

TECM 1700: Technical Writing

Course Information

Term: Spring 2020

Location: AudB 312

Instructor Information

Instructor: Meesha Thomas

Office Location: AudB 105

Office hours: In Office T/Th 8:25AM – 9:25AM and Video Conference 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	Type	Grade Weight
Correspondence Package	Individual	10%
iFixit Page Revision	Individual	10%
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, Drafts, and Participation	Individual and Group	15%
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. 14	Grammar diagnostic; review syllabus; wrong word errors; homonym errors		Buy textbooks
Day 2, Jan. 16	Lab orientation; review diagnostic; spectrum of punctuation; missing comma in a series	Chapter 1	
Week 2			
Day 3, Jan. 21	Information hierarchy; The rhetorical situation; restrictive and non-restrictive clauses; assign correspondence package	Chapters 2 & 10	Ch. 2 reading quiz Ch. 10 reading quiz
Day 4, Jan. 23	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
Week 3			
Day 5, Jan. 28	direct v indirect style; email etiquette; vague pronoun reference; comma splice	Chapters 6	Correspondence package (draft) Ch. 6 reading quiz
Day 6, Jan. 30	How to write like an 8 th grader; track changes; workshop; unnecessary or missing apostrophe (including <i>its/it's</i>); fragments	Chapter 19	Correspondence package (final) Ch. 19 reading quiz
Week 4			
Day 7, Feb. 4	Lack of noun-antecedent agreement; fused (run-on) sentence		iFixit Getting Started

Day 8, Feb. 6	How's my writing?; unnecessary shift in verb tense; dangles Assign iFixit Project	Chapter 5	iFixit Page revision Ch. 5 reading quiz
Week 5			
Day 9, Feb. 11	Workshop; incomplete or missing documentation; personality types and learning styles	Chapter 22	Team Charter Ch. 22 reading quiz
Day 10, Feb. 13	Grammar review; mechanical error with a quotation;		iFixit Proposal Draft/Email
Week 6			
Day 11, Feb. 18	Process descriptions;	Chapter 7	iFixit Final Proposal Ch. 7 reading quiz
Day 12, Feb. 20	Library research basics; begin ifixit milestone 1; graphics		iFixit Final Proposal Changes (if needed)
Week 6			
Day 13, Feb. 25	Comparing documents; concision strategies; workshop; review for grammar test		
Day 14, Feb. 27	In-class grammar test; Workshop	Chapter 17	Grammar test (final); iFixit Troubleshooting Page Draft Ch. 17 reading quiz
Week 8			
Day 15, Mar. 3	Inserting page numbers and section breaks; parallelism and passive voice		iFixit Final Troubleshooting Page
Day 16, Mar. 5	Fancy language; Begin iFixit Milestone 2	Chapter 18 "Searching for Information with Field Research Methods" (Scratch drive)	iFixit Troubleshooting Page Changes Due (if needed) Ch. 18 reading quiz
NO CLASSES Enjoy your Spring Break!			
Week 9			
Day 17, Mar. 17	Introduction to Adobe Acrobat; usability testing;		

Day 18, Mar. 19	Workshop; primary research;		iFixit Device Page Draft
Week 10			
Day 19, Mar. 24	PowerPoint design tips; slide Master		iFixit Final Device Page
Day 20, Mar. 26	Begin iFixit Milestone 3		iFixit Final Device Page Changes Due (if needed)
Week 11			
Day 21, Mar. 31	SurveyMonkey exercise		Progress Report
Day 22, Apr. 2	Workshop		First Guide Draft
Week 12			
Day 23, Apr. 7			Submit Final First Guide Draft to iFixit
Day 24, Apr. 9	Begin Milestone 3 – Part 2		Submit finalized guide drafts (All Guides) to iFixit
Week 13			
Day 25, Apr. 14	iFixit Milestone 4 Workshop		
Day 26, Apr. 16	Group evaluation form Giving stellar presentations	Chapter 23	Submit Final Guides to iFixit. Ch. 23 reading quiz
Week 14			
Day 27, Apr. 21	Workshop group presentations		
Day 28, Apr. 23	Group Presentations		Group Presentations
Week 15			
Day 29, Apr. 28	Group presentations continued Evaluations		Group Presentations
Day 30, Apr. 30			
Week 16			
Final Exam Day May	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

Your presence in this course is mandatory not optional. You cannot perform well in this course unless you attend class. If you miss class for any reason, you are responsible for all material covered and all assignments made.

Should you miss more than 2 classes, your grade will be lowered one letter. If you miss more than 3 classes, your grade will be lowered 2 letters. If you miss 5 classes, you will receive a grade of 'F' in the class.

Tardies may be logged and can result in a lowered grade should they begin to accumulate. If, for example, a participation grade or quiz is given during the first 15 minutes and a student arrives late, a grade of zero (0) will be received for that assignment.

Likewise, any student who *leaves class* has before it has ended or without my prior approval will automatically receive an absence for that day.

Leaving Class: Any student who leaves before the class has ended without my prior approval will automatically receive an absence for that day.

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.

As a student at UNT, you can back up data, up to 25 GB, through SkyDrive. A corrupted disk or crashed hard drive does not constitute an excuse for late or unsubmitted work. If you need to bring electronic files to class, please email them to yourself as attachments or use the SkyDrive available through your EagleConnect account.

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.

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 Canvas unless otherwise noted. E-mailed assignments will not be accepted.

Due Dates

Assignments must be completed and uploaded to Canvas 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.