TECM 1700.006: Technical Writing

Course Information

Term: Fall 2018

Class Time: 8am – 9:20am

Location: AudB 313

Instructor Information

Instructor: Meesha Thomas

Office hours: T & Th 2pm – 3:00pm and by appointment

Office Hours Location: AudB 302

Email: meesha.thomas@unt.edu

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 Blackboard.

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 Blackboard.

Assignment	Type	Weight
Correspondence Package	Individual	10%
iFixit Page Revision	Individual	5%
Grammar Test	Individual	10%
iFixit Proposal/Email	Individual	5%
iFixit Troubleshooting Page	Individual	5%
Progress Report	Group	10%
iFixit Guide	Group	5%
iFixit Guide	Individual	10%
iFixit Project Presentations	Group	5%
Quizzes, Homework, and Drafts	Individual/Group	10%
Professionalism (includes your engagement, participation, & attendance).	Individual	10%
Final Exam	Individual	15%

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 Schedule

This is a tentative schedule for this section of 1700. The schedule is subject to change pending our progress this semester.

Date	Agenda	Readings Due	Assignments Due
Week 1			
Day 1, Jan. 16	Grammar diagnostic; ice breaker; review syllabus; wrong word errors; homonym errors		Buy textbooks
Day 2, Jan. 18	Lab orientation; review diagnostic; spectrum of punctuation; missing comma in a series	Chapter 1	
Week 2			
Day 3, Jan. 23	Information hierarchy; The rhetorical situation; restrictive and non-restrictive clauses; Audience analysis activity Assign correspondence package	Chapters 2 & 10	Ch. 2 reading quiz Ch. 10 reading quiz
Day 4, Jan. 25			
Week 3			
Day 5, Jan. 30	Understanding readers and context of use; missing comma in a compound sentence; unnecessary or missing capitalization	Chapters 11 & 14	Ch. 11 reading quiz Ch. 14 reading quiz
Day 6, Feb. 1	Direct v indirect style; email etiquette; vague pronoun reference; comma splice	Chapters 6	Correspondence package (draft) Ch. 6 reading quiz
Week 4			
Day 7, Feb. 6	Track changes; workshop; unnecessary or missing apostrophe (including *its/it's*); fragments	Chapter 19	Correspondence package (final) Ch. 19 reading quiz
Day 8, Feb. 8	Lack of noun-antecedent agreement; fused (run-on) sentence		iFixit Getting Started

Week 5			
Day 9, Feb. 13	How's my writing?; unnecessary shift in verb tense; danglers Assign iFixit Project	Chapter 5	iFixit Page revision Ch. 5 reading quiz
Day 10, Feb. 15	Workshop Personality types and learning styles	Chapter 22	Team Charter Ch. 22 reading quiz
Week 6			
Day 11, Feb. 20	Grammar review; mechanical error with a quotation;		iFixit Proposal Draft/Email
Day 12, Feb. 22	Workshop; Process descriptions; graphics	Chapter 7	iFixit Final Proposal Ch. 7 reading quiz
Week 7			
Day 13, Feb. 27	Library research basics Begin ifixit milestone 1		iFixit Final Proposal Changes (if needed)
Day 14, Mar. 1	Concision strategies; Concision practice worksheet Workshop Review for grammar test		
March 12-15	**Spring Break**	**Rest and ENJOY!**	**NO Classes**
Week 8			
Day 15, Mar. 6	Inserting page numbers and section breaks; parallelism and passive voice iFixit Troubleshooting Page - Practice Worksheet Workshop	Chapter 17	iFixit Troubleshooting Page Draft Ch. 17 reading quiz
Day 16, Mar. 8	In-class grammar test;		iFixit Final Troubleshooting Page Grammar test
Week 9			
Day 17, Mar. 20	Fancy language Begin iFixit Milestone 2	Chapter 18	iFixit Troubleshooting Page Changes Due (if needed) Ch. 18 reading quiz
Day 18, Mar. 22	Introduction to Adobe Acrobat; usability testing;		

Week 10			
Day 19, Mar. 27	Workshop; primary research;		iFixit Device Page Draft
Day 20, Mar. 29	PowerPoint design tips; slide Master Correspondence Practice Activity		iFixit Final Device Page
Week 11			
Day 21, April 3	Workshop Begin iFixit Milestone 3		iFixit Final Device Page Changes Due (if needed) Individual Progress Report-Draft
Day 22, April 5	SurveyMonkey exercise		Progress Report
Week 12			
Day 23, April 10	Workshop		First Guide Draft
Day 24, April 12	In-class Challenge		Submit Final First Guide Draft to iFixit
Week 13			
Day 25, April 17	Begin Milestone 3 – Part 2		Submit finalized guide drafts (All Guides) to iFixit
Day 26, April 19	iFixit Milestone 4 Workshop		
Week 14			
Day 27, April 24	Group evaluation form Giving stellar presentations	Chapter 23	Submit Final Guides to iFixit. Ch. 23 reading quiz
Day 28, April 26	Workshop group presentations		
Week 15			
Day 29, May 1	Group Presentations		Group Presentations
Day 30, May 3	Group presentations continued Evaluations		Group Presentations
Week 16			
Final Exam Day **Tuesday, May 8 8AM-10AM**	Final exam period		Final Exam

Course Policies

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.

Attendance

Professionalism Policy

10% 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 accommodation.
- Engagement—how actively you engage in class discussions, with your classmates, and with me, how actively you submit online quizzes, and complete homework.
- Contribution—how much you contribute to the success of yourself, your team, and every project you submit.

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:

0 absences= 100%	1 absence= 90%	2 absences= 80%
3 absence= 70%	4 absences= 60%	5 absences= 0%

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 see me after class 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 that were written and submitted 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.

General Technology Requirements

Computer Operations and Access Requirements

You are expected to be familiar with the day-to-day operation of computers including email (and sending attachments) and standard software. If you need to develop your computer skills, please consider signing up for the courses offered by the Computer and Information Technology Center.

You are also expected to have regular access to computing technology whether it be your computer at home or the computers provided by the Library. There are 14 computer labs on campus, including one 24-hour lab should the library be closed.

Hardware and Disk Media Requirements

It is your responsibility to ensure that the computer(s) and disk(s) you use are functional and that you have, in the case of technological failure, backed up your data.

Small USB storage units called "jump drives" or "pen drives" are an excellent alternative. See Amazon for more information or visit our local computer stores and/or large retailers to purchase portable memory starting at around $30.00.

I highly suggest using a platform like Google Docs or Dropbox to store your work and ensure you always have access to your work when needed.

Email Requirement

All students must have a valid UNT email address. You can forward your UNT email to your regular account (Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.), should you not wish to directly check your UNT account. It is also your responsibility to check your email regularly. I often use email to send class emails, including notices, updates, and advisories.

Assignment Submission and Grading

Format

Major assignments and drafts must be submitted through Blackboard unless otherwise noted. E-mailed assignments will not be accepted.

Due Dates

Assignments must be completed and uploaded to Blackboard by the beginning of the designated class period, unless specified otherwise. I do not accept late work unless you have documented extenuating circumstances related to university events or the observance of a recognized holy day.

It is your responsibility to turn in your work on time. Computer-related excuses will not be accepted as per the above technology requirements.

Lastly, you may not use program templates (e.g., Word templates) to format any of your documents — these don't encourage you to learn the programs and generally result in dull, unpersuasive documents.

Classroom Behavior

It is expected that discussions will occur in the classroom; consequently, it is important to be respectful and listen to the instructor and your classmates.

"Listening" does not include answering a cell phone, texting, chatting to your neighbor, checking email, surfing the Internet, or reading the *University Daily*, *USA Today*, *Sports Illustrated* supplement or any other printed matter.

Particularly, students who elect to surf the Internet rather than work on a class assignment or listen to the instructor/classmate will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent for that day.

Your preparedness in this course also falls under the subject of classroom behavior. You are expected to come to every class period with your textbook and appropriate note-taking materials. Likewise, you are expected to have completed all the assigned readings and brought all assignments due during that class period.

Academic Dishonesty

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment. Other sanctions may be issued, depending on the severity of the incident. All incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations
b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments
c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university
d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s)
e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.

The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to:

a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment
b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

ADA Statement

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability

Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Emergency Procedures/Notifications

Emergency Procedures

In my class we will follow the emergency procedures recommended by the university. You can find a complete description of these procedures by going to the link below. Please review these procedures:

https://emergency.unt.edu/emergency-guidelines-0

Emergency Notifications

Below, I have copied UNT"s policy regarding emergency notification processes:

Eagle Alert is the primary alert notification system for the University of North of Texas and it will be used to communicate emergency messages to the campus community. Other alert notification methods should be utilized in addition to Eagle Alert.

Local Notifications/Alerts

Eagle Alert   Denton County Alert System

City of Denton Code Red   City of Denton Outdoor Warning Sirens

Additional Resources

NOAA Weather Radios   Barron Threat Net App

FEMA App   NWS Twitter Alerts

Please be alert for emergency notifications, and always read them immediately.