

TECM 2700: Introduction to Technical Writing

Course Information

Term: Summer 2018

Location: Online via Canvas

Instructor Information

Instructor: Meesha Thomas

Office hours: Via Conferences in Canvas M/W/F 10AM – 11AM, and by appointment

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Course Summary

Every profession, regardless of the field, requires solid communication skills: the ability to communicate with an audience inside and outside of the profession. The effective professional has a keen sense of audience and purpose, a command of the language, and an ability to adapt to a variety of communication tasks. Technical Writing introduces students to the genres, style, and design of technical documents that are used in various professional fields including engineering, science, business, and criminal justice.

By the end of this course you should be able to

- analyze communication contexts rhetorically by understanding audiences, purposes, and situations
- create technical documents that solve problems and improve a reader's access to information
- write effective technical prose
- design convincing and usable documents
- research, synthesize, articulate, and graphically represent technical data
- write collaboratively and work as a member of a team

Textbook

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.

Assignments

The assignments in this course are designed to provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate and develop your writing abilities. As this is a writing-intensive course, each assignment, whether individual or group, requires substantial contribution and solid evidence of audience analysis, ethical considerations, and problem-solving skills.

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.

Assignment	Weight
Quizzes, Discussion Board Assignments, Drafts, and Participation	10%
Resume and LinkedIn Summary	20%
Final Exam	10%
Policy Memo	15%
Project Management Software Report	15%
LinkedIn Profile Content	10%
Employment Outlook Report	20%

Quizzes, Discussion Board Assignments, Drafts, and Participation, 10%

The above listed assignments will be averaged to determine this 10% of your grade.

Policy Memo, 15%

Revise the policy memo on employee time reporting. You will be assessed on your ability to deliver information using direct and indirect styles as well as your use of appropriate devices such as active and passive voice, parallelism, and imperative mood.

Resume and LinkedIn Summary, 20%

Select an internship posting based on your current qualifications. If you're planning on graduating this year, approach this assignment as if you have your degree. Design and construct a resume based on this posting's desired qualifications. You will be evaluated on the content and appearance of the resume as well as how effectively it targets your audience. Resumes produced with existing templates will not be accepted.

Additionally, write a LinkedIn Summary, which would appeal to recruiters and hiring managers. The summary paragraph will be assessed on its content and persuasiveness.

Project Management Software Report, 15%

In assigned groups, research and assess the efficacy of two free project management tools such as Asana, Dropbox, Google Drive, GoToMeeting, or Slack. After your team has selected its tools, you will perform a usability test. Your team will then synthesize your findings an IMR&D (Introduction-Methods-Results-Discussion) report.

Employment Outlook Report, 20%

In the groups from your previous assignment, research and report the employment outlook for your future profession. Each team member is responsible for locating and synthesizing data from the Occupational Outlook Handbook (Bureau of Labor Statistics) as well as 3 current job postings in his or her desired field and location. Each team member will also interview one relevant professional who works outside the university. Your team must use the project management tool you recommended in the project management report to communicate with one another.

The audience for the employment outlook report is academic advisors and undergraduate directors who advise and recruit students into your major. The report will be assessed on your ability to analyze, synthesize, and visualize technical information.

LinkedIn Profile Content, 10%

Write the content necessary for an effective LinkedIn profile. If you don't wish to post these materials on LinkedIn, submit them via Canvas. The profile content should include a professional headshot as well as the following sections: summary, experience, courses, skills, and education. Organize these sections based on what we've discussed about hierarchy in class as well as the experiences that distinguish you from the competition.

Final Exam, 10%

You will take a comprehensive exam at the end of the semester. It will include a written section and a multiple choice sections. The exam will be taken online via Canvas.

Grading

The below grading criteria serve as general guidelines for evaluating all assignments. Assignment-specific rubrics will be housed on Canvas.

"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 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, 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.

Assignment Submission and Grading:

Format

Major assignments and drafts must be submitted through Canvas unless otherwise noted. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.

Due Dates

To receive credit for an assignment, you must upload it to Canvas by the posted time and date.

Students frequently blame Canvas when they submit assignments late. I will not except late assignment submissions unless you have:

- written evidence to prove that you submitted the paper on time
- written evidence that a legitimate Canvas issue prevented you from submitting your work on time

If you cannot upload your document to Canvas for some reason, send me an email with the document attached to verify that you submitted the document before the deadline. I do not grade documents that aren't in Canvas, so see me as soon as possible to resolve the problem.

If you need help with either of these issues, contact the Canvas student help desk: 940-565-2324.

If I allow your class to revise a document for a higher grade, you cannot make up points lost for lateness.

Templates

You may not use program templates (e.g., Word templates) to format any of your documents.

Other Policies and Information

General Technology Requirements:

Computer Operations and Access Requirements

As this is a sophomore-level course, you are expected to be familiar with the day-to-day operation of computers including UNT email, Canvas, and standard software. 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.

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 backed up your data in the case of technological failure. As a student at UNT, you can back up data, up to 25 GB, through OneDrive. **A corrupted disk or crashed hard drive does not constitute an excuse for late or unsubmitted work.** To bring electronic files to class, email them to yourself as attachments or use the OneDrive available through EagleConnect.

Email Requirement

All students must have a valid UNT email address, as it is the only email address I can use to communicate with you. It is also your responsibility to check your email regularly.

Academic Integrity:

I follow UNT's policy for academic dishonesty. You can access these guidelines and the UNT policy at <http://tinyurl.com/nuwo42u>. You are responsible for knowing and following the student standards for academic integrity.

Accommodations (Special Arrangements):

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations.

UNT's Office of Disability Accommodations offers a variety of services but requires qualified students to follow an application process. Please check their Web site for more information.

New ODA policy – *The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 – The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.*

Senate Bill 11 ("Campus Carry"):

Students must read UNT's policy on concealed handguns on campus, available at <http://campuscarry.unt.edu/untpolicy>.

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

[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](#)
- [City of Denton Code Red](#)
- [Denton County Alert System](#)
- [City of Denton Outdoor Warning Sirens](#)

Additional Resources

- [NOAA Weather Radios](#)
- [FEMA App](#)
- [Barron Threat Net App](#)
- [NWS Twitter Alerts](#)

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

Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule for this section of 2700. The schedule is subject to change pending our progress this semester.

Date	Details
Tue Jun 5, 2018	Discussion: Introduce Yourself
Wed Jun 6, 2018	Module2: Assignment - Snow Policy Memo Academic integrity quiz Module 1: Assignment - Correspondence Case Study (First Week) Module 1: Discussion Activity Start Here Completion Quiz
Thu Jun 7, 2018	Diagnostic-Writing Exam (first week) due by 11:59pm
Fri Jun 8, 2018	Module 2: Discussion Activity Chapter 11 Quiz Module 2: Assignment Policy Memo Draft and Peer Reviews Module 3: Discussion Activity
Sun Jun 10, 2018	Module 2: Assignment - Policy Memo Final
Mon Jun 11, 2018	Module 5: Assignment - Practice Creating a Resume Shell in MS-Word
Wed Jun 13, 2018	Chapter 13 Quiz Chapter 16 Quiz Chapter 19 Quiz Chapter 25 Quiz Module 4: Discussion Activity Module 6: Discussion Activity
Fri Jun 15, 2018	Module 5: Assignment - Resume and LinkedIn Summary Drafts and Peer Reviews
Wed Jun 20, 2018	Module 6: Major Assignments - Resume and LinkedIn Summary - Final Module 8: Class Discussion Activity Chapter 5 Quiz Module 7: Discussion Activity Module 8: Team Discussion Activity
Fri Jun 22, 2018	Module 9: Team Discussion Activity Module 8: Assignment - Team Charter
Sun Jun 24, 2018	Module 9: Assignment -Creating User-Test Scenarios

Date	Details
Wed Jun 27, 2018	Chapter 21 Quiz Module 10: Assignment - User Testing
Fri Jun 29, 2018	Chapter 7 Quiz Module 10: Assignment - Project Management Software Report Draft and Peer Review
Sun Jul 1, 2018	Module 10: Major Assignment - Project Management Software Report Final Chapter 9 Quiz Module 11: Assignment - Gathering Data for the Employment Outlook Report Module 11: Discussion Activity - Develop Interview Questions
Mon Jul 2, 2018	Module 13: Discussion Activity Module 13: Major Assignment - Employment Outlook Report Draft and Peer Reviews Module 14: Discussion Activity
Wed Jul 4, 2018	Chapter 12 Quiz due by 11:59pm
Thu Jul 5, 2018	Module 13: Major Assignment - Employment Outlook Report - Final Module 15: Assignment - Team Evaluations **
Fri Jul 6, 2018	Diagnostic-Writing Exam (final exam) Module 15: Correspondence Case Study (Final) Module 15: Major Assignment: LinkedIn Profile Content