



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
& SOCIAL SCIENCES
Department of
Technical Communication

TECM 4180-401 Advanced Technical Writing FALL 2026

August 17 – December 3, 2026

3 credits / 100% online

Instructor: Dr. Cynthia Pope
Phone: 507-382-6121 cell/text (even on weekends by 10 pm)
Email: cynthia.pope@unt.edu
Office Hours: 10:30am-12:30pm CST Friday via Zoom or by special appointment; on-call 24/7 for texting
<https://unt.zoom.us/j/86467763417?pwd=mrxiidcAOXvnZRIPLJgaTLiGwnDROL1>
Meeting ID: 864 6776 3417 / Passcode: 762924

COUNSELING & STRESS RELIEF OPTIONS

COUNSELING SERVICES: Private & free counseling services are available 24/7

- 940-565-2741 or <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-counseling>
- Student Health & Wellness Center: Chestnut Hall, 2nd floor or 940-565.2333
- Counseling & Testing Center: Chestnut Hall, Suite 311 or 940-565.2333
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 or <https://988lifeline.org/>

STRESS RELIEF:

- Stress relief podcast <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/decompress/id1506861758>
- Virtual museum exhibit <https://apple.news/AoXUX57qoTzuLREnMdxoSvQ>
- Squirrel video <https://x.com/jeepguytexas/status/1940363807542636986?s=42>
- Mr. Potato video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kqzx0YKu9DA>
- Meditative music <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYtA3V5s92E>

Course Description

Professionals in all fields are increasingly called upon to evaluate processes, improve outcomes, and lead change. To make sound conclusions and to influence others, you need to gather information, ensure that it's valid and credible, and present your findings and recommendations in a clear compelling way. In this course, you'll gather information through interviews, surveys, and secondary research. You'll hone your critical thinking skills. You'll learn how to organize your content for maximum impact. And you'll develop memos, articles, reports, and graphs. In a nutshell, this class allows students to

1. **Locate and critically evaluate information,**
2. **Communicate effectively, precisely & concisely, and**
3. **Identify, define, and solve problems.**

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to

- make decisions and solve problems by planning, organizing, and prioritizing work
- communicate textually, verbally, visually, and digitally to convey professional ideas
- obtain and process information by researching, analyzing, and preparing empirical data
- understand technology related to the job and use software proficiently
- create and/or edit professional & technical artifacts used in the field

Course Structure

This course takes place 100% online. If you want, you can have synchronous meetings with me or other members of the class. Other than that, your interaction with me and with your fellow students will take place in Canvas. There are 14 weeks of content that you will move through. All modules are open for the entire semester.

Contacting CPope

- For urgent matters needing immediate attention, [text or call](#) me at 507-382-6121 (by 10 pm pls, even on weekends)
- For matters that can wait 24 hours, [email](#) me using your UNT email account
- For matters requiring a [face-to-face](#) meeting, ask for a Zoom mtg
- Feel free to pop into [optional office hours](#) to chat
- To discuss your grade on an assignment, schedule a Zoom mtg. I do not discuss grade modifications via text

Required Texts

None. I will give you the readings for free that you need. However, you will need access to both [Microsoft Word software](#) & a [free Google account](#).

Assignments

Below is a brief description of the major assignments you will complete in this course and the assignment grade weights. More specific instructions about each will be provided in-class and on Canvas.

Unit 1: Interoffice Communications

This unit focuses on crafting various artifacts you'll likely encounter in a professional setting, regardless of field. You'll craft memos, various emails revolving around common office circumstances (mentor thank you, colleague bereavement, group committee work problem, manager observations, etc.). Students will also craft an ePortfolio to be used for post-graduate interviews and/or graduate school and create an email signature of professional worth.

70
points

Unit 2: Interview Report, eSurvey Report, and Secondary Research Report

This assignment contains 3 parts: the Interview Report, the Qualtrics® eSurvey Report, and the Secondary Research Report. Specifically, each requires students to synthesize data from both primary and secondary research sources to build a convincing Unit 4 IMRaD Formal Report proving the Unit 3 Proposal improvement is worthy.

185
points

Unit 3: The Proposal with Empirical Research

This analytical feasibility study starts with a real problem or need of a local company (not state or internationally based) and requires students to design a plausible improvement plan with practical and result-oriented approach resulting in a solution of said conundrum. This project demands workflow management skill sets and leads to the Unit 4 Formal Report.

60
points

Unit 4: Formal Report Project using IMRaD Structure

Acting on the premise that Unit 3 Proposal was accepted by a committee, students will code empirical data (i.e. eSurvey quantitative data, interview qualitative data) as well as secondary sources and IMRaD structure to craft an evidence-based analysis report to solve the problem identified in Unit 3 Proposal.

180
points

Unit 5: Digital Presentation w/ Audio Narration

This digital presentation is a creative outlet summarizing the Unit 4 Formal Report using IMRaD structure. Students create slides using Canva, Visme, Power Point, Google Slides, etc. and orally record vocal comments using progressive professional software (QuickTime, Zoom, Youtube, Screen-O-Matic, or any other audio software, but not Power Point audio).

50
points

"Final" Assignments

The final involves several components:

- ePortfolio (final digital collection of all course projects for future employment use)
- Exit Survey (points for completing survey re: CPope & the course itself)
- Final Reflection (for measuring skill set growth from Wk 1)

30
points

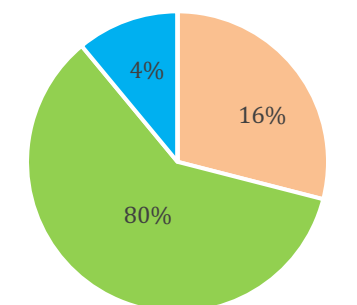
Grading

The below grading criteria serve as general guidelines for evaluating all assignments. Assignment-specific rubrics will be housed on Canvas. Grades of ABCDF will be issued, no pass/fail option, no +/- option either.

A	90-100%	A manager would be very impressed and would remember the work when a promotion is discussed. Work that is a pleasure to read, with excellent content, grammar, sentence structure, mechanics, and visual design. In addition, work is thorough, complete, coherent, well organized, supported sufficiently, and demonstrates a superior understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale.
B	80-89%	A manager would be satisfied with the job but not especially impressed. Documents are well written and well produced and demonstrate a substantial addition to the learning process. Work is sufficiently developed, organized, and supported, and demonstrates a solid understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale.
C	70-79%	A manager would be disappointed and ask you to revise or rewrite sections before allowing clients and others to see the work. In other words, the document may have clear, but underdeveloped ideas, or it might not engage or affect the reader. The documents may contain some errors in grammar, mechanics, or logic.
D	60-69%	A manager would be troubled by the poor quality of work. This level of work forces the reader to work too hard to understand the main ideas. The documents may contain incomplete information, have serious grammar and mechanical problems, lacks clear organization, or be conceptually unclear.

F	0-59%	A manager would start looking for someone to replace you. In particular, work fails to address the tasks of the assignment, is so underdeveloped as to demonstrate incompetence, and is mechanically and grammatically incomprehensible. This grade will also be assigned for any evidence of plagiarism.
----------	-------	---

Summary of Assignments



■ Daily Work ■ Projects ■ Final

Scale for Final Grade	
A	614-685 pts
B	545-613
C	477-544
D	408-476
F	0-407

Daily Work: In-class individual & group exercises designed to prepare students for projects

- Intercultural Analysis 15 points
- Audience Analysis 10 points
- Quizzes 65 points
- Intro Assignments 20 points

110 points

Projects: Various large projects performed both individually & collaboratively w/ international students

- Unit 1 Correspondence 70 points
- Unit 2 Research Reports 185 points
- Unit 3 Proposal 60 points
- Unit 4 Formal Report 180 points
- Unit 5 Digital Presentation 50 points

545 points

Final: Various projects completed to wrap up the course process & determine competency

- Final ePortfolio 10 points
- Final Reflection 10 points
- Final Exit Eval 10 points

30 points

Artificial Intelligence Assistance Policies

AI should be used as tools, not to generate text. AI, such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Grok, Gemini, etc., may be used in this course, but only for refinement and reflection, not to create original content or complete assignments on your behalf. You **may** use AI tools to help you:

- Brainstorm topics & organize outlines
- Revise sentence structure or transitions
- Improve clarity or tone
- Reflect on your writing or receive feedback on coherence

You **may not** use AI to:

- Generate entire drafts or sections of reports
- Compose original research, findings, or project content
- Bypass the writing process or avoid engaging with the assignment directions

You will not fail for using AI appropriately, but **you must disclose your usage**. Every assignment that involves AI support should include a short AI Usage Statement (1–3 sentences) at the end, indicating:

- Which tool(s) you used
- The prompt you entered into the AI tool
- What you use the tools for
- How you incorporated or revised the output

Example

I used Chat GPT to rephrase a few sentences in my conclusion to improve clarity. My prompt was, "Attached is my report. Please identify 2-3 items that could be done to improve the clarity of my report." I kept the original meaning, but adjusted some transitions based on suggestions."

Failure to disclose AI use or using AI in ways that substitute for your own intellectual labor, may be treated as a form of academic dishonesty and addressed under UNT's academic integrity policy.

AI tools, while powerful, can sometimes produce fabricated or inaccurate information. It's your responsibility to vet any content, AI-generated or otherwise, before submission. Understand that actions, such as fabricating content or misrepresenting work would be considered breaches of academic integrity, with or without the use of AI. If you're unsure about the appropriateness of using AI for a specific task, consult your instructor before proceeding.

Course Policies and Procedures

These policies provide you with the formal regulations governing this course. Submission of your first assignment indicates you have read, understood, and agreed to these policies.

Drop Dates

Please be aware of the below deadlines as well as the changes in grading policies. UNT students can no longer receive a grade of WF, and they can drop a course online without the instructor's signature. However, students have five (5) business days to be reinstated in a dropped course.

Date	Description
Nov 6	Last day to withdraw from the semester. Process must be completed by 5 p.m. in the Dean of Students Office. Grades of W are assigned.
Nov 7	Last day to request a grade of I, incomplete (See "Grading system" in the Academics section of this catalog.).

Medical Withdrawals

If a student must withdraw due to medical reasons, prior to the withdrawal deadline as indicated in the academic calendar, a student may do so through the regular withdrawal process. If a student is incapacitated or unable to make the request on his/her own, please contact the Dean of Students Office for assistance at 940-565-2648. For details regarding the withdrawal process, go to <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/withdrawal>

Requesting an Incomplete

Students facing an emergency or extenuating circumstances at the end of the semester may request an "incomplete" grade. To be eligible for an incomplete, a student must have completed at least 80% of the coursework and be passing at the time of the emergency or extenuating circumstances. The student must request the incomplete in writing and provide documentation of the emergency or extenuating circumstances. The instructor will then request departmental approval for an incomplete on behalf of the student.

Netiquette Guide

When communicating online, you should

- Treat others with the same respect you would show in a face-to-face classroom
- Err on the side of being too formal rather than too informal. Take your cue for the right level from how your professor & classmates interact with you
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as it can easily be misunderstood
- Be careful with personal information (both your own and other people's info)
- Avoid using all capital letters as it means you're shouting at the recipient

Academic Integrity

Follow UNT's academic integrity & dishonesty policies. UNT defines six acts of academic dishonesty ([see UNT Policy 06.003](#)). Below is a brief description of these acts & the related penalty for committing each act:

Cheating	Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves cheating.
Plagiarism	The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgement. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves plagiarism.
Forgery	Altering a score, grade, or official academic university record or forging the signature of an instructor or other student. You will receive a final grade of F in the course for any act of forgery.
Fabrication	Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. You will receive a grade of zero for any assignment that involves fabrication.
Facilitating dishonesty	Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves facilitating academic dishonesty.
Sabotage	Acting to prevent others from completing their work or willfully disrupting group projects. That includes omission of effort; thus, all students in the group must contribute. You will receive a final grade of F in the course for any act of sabotage.

All acts of academic dishonesty will be reported to UNT's Academic Integrity Office. You can read UNT's policy at <http://tinyurl.com/nuwo42u>. At the beginning of the semester, we will review the six acts of academic dishonesty and their related penalties. You must also complete a quiz on the subject, which will certify that you understand the policies and procedures.

Assignment Submission and Grading

Format

Major assignments and drafts must be submitted on MS Word files or Google URL files through Canvas unless otherwise noted. Emailed assignments will not be accepted. Being an UNT student, you're entitled to a **free** download of [Microsoft Office Suite](#), which includes MS Word, Excel, and Power Point—all useful in this course.

Late Work

I will allow **one** late assignment from each student (excluding topic sign-ups, proposals, drafts/peer reviews and Unit 4 Formal Report) & treat it as though it were not late. **Do not email late work; submit them to Late Work Assignment file (Canvas/Modules tab/Week 14/scroll to the bottom of the list).** All work submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of zero unless the student has a [university authorized absence](#) & provides documentation within 48 hours of the missed deadline. In those circumstances, I'll do my best to accommodate you fairly.

Grade Disputes

You are required to wait 24 hours before contacting me to dispute a grade. Within that timeframe, review assignment details & reflect on the quality of work you submitted. If you'd still like to meet, email me to set up a meeting between us. Come to the scheduled meeting with specific examples that demonstrate you should have a higher grade than you received. If you miss our scheduled meeting, you forfeit your right to a grade dispute. Incidentally, if you don't contact me to schedule a meeting within seven days after I post grades, you forfeit your right to a grade dispute.

Schedule

Our tentative schedule for TECM 4180 is subject to change pending student progress during the semester. Each Monday I will update the Canvas Home Page to delineate weekly assignments due & other pertinent information about the course.

Wk	Date	Readings/Activities	Assignment Due Dates are 11:59 pm (usually Sunday, sometimes not)
1	Aug 17	- Intro to Course & CPope on Canvas modules - Review Syllabus & get acquainted w/ course site - Complete Video Intro assignment UNIT 1 CORRESPONDENCE - Brush up on Tech Writing info - Brush up on Memo format - Create a professional UNT eSignature	- Video Intro assignment by Aug 23 - Week 1 Prompt assignment by Aug 23 - Memo 1: Diplomacy & Tone by Aug 23 - UNT eSignature by Aug 23
2	Aug 24	- Complete Thank You Email - Complete Bereavement Email - Brush up on Active v Passive Voice	- Memo 2: Tech Style & Justification by Aug 30 - Thank You Email by Aug 30 - Bereavement Email by Aug 30 - Active v Passive Voice Quiz by Aug 30

3	Aug 31	- Create a free wix.com ePortfolio Shell Draft - Peer Review a classmate's ePortfolio Shell Draft - Complete Intercultural Comm assignment - Check out McDonald's Corporate Websites TECH COMM FUNDAMENTALS - Review 6 Causes of Bad Communication - Read Ch. 1 of <i>Tech Writing Essentials</i> UNIT 3 PROPOSAL - Explore Unit 3 Proposal topic examples - Choose a Unit 3 Proposal Topic	- ePortfolio Shell DRAFT by Sept 2 (Weds) - ePortfolio Shell PEER REVIEW by Sept 6 - Late ePortfolios receives zero points - Intercultural Communications Assignment by Sept 6 - Intro & Ch. 1 Quiz by Sept 6 - Proposal Topic sign up by Sept 6 & get it approved by CPope
SEPT 7 is LABOR DAY HOLIDAY—NO CLASSES			
4	Sept 7	UNIT 2A INTERVIEW - Read Interview files to get acquainted w/ process - Contact someone for an interview this week - Follow up w/ interview after 2 days if s/he doesn't reply to your initial email or go to Plan B person	Request Interview this week - Writing Interview Qs by Sept 9 (Weds) - Interview Purpose Statement by Sept 13 - Interview Best Practices Quiz by Sept 13
5	Sept 14	UNIT 2A INTERVIEW - Before creating the Interview Report: — Do Summary of Interview assignment — Fixing Bad Background assignment - Get all interview details in order - Finalize Interview Report TECH COMM FUNDAMENTALS - Complete Bad Background Assignment	Conduct Interview before Weds - Summary of Interview by Sept 16 (Weds) - Final Interview Report by Sept 20 - Fix Bad Background Assignment by Sept 20
6	Sept 21	UNIT 2B SECONDARY RESEARCH - Read Secondary Source Research info files - Read Content Strategy files for tips - Create 5 Secondary Annotated Bibliographies - Complete the Secondary Research Report - Finalize 5 secondary Sources & create 5 Ann Bibs TECH COMM FUNDAMENTALS - Read Audience Awareness files - Review Understanding Audience - Review AI & Writing file	5 Secondary Ann Bibs by Sept 23 (Weds) - Secondary Research Report by Sept 27 - Audience Analysis Practice by Sept 27

7	Sept 28	TECH COMM FUNDAMENTALS - Review AI & Writing file - Brush up on Rhetoric: Ethos, Logos, Pathos - Complete Ethos, Logos, Pathos Quiz - Take Sentence Type Quiz - Take Capitalization Quiz - Take Apostrophe & Possession Quiz	- Using AI Ethically Assignment by Oct 4 - Ethos, Logos, Pathos Quiz by Oct 4 - Sentence Type Quiz by Oct 4 - Capitalization Quiz by Oct 4 - Apostrophe & Possession Quiz by Oct 4
OCT 9 is MIDTERMS (no test, just that time of the semester)			
8	Oct 5	UNIT 2C: QUALTRICS® eSURVEY REPORT - Watch video about Qualtrics® eSurvey - Read eSurvey files re: eSurvey process - Complete eSurvey Distribution Plan - Take the eSurvey Design Quiz - Submit Qualtrics® eSurvey URL to Canvas - Send Qualtrics® eSurvey to the public - Strive for 24+ responses	- Read, Watch & Do: Learning About Qualtrics Assignment by Oct 7 (Weds) - eSurvey Distribution Plan by Oct 7 (Weds) - eSurvey Design Quiz by Oct 11 - Submit eSurvey URL by Oct 11
9	Oct 12	UNIT 2C: QUALTRICS® eSURVEY REPORT - Check Qualtrics for 24+ responses - Read Claims & Evidence w/ eSurvey Data file - Complete eSurvey Report–Visuals included MAKING VISUALS - Watch pie/bar chart, tables & pictograph videos	- Resend eSurvey URL if you don't have 24+ responses yet - eSurvey Report by Oct 18
10	Oct 19	UNIT 3 PROPOSAL - Focus revolves around your Topic improvement - Include Reports from Unit 2 - Include 5 Ann Bib Secondary Sources	Unit 3 Proposal by Oct 25
11	Oct 26	UNIT 4 FORMAL REPORT PREP - Brush up on Claims & Evidence - Take Claims & Evidence Quiz - Review Ethics in Technical Communication - Review Content Strategy files IMRaD FUNDAMENTALS - Read IMRaD structure in Module files UNIT 4 FORMAL REPORT - Start your Unit 4 Formal Report DRAFT	- Claims & Evidence Quiz by Nov 1 - Start the Unit 4 Formal Report DRAFT, which will be due next week ADVICE: Do not wait until next week to start the DRAFT or you'll be in a world of hurt
NOV 6 is LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM FAILING COURSES			



12	Nov 2	UNIT 4 FORMAL REPORT · Finish the Unit 4 Formal Report DRAFT this week · Be prepared to peer review early next week	· Submit Unit 4 Formal Report DRAFT by Nov 8 · Late Drafts receive zero points
13	Nov 9	UNIT 4 FORMAL REPORT · Find your assigned Peer Review groups · Complete one Unit 4 PEER REVIEW · Upload required form to Peer Review file · Revise Report based on Peer reviews & finalize · Submit Unit 4 Formal Report FINAL to Canvas	· Unit 4 Formal Report PEER REVIEW by Nov 11 (Weds) · Late Peer Reviews receive zero points · Unit 4 Formal Report FINAL by Nov 15
14	Nov 16	UNIT 5 DIGITAL PRESENTATION · Complete Digital Presentation · No draft, no peer review, just the final	· Unit 5 Digital Presentation by Nov 22
NOV 23-29 is THANKSGIVING BREAK–CAMPUS CLOSED HAVE A GREAT TIME! YOU'VE FINISHED THIS COURSE!			
15	Nov 30	FINAL ASSIGNMENTS · Populate ePortolfio shell w/ coursework & finalize & send URL to Canvas · Complete Final Course Reflection Assignment · Complete Exit Evaluation for credit	· ePortfolio FINAL w/ populated tabs by Dec 3 (Thurs) · Final Course Reflection by Dec 3 (Thurs) · Exit Evaluation Dec 3 (Thurs) per UNT Admin
LATE WORK ASSIGNMENT OPTION Did you miss a deadline? I allow ONE assignment not submitted by its due date (excluding topic sign-up, Unit 3 Proposal, Unit 4 Formal Report & all drafts/peer reviews). Submit by 11:59 pm Dec 3 (Thurs) if applicable to you.			