

TECM 1700: Technical Writing

Course Information

Term: Spring 2021

Location: Online via Canvas

Instructor Information

Instructor: Meesha Thomas

Office Location: AudB 105

Office hours: via Canvas Conference: M/W/F 10AM - 11AM, or by appointment

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TECM 1700: Introduction to Professional, Science, and Technical Writing

This course meets the requirements for the University CORE and is a process-oriented introduction to writing, especially for science, pre-engineering, and business students. This summer, we will focus on understanding the writing situation and practice writing in response to professional, science, and technical situations. You will fulfill the following learning objectives by the end of this course:

- Learn effective study skills
- Learn to practice time management
- Learn to work as an effective member of a collaborative team
- Learn skills for evaluating effective writing
- Enhance grammar and punctuation skills
- Become familiar with the genres of writing common to technical disciplines
- Learn to apply the rhetorical situation (audience, purpose, occasion) to the decision-making process when writing and learning.

Required Text

The required text for this course is

Lannon and Gurak's *Technical Communication*, 14 ed (2016). ISBN: 9780134271958.

Subscription to MyWritingLab is optional.

Supplemental readings will be available on Canvas.

Course Assignments

The assignments on this course are designed to provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate and develop their writing abilities. As this is a writing intensive class, each assignment, whether individual or group, requires substantial contributions and solid evidence of audience analysis, ethical considerations, and problem-solving skills. Throughout the process this course requires review, revision and editing—all of which improve the effectiveness of your writing.

You will complete the following assignments in the class. Full assignment descriptions will be placed under the "assignments" tab in Canvas.

Assignment	Grade Weight
Correspondence Package	10%
Grammar Test	10%
Major Project	30%
Progress Report	10%
Presentations	10%
Quizzes, Homework, & Drafts	15%
Professionalism	5%
Final Exam	10%

Grading Scale

The following criteria serve as general guidelines for all assignments submitted in this course. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with these guidelines.

"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.

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.

Professionalism Policy

5% of your semester grade is based on professionalism. Your professionalism grade is comprised of three components:

- Attendance—number of unexcused absences. I only excuse absences for university sanctioned events, religious holidays, or ODA accommodations.
- Engagement—how actively you engage in class discussions, with your classmates, and with me, how actively you complete assignments.
- Contribution—how much you contribute to the success of yourself, your team, and every project you submission.

Attendance

You will receive three attendance grades—one at the end of each five-week period. Your grade will be calculated by how many absences you have during the 5 week period. At the beginning of each 5-week period your absences will reset. Following is the grade breakdown per absence:

You will be considered absent if,

- You do not come
- You are more than 10 minutes late
- You leave more than 10 minutes before the end of class without my approval

I understand that extenuating circumstance do exist, so if you feel an exception is needed in any of these cases, please come by my office hours, or contact me via email.

If you miss class for any reason, you are responsible for all material covered and all assignments made. However, you cannot make-up assignments completed during class. It is your responsibility to keep track of your own absences. If you have questions regarding your absence(s), please speak to me during office hours, or send me an email.

Engagement

Contribution

COVID-19 Impact on Attendance

While attendance is expected as outlined above, it is important for all of us to be mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our community, especially given concerns about COVID-19. Please contact me if you are unable to attend class because you are ill, or unable to attend class due to a related issue regarding COVID-19. It is important that you communicate with me prior to being absent so I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class.

If you are experiencing any [symptoms of COVID-19 \(Links to an external site.\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>) please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus. UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Hotline at 844-366-5892 or COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure. While attendance is an important part of succeeding in this class, your own health, and those of others in the community, is more important.

Class Materials for Remote Instruction

The UNT fall schedule requires this course to have fully remote instruction beginning November 28th. Additional remote instruction may be necessary if community health conditions change or you need to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19. Students will need access to a [webcam and microphone – faculty member to include what other basic equipment is needed] to participate in fully remote portions of the class. Additional required classroom materials for remote learning include: [list specific software, supplies, equipment or system requirements needed for the course]. Information on how to be successful in a remote learning environment can be found at <https://online.unt.edu/learn> ([Links to an external site.](https://online.unt.edu/learn)).

Statement on Face Covering

Face coverings are required in all UNT facilities. Students are expected to wear face coverings during this class. If you are unable to wear a face covering due to a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Access to request an accommodation. UNT face covering requirements are subject to change due to community health guidelines. Any changes will be communicated via the instructor.

Assignment Submission

The assignment submission policy is designed to help you develop the skills and habits that employers want. The self-discipline of meeting deadlines is an important aspect of

professionalism. Responsible students understand and appreciate this policy, which helps you to follow through on your educational goals.

- Take responsibility to submit every assignment on time. **On time means before the deadline.**
- The deadline for an assignment will be indicated in Canvas
- Daily assignments **will not** be accepted late. To earn more than 0 on these assignments, submit them before the deadline.
- For **each 24-hour period that a major assignment is late**, you will lose 10% of the total points possible for the assignment. After four 24-hour periods have passed, the paper receives an automatic "F."
For example, if an assignment is due at 8 a.m. on Monday, and you submit it at 8:05 a.m. on Monday, you will lose 10% of the total points possible for the assignment.
- To avoid any negative impact from possible technical issues, you should develop the good habit of submitting your work at least 12 hours before the deadline. By doing so, you will give yourself time to resolve issues before the deadline.
- After submitting an assignment, verify that it is in Canvas and is available to the instructor for grading. It is your responsibility to use these tools correctly.
- **DO NOT** ask for “leeway.” As in the workplace, there are consequences when a deadline is missed.
- Before submitting an assignment for grading, ensure that it meets the assignment requirements as listed on the assignment sheet. Also double-check your work against the quality criteria that were presented for the assignment.
- When an assignment is due for grading, **submit it through Canvas**. Plan ahead and allow plenty of time to resolve any issues you might experience with your computer, your Internet connection, Canvas availability, etc.
- **Turnitin Submissions:** Some written assignments will be submitted as Turnitin assignments. Turnitin is a third-party web-based plagiarism detection service. Before submitting your paper to Turnitin, please remove your name and other personal information from the document. After submitting an assignment, verify that it was submitted and that it is available to the instructor for grading.

Classroom Conduct

The classroom conduct policy is designed to help you develop the skills and habits that employers want. The self-discipline of respectful, responsible, and productive behavior is an important aspect of professionalism. Responsible students understand and appreciate this policy, which helps you to follow through on your educational goals.

As a student in a senior-level course, you are expected to take responsibility for following the UNT Student Code of Conduct

(https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/07.012_CodeofConduct_2013_0.pdf (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. (Links to an external site.)).

Off-task and disruptive behaviors: Even adults in a senior-level class sometimes need to be incentivized to stay on task. Therefore, 1 absence or a half-absence may be recorded if the

instructor observes off-task behaviors such as smartphone use, computer use, side conversations, sleeping, doing work for other courses, etc., during lectures, small-group activities, or work periods.

Computer Lab Rules

This course takes place in a computer lab. Students must follow the lab rules.

- Make appropriate use of technology.
- Do not make disruptive, distracting, or off-task use of any technology during class.
- Do not use technology unless it is required for a classroom activity. For example, if there is a lecture or a class discussion, you should not be using your phone. Using your phone or using technology for “off-task” use can result in an absence.
- If you fail to comply with instructions concerning the use of computers, phones, tablets, or other technology, you may be asked to leave the classroom, and in that event, you will be counted as absent for the day.