

TECM 2700D - TECHNICAL WRITING

UNT Dallas

Summer 5W2, 2013

Course Information and Description

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Website

The course website will can be found at:

TECM2700summer13.wordpress.com

COURSE BASICS

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Christopher Dickman

Office: Founders Hall 258

Phone: 972.338.1537

Email: Christopher.Dickman@unt.edu

Office Hours: Thursday, 12:30-2:30
and by appointment

COURSE MEETINGS

Room: Building 1, Room 201

Days/Time: MTWR, 10-11:50

ACCESS TO LEARNING RESOURCES

Library:

Phone: 972.780.3625

Web: www.unt.edu/unt-dallas/library.htm

Bookstore:

Phone: 972.780.3652

Email: 1012mgr@fhcg.follett.com

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 technical communication - that is, how a focus on our audience, author, text, and purpose should affect how our writing is composed in professional and 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, much like experienced workplace writers.

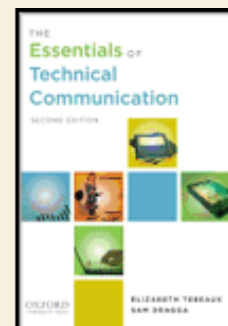
Workshop format: Students should expect to do a good deal of work on their projects during class time, including planning, drafting, rewriting, etc. in order to take advantage of instructor and peer feedback during the writing process. Students should come to class ready to work, with all needed materials.

Textbook:

Essentials of Technical Communication,
2nd ed.

By: Tebeaux and Dragga

ISBN: 0199890781



Course Objectives

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

- Understand some of the contexts in which professional and technical writing takes places and to
 - better adapt writing to the demands of professional situations.
- Understand the ways in which technical and professional documents are designed in order to fulfill the needs of workplace audiences.
- Be able to format professional documents to effectively convey messages and information
- Understand the writing process strategies of experienced writers and
 - be able to use writing to think through and develop their ideas
- Reflect on and assess their own progress in the course and on individual assignments

Attendance and Participation

Due to the workshop format of this class, the University attendance policy is in effect for this class. For this summer session, students may have up to two (2) maximum unexcused absences for the term. After these two, the instructor reserves the right to reduce the student's participation grade significantly. More than four (4) unexcused absences may be grounds for failure of the course. Students who are more than 10 minutes late to class 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 any class notes if they are absent.

Technology Policy

No use of cell phones is permitted during class time; cell phones should be turned off and put away throughout class. Any computer use needs to be strictly for purposes of this course; any use outside of those purposes will result in a reduced participation grade.

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 welcome 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.

Disability Services

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.



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

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 result in removal from the classroom as well as a referral to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities as the instructor deems fit.

Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

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.

Students who purposefully plagiarize or intentionally pass off others' work as their own will receive a zero (0) on any assignment for which this occurs. Students should also expect such action to result in a referral to the University for further action.

Bad Weather

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 Assignments

GRADING SCALE

- A = 900-1000 points; 90% or better
- B = 800-899 points; 80-89%
- C = 700-799 points; 70-79%
- D = 600-699 points; 60-69%
- F = 599 points or below; less than 60%

GRADE BREAKDOWN

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS
Project 1 - Instruction Set	125
Instruction Set Memo	100
Project 2 - Witness Report	125
Witness Report Memo	100
Project 3 - PR & Damage Control	125
PR & Damage Control Memo	100
Project 4 - Job Application Materials	125
Job App Materials Memo	100
Participation	100
TOTAL	1000

A NOTE ON MAJOR PROJECTS

As you can see from above, each major project should also have a memorandum attached to it. For each project, the specific content of the memo will be described in that project's description. While memos will not be difficult, and will not be integrated into the main body of the project, please do not take them lightly; they are a significant portion of the overall course grade.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

Project Formatting and Submission:

As is the case with much of the work done in professional settings, each project in this course will have its own unique formatting tailored to the task and audience at hand. In general, though, projects should be composed with a professional and easily readable font. Formatting should also be consistent throughout the document, and documents should make every effort to be free of errors.

However, all assignment files must be uniformly named, according to the system: **LastnameProject#**. So, a student named John Smith would name his first project "SmithProject1".

Project Submission will occur through the course website. On the right hand side, you will see a menu and link called "Submit Project." Click on that link, type in the password "TechWriting," and upload your file. Projects should be in either Microsoft Word, Apple's Pages, or Adobe PDF format and named according to the guidelines above. **It is recommended that you save all files as PDF documents, which will preserve any formatting you have done.**

Late Policy:

Late work is accepted, but will be docked 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, this needs to be much more than editing grammar, spelling, mechanics, etc.).

Peer Review Draft Policy:

For projects that we peer review in class, students need to have a **full draft** of their paper at the beginning of class on those days – that is, the draft must be in a coherent, paragraph format and meet the word requirements; students do not need to have their reflection component for peer review days. Students will lose all participation points for that day for not having a full draft.

Course Schedule

DATE	TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS
M, 7/8	Course Intro; Syllabus; Technical/Professional Writing and its Demands; Introduce Project 1
T, 7/9	Writing Process and Rhetorical Situation; <i>Essentials of Technical Communication (ETC)</i> pp 12-22
W, 7/10	Informal Instruction Test; Instruction Set Design; <i>ETC</i> pp 239-264; Activity idea via email
R, 7/11	Technical and Professional Writing Style, <i>ETC</i> pp 45-62
M, 7/15	In-class Instruction Set User Testing
T, 7/16	Project 1 Due; Introduce Project 2 - Witness Report; Designing Documents, <i>ETC</i> pp 71-92
W, 7/17	Writing Ethically, <i>ETC</i> pp 32-42
R, 7/18	Practice observation and reporting; Witness Report form creation
M, 7/22	In-class event observation for Project 2
T, 7/23	Project 2 - Witness Report Due; Introduce Project 3 - PR and Damage Control
W, 7/24	Document security and legality, <i>ETC</i> pp. 3-7
R, 7/25	Business formats and genres: Emails, Memos, Letters; <i>ETC</i> pp 129-148
M, 7/29	Damage Control Case Studies
T, 7/30	Peer Review of PR and Damage Control materials in class
W, 7/31	Project 3 - PR and Damage Control; Introduce Project 4 - Job Application Materials
R, 8/1	<i>ETC</i> pp. 303-316, Resume review
M, 8/5	Cover Letters
T, 8/6	<i>ETC</i> pp. 318-320; Interviews, in-class trial run
W, 8/7	Peer Review of resumes and cover letters
R, 8/8	Project 4 - Job Application Materials Due