

# TECM 4190: Technical Editing

University of North Texas

Technical Communication

Instructor and Course Information

<b>Time</b>	M/W: 3:30-4:50pm
<b>Place</b>	AudB 313
<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. Chris Lam
<b>Office</b>	Auditorium 316
<b>Email</b>	chris.lam@unt.edu
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://unt.instructure.com">http://unt.instructure.com</a>

## Course Description

In this class, you'll learn how to edit technical documents from copyediting to comprehensive editing. Because this course is designed specifically for future teachers of technical writing, every project and lesson will include specific takeaways for the technical communication classroom.

By the end of this course you should be able to

- perform comprehensive editing, copyediting, and proofreading
- use and understand editorial terminology
- understand the profession of editing, including career possibilities and professional and ethical responsibilities
- revise for tone, clarity, conciseness, and continuity
- use traditional copyediting marks
- become familiar with project management techniques
- use technologies related to editing

### Course Materials

- Riley, K., Campbell, K., Manning, A., & Parker, F. . Revising Professional Writing, Ebook. Link in Canvas

### Course Assignments

**Note:** See detailed descriptions with grading criteria and on Canvas.

## Copyediting Test, 15%

The exam will cover all copyediting topics covered in class and in the readings in the first two weeks of class. The items will include a mix of long technical passages and shorter sentence-level items. You'll

complete the test in Canvas using the Lockdown browser. To download the browser, visit:  
<https://aits.unt.edu/support/lockdown-browser.html>

## Job materials Edit with and without ProWriting Aid, 20%

For this assignment, you will engage in a two-part editing activity followed by a written reflection. The goal is to compare your manual editing process to the results produced by ProWriting Aid and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of using this tool in technical editing.

### Assignment Components:

1. **Manual Copyedit and light structural edit (Without ProWriting Aid):**
  - o Begin by conducting a thorough edit of the resume and cover letter **without** using ProWriting Aid or any automated editing tools.
  - o Focus on applying different levels of edit, including copyediting, structural editing, and quality assurance, to improve the clarity, accuracy, and usability of the text.
2. **Editing with ProWriting Aid:**
  - o After completing your manual edit, conduct the same edit using ProWriting Aid.
  - o Pay attention to how the tool identifies and addresses errors, stylistic inconsistencies, and overall document quality.
3. **Reflection Essay (500–1000 words):**
  - o Write a reflection comparing the two edits. Address the following questions:
    - **Levels of Edit:** What levels of edit (e.g., mechanical, substantive, copyediting) did ProWriting Aid assist with most effectively? Were there areas where it excelled in comparison to your manual edit?
    - **Deficiencies:** What areas did ProWriting Aid struggle with or fail to address effectively? Were there any issues or nuances in the text that the tool missed entirely?
    - **Insights:** What did you learn about the role of human editors versus automated tools in ensuring content quality? How might these insights impact your approach to editing in the future?
  - o Support your analysis with specific examples from your edits and the ProWriting Aid feedback.

### Submission Guidelines:

- Submit:
  1. Your manual edited version of the text.
  2. The ProWriting Aid-edited version of the text.
  3. Your 500–1000 word reflection essay.

- Use clear headings in your essay to separate your discussion of the manual edit, ProWriting Aid edit, and reflection analysis.
- Be prepared to discuss your findings and insights in a class discussion or peer review session.

This assignment will help you evaluate the role of automated tools in technical editing and develop a deeper understanding of the critical thinking skills required to supplement these tools in professional contexts.

## Structural Edit of a Video Tutorial, 25%

The final project will involve conducting a structural edit (copyedit and structural edit) of a highly technical video tutorial. You will be provided with one video tutorial option or the opportunity to choose your own artifact. The project includes three key deliverables to accompany your edit:

### 1. Audience Analysis:

- o Identify and define the **primary** and **secondary audiences** for the video tutorial.
- o Move beyond surface-level demographics (e.g., age, gender, education) to explore deeper insights, such as motivations, needs, prior knowledge, and potential barriers to understanding the content.
- o Conduct primary and/or secondary research to support your analysis, providing evidence for your conclusions.

### 2. Rhetorical Analysis:

- o Examine the rhetorical context of the video tutorial by answering the following questions:
  - **Who:** Who is the creator, and how does their credibility impact the content?
  - **What:** What is the message or goal of the tutorial?
  - **Where:** Where is the tutorial accessed or delivered, and how does the platform affect its effectiveness?
  - **Why:** Why was the tutorial created, and what is its intended purpose?
  - **When:** When is the information relevant, and how does timing affect its impact?
- o Your analysis should highlight how the rhetorical context influences the tutorial's effectiveness for its intended audience.

### 3. Goodwill Client Memo (Primary Deliverable):

- o Compose a professional memo addressed to the creator of the video tutorial.
- o Provide a summary of your findings from the structural edit, audience analysis, and rhetorical analysis.
- o Clearly explain your suggested edits and provide evidence-based reasoning to justify your recommendations.
- o Maintain a tone of goodwill and professionalism, emphasizing collaboration and constructive feedback.

This comprehensive project is designed to strengthen your skills in editing, audience evaluation, and rhetorical analysis while demonstrating your ability to communicate findings effectively to clients.

## Homework and other assignments, 40%

In addition to the major assignments, you will complete a series of homework assignments, practice exercises that go along with video tutorials, and discussion board posts.

### Email and Communication Timeframe

Generally, I will respond to any email and communication within 24 hours.

## Grading

The grading criteria serve as general guidelines for all course assignments.

"A" (90-100%): A manager would be very impressed and would remember the work when a promotion is discussed. In this course, that means 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. This means that papers 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 paper may have clear, but underdeveloped ideas, or the paper might not engage or affect the reader. The paper 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 paper may contain incomplete information, have serious grammar and mechanical problems, lack 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.

## Homework

All homework, labeled "Do" in the course shell, is due by **11:59 p.m. CST on Sunday evening.**

## Late Work

All late work will be marked down 10% for each day it is late.

## Email Requirement

All students must have a valid UNT email address. I will use MyUNT to send mass emails to the class. I often use email to send class emails, including quizzes, notices, updates, and advisories. It is your responsibility to check email regularly. Not receiving an email is not a valid excuse for late or missing work. You will also need your UNT email address to check your grade throughout the semester.

## ADA

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, I will work with the Office of Disability Accommodation to help reasonably qualified students with disabilities. If you have such a disability, please advise me in writing of your needs no later than the second week of class.

## Religious Holidays

In accordance with State law, students absent due to the observance of a religious holiday may take examinations or complete assignments scheduled for the day missed within a reasonable time after the absence. Travel time required for religious observances shall also be excused. Please see the UNT Student Handbook for information on which holidays or holy days are covered by this policy. State law also requires that students notify their teachers at the beginning of the semester if they expect to miss class on a religious holiday during the semester but want to make up the work missed. Students will be allowed to make up the work provided they have informed their teachers in writing within the first 15 days of the semester. Once again, all assignments and scheduled work must be turned in before the date of the excused absence. University policy requires that students provide their teachers with an official notification card issued by the university if they want to make up any in-class work they missed while they were involved in a university authorized activity.

## Academic Honesty and Integrity

It is your responsibility to become familiar with UNT's Policy of Academic Dishonesty.

This policy defines the following forms of academic dishonesty:

- Cheating intentionally 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.
- Plagiarism the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgement.
- Fabrication intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- Facilitating academic dishonesty intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity. If any course material is submitted that violates this policy of academic dishonesty, the assignment will receive a grade of "F" and appropriate judicial action will be filed. This action includes a report of academic misconduct to your college Dean and possible dismissal from The University of North Texas. There are no first-offense warnings regarding plagiarism.
- It is expected that plagiarism and the correct use (citation) of other's ideas (including print, digital, images and other media) are fully understood. Contact me if you're ever confused about what constitutes academic dishonesty. Misunderstandings, miscommunication, oversights, or lack of comprehension as to what constitutes academic dishonesty is not accepted.

# Technology Requirements

To successfully complete this course, you should have access to a reliable internet source. You should also have these technical skills:

- Using the learning management system
- Using email with attachments
- Creating and submitting files in commonly used word processing program formats
- Copying and pasting
- Downloading and installing software
- Using spreadsheet programs
- Headset/Microphone (if required for synchronous chats)
- Word Processor

Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm.

- Don't share your password with anyone.
- Change your password if you think someone else might know it.
- Always log out when you are finished using the learning management system.

The following information has been provided to assist you with the technological aspect of the course.

- UIT Help Desk: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>
- Hardware and software necessary to use Bb Learn: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/bblearn/>
- Browser requirements: <http://kb.blackboard.com/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=84639794>
- Computer and Internet Literacy: [http://clt.odu.edu/oso/index.php?src=pe\\_comp\\_lit](http://clt.odu.edu/oso/index.php?src=pe_comp_lit)

## 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. You should take your cue for the right level from how your professor interacts with you and other students.
- 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).