

TECM 2700-031 & 032

Technical Writing (3 hrs)

University of North Texas at Dallas

Department of Languages and Communication | School of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Fall 8w2, 2016 SYLLABUS

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| Instructor Name: | Professor Young |
| Office Location: | DAL2 Adjunct Office, 3 rd Floor, Room 303 (Knock on door) |
| Email Address: | Lea.Young@untdallas.edu (preferred contact) |
| Office Phone | 972-669-1777 |
| Office Hours: | Virtual: TR 11:00-12:00 or by appointment |
| Classroom: | N/A |
| Class Dates: | Course begins October 17, 2016 and ends December 10, 2016 |
| 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. |
| Required Texts and Software: | <p>1) Technical Communication: A Practical Approach, 8th ed., William Pfeiffer and Kaye Adkins ★ Available as a digital text via CourseSmart.com; must have by end of first week of class</p> <p>2) Eli Review, peer editing software, subscription required at EliReview.com</p> |
| Recommended Texts: | Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) , found free online at https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/ |
| Access to Learning Resources: | <p>UNT Dallas Library: web: http://www.untdallas.edu/library</p> <p>UNT Dallas Bookstore: phone: (972) 780-3652</p> |

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

Important Notes for the 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.
- "TCAPA" denotes **Technical Communication: A Practical Approach**, our required class text; "BB" denotes Blackboard.
- All assignments are due by the end of the business day – before 5:00 pm – unless otherwise noted. Links and quizzes will expire at 5:00 pm.

| Week | Dates | Work to Do | Due Dates |
|-----------|------------|---|---|
| Weeks 1-2 | Oct. 17-29 | Read/Watch videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Syllabus (find link on BB menu) Description, Project 1: Innovation Prospectus Chapters 2, 4, and pp 167-172 in <i>TCAPA</i> Chapter 10 in <i>TCAPA</i> Chapter 11 in <i>TCAPA</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entire Course Syllabus and Project 1 Description read by Tues. Oct. 18 All other reading/videos complete by Fri. Oct. 27 |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Videos (4) on rhetoric and professional writing | |
| | | Take Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syllabus quiz Quiz over Chapters 2, 4, and 167-172 Quiz over Chapter 10 Quiz over Chapter 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syllabus Quiz taken by Thur. Oct. 20 All other quizzes taken by Fri. Oct. 27 |
| | | Compose/Write <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Board #1 Email to instructor with ideas for Project 1 Project 1: Innovation Prospectus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email project ideas by Thur., Oct. 20 by noon (see Project 1 description) Discussion Board #1 post and replies Wed. Oct. 26 Draft of Project 1 submitted to Eli Review by Sat. Oct. 29 |
| Weeks 3-4 | Oct. 30-Nov. 12 | Read/Watch videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description, Project 2: Proposal Report Chapter 7 in <i>TCAPA</i> Chapter 12 in <i>TCAPA</i> Video (1) on peer review | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer review video watched by Mon. Oct. 30 <input type="checkbox"/> Remainder of reading complete by Thurs. Nov. 3 |
| | | Take Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiz over Chapter 7 Quiz over Chapter 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> All quizzes completed by Fri. Nov. 4 |
| | | Compose/Write <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Board #2 Project 1: Innovation Prospectus Project 2: Proposal Report (ongoing) | <input type="checkbox"/> All peer reviews completed on Eli Review by Mon. Nov. 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Final draft of Project 1 due on BB by Wed. Nov. 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board #2 posts and replies due by Thurs., Nov. 3 |
| Weeks 5-6 | Nov. 13-26 (Thanksgiving Nov. 24-25) | Read/Watch videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5 in <i>TCAPA</i> Chapter 13 in <i>TCAPA</i> Videos on research | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading completed by Tues. Nov. 15 |
| | | Take Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5 Chapter 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> All quizzes completed by Thur. Nov. 17 |
| | | Compose/Write <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Board #3 Project 2: Proposal Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board #3 posts and replies by Fri. Nov. 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Draft of Project 2 due on Eli Review by Tues. Nov. 22 |

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| Week 7 | Nov. 27-Dec. 3 | Read/Watch videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description, Project 3: Consumer Website • Chapter 14 in <i>TCAPA</i> • Chapter 17 in <i>TCAPA</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> All reading and watching complete by Thur. Dec. 1 |
| | | Take Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 14 • Chapter 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> All quizzes completed by Fri. Dec. 2 |
| | | Compose/Write <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board #4 • Project 2: Proposal Report • Project 3: Consumer/User Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Peer reviews of Project 2 completed on Eli Review by Mon, Nov. 28 <input type="checkbox"/> Final draft of Project 2 submitted to BB by Wed, Nov. 30 <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board #4 post and replies by Thurs. Dec. 1 |
| Week 8 | Dec. 4-10 | Read/Watch videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> None |
| | | Take Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> None | <input type="checkbox"/> None |
| | | Compose/Write <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Board #5 • Project 3: Consumer Website | <input type="checkbox"/> Project 3 draft submitted to Eli Review by Mon. Dec. 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Peer reviews of Project 3 on Eli Review completed by Wed. Dec. 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Board #5 post and replies by Thurs. Dec. 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Final Draft of Project 3 due on BB by Fri. Dec. 9 |

Grade Breakdown

| Assignment | Points Each | Total Points |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Major Projects (3) | 100 | 45% |
| Peer Reviews (3) | 100 | 15% |
| Discussions (5) | 100 | 10% |
| Quizzes (10) | 100 | 30% |
| | | 100% |

Assignments/Evaluation Methods

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

Major Projects – Three major projects constitute most of your grade – these projects are practical and creative applications of the material you will be learning through the textbook, quizzes, and discussions. Drafts of major projects will be peer reviewed on the Eli Review web platform, and final versions will be submitted to Blackboard

Peer Reviews – For each major project, student work will undergo a peer review on the Eli Review platform. Students will post drafts of their major projects to Eli Review, and review peer work on the platform as well.

Discussions: Once a week, students will discuss a significant question or concept related to Technical Writing. Discussion boards are meant to promote reflection on work experiences and concepts.

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%

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.

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; the instructor will not remind you of all due dates, missed assignments, etc.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

In short, **plagiarism** is the use of someone else's material – their written text, their images, their audio work, or even their ideas – as your own. 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. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct [here](#) for complete provisions of this code.

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.

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 48-72 hours on the weekend and on holidays; the best time to reach me is during business hours – Monday through Friday, 9 am to 4 pm.

Office phone and voicemail is **not** the best method for contacting me; voicemails will generally take longer to respond to than emails, as I am not in my office on a regular schedule outside of office hours.

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

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.

Late Policy

- No late work is accepted in this course. If you feel you are falling behind in the course or struggling to meet deadlines, please speak to me **before** assignments are late.
- No part of the peer review process is accepted late, including the submission of drafts or review of other students' work.
- Quizzes may not be taken late; all access to quizzes will end at 5:00 pm of their due date.

Revision Policy

For each project, students have the option of revising their projects once a grade has been given on the final draft; any revisions submitted will 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.

In addition, all revisions must be accompanied by a 200 word paragraph about how the work has been revised and how those revisions improve the work.

Revisions are due **no later than one week after an assignment has been returned with a grade** unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

Writing Assistance and Consultation (Bonus Points)

Everyone, including (and maybe 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.

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

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.