepted. Links to submit assignments on Blackboard will expire at midnight on their due dates, after which no assignment can be submitted.

Revision Policy

For each project, students have the option of re-revising their **revised versions** once a grade has been given; any revisions submitted will fully replace the initial grade for the assignment or project. Projects, however, must be revised **significantly** in order for the grade to be increased; much more needs to be done than fixing grammatical, spelling, punctuation, and mechanical errors to have the grade improved.

Revisions are due **one week after an assignment has been returned with a grade** unless otherwise noted by the instructor. To submit a revision, please go to the "Turn in Assignments" link on our Blackboard page and find the revision assignment for the project that you're working with.

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.