

Course Syllabus - Spring 2019 TECM 4180

Instructor: Mrs. Thomas

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What is this course about?

Professionals in all fields are increasingly called upon to evaluate processes, improve outcomes, and lead change. To make sound conclusions and to influence others, you need to gather information, ensure that it's valid and credible, and present your findings and recommendations in a clear compelling way. In this course, you'll gather information through interviews, surveys, and secondary research. You'll hone your critical thinking skills. You'll learn how to organize your content for maximum impact. And you'll develop memos, articles, reports, and graphs.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to

- Create a survey and analyze its results
- Conduct interviews to gather information for product improvement and development
- Work successfully in a group to solve problems
- Report results of research in audience-appropriate ways.

Major Units

Critical Thinking

Explore practical applications of critical thinking techniques. Use these skills while conducting research, forming conclusions, and recommending action.

Interviewing

Develop your interview skills by conducting two interviews and writing recommendations based on your findings.

Survey Design and Reporting

Work as a group to identify research goals and to conduct a survey. Analyze your survey results and report your findings verbally and visually.

Secondary Research

Conduct secondary research to explore a challenge or opportunity that is critical to the success of an organization or business. Synthesize information from multiple sources to report your findings and recommendations.

What books do I need to buy?

Please buy these books right away:

- *Organizing Ideas* by Matthew Spence ISBN - 978-1495984938
- *Think Smarter, Critical Thinking to Improve Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills* by Michael Kallet ISBN - 978-1118729830

Additional reading assignments will be announced in class and listed in Canvas. You'll also do self-selected reading, primarily for the Secondary Research assignment.

How much homework is there?

As with most 3-credit classes, you should plan for an average of 8 to 9 hours of homework each week. Out-of-class work will include reading assignments, reading summaries, research projects, and major writing assignments.

What policies should I be aware of?

Please take the responsibility to read the entire Policies section of this document. Several of these policies are designed to incentivize good professional habits such as attendance, punctuality, accountability, and commitment to quality.

Consequently, there are ***grade penalties for:***

- ***Excessive absenteeism*** (1 letter grade off the final course grade for each absence greater than 3)
- ***Off-task behaviors*** (1 absence or a half-absence may be recorded for off-task behaviors such as smartphone use, computer use, side conversations, sleeping, doing work for other courses, etc.)
- ***Late submission of assignments*** (no late submission for low-stakes assignments; 10% deducted from major assignments for each day late)

Policies

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.

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> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

As a student enrolled in a senior-level university course, you are expected to take responsibility for your own learning and to uphold the highest academic standards at all times.

- Do your own work.
- Do new work for every assignment—do not reuse work that you created for other purposes.
- Do your best on every assignment—strive to meet professional standards.
- Follow the UNT Policy for Student Academic Integrity.
(https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003_StudentStandardsOfAcademicIntegrity_8_2017.pdf (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.)

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. As this is a senior-level course it is expected that plagiarism and the correct use (citation) of others' 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 in this course.

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:

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 0 absences= 100% | 1 absence= 80% | 2 absences= 60% |
| 3 absence= 50% | 4 absences= 30% | 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 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

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Consistently effective participation that demonstrates knowledge of the course readings. | 100 |
| Typically effective participation that demonstrates knowledge of course material | 80 |
| Occasional participation that demonstrates some knowledge of the course material | 70 |
| Infrequent or ineffective participation | 60 |
| Failure to participate or demonstrate knowledge of the course readings | 50 |

Contribution

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Attends office hours (when needed), submits all work, and demonstrates full team engagement by participating actively both online and face-to-face. | 100 |
| Attends office hours (when needed), submits most work, demonstrates team engagement by participating both online and face-to-face | 80 |
| Occasionally attends office hours, submits some work, some team engagement | 70 |
| Never attended office hours, regularly fails to submit work, little team engagement | 60 |
| No engagement with instructor or team | 50+/- |

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.
- As an adult enrolled in a senior-level university course, you are expected to take responsibility to learn how to submit assignments in Blackboard, to manage your time, to resolve technical issues, and to meet deadlines.
- 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 that you might experience with your computer, your Internet connection, Blackboard availability, etc.
- **If you are asked to bring a printed document for an in-class activity**, such as Peer Review, print the document before class begins and remember to bring the printed document to class. **Do not** ask to leave class to print the document. **Do not** bring your laptop or other device and expect other students to read your document on that device. If you do not bring a printed document when one is required, you will not be able to participate in the activity. You will be asked to leave the classroom and you will receive a daily grade of a zero for the workshop.
- **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.).

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.

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.**

University-Authorized Activities

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.

Workshopping

As in many writing classes, this class includes a workshop component, in which students' writing samples are evaluated or discussed. For example, we will have peer review workshops, in which students evaluate one another's documents and provide written feedback. We also will have workshops in which the whole class looks at a selected document and discusses possible improvements. If your document is chosen for this purpose, it will be an extra opportunity to get additional feedback and guidance on your writing. Be sure to talk with the instructor if you have any questions about how to evaluate and apply the suggestions from these workshops.

Grading

Each assignment will be graded according to the requirements and the quality criteria for the assignment.

Your final course grade will be based on the total points earned, minus any penalties for non-attendance (see Attendance).

- A: You earned 90-100% of the possible points.
- B: You earned 80-89.9% of the possible points OR your course grade was lowered to a B due to the Attendance Policy.
- C: 70-79.9% of the possible points OR your course grade was lowered to a C due to the Attendance Policy.
- D: You earned 60-69.9% of the possible points OR your course grade was lowered to a D due to the Attendance Policy.
- F: You earned less than 60% of the possible points OR your course grade was lowered to an F due to the Attendance Policy.

Typical criteria are provided below to help you understand the expectations. ***Assignment-specific requirements and grading criteria will be presented in class***

Assignments

The assignments in this course are designed to provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate and develop your writing abilities. As 4180 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. Throughout the process, this course requires review, revision and editing—all of which improve you writing.

Course assignments, type, and grade weight are listed in the table below:

| Assignment | Type | Weight |
|------------------------------------|------------------|--------|
| Student Interview Report | Individual | 10% |
| Client Interview Report | Individual | 15% |
| Intercultural Communication Report | Individual | 20% |
| Proposal Pitch | Individual | 15% |
| Survey Workshops/Report | Group | 25% |
| Homework, and Quizzes | Individual/Group | 10% |
| Professionalism | Individual/Group | 5% |

Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule for this section of 4180. The schedule is subject to change pending our progress this semester.

| Date | In-Class Activities | Readings Due | Assignments Due |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | Course intro, overview of syllabus, the three tools of persuasion, interviewing, intro to data-driven learning | Spence, Chps 1-2 | |
| Week 2 | Spence Method, assign student interview assignment, intro to critical thinking, evaluative adjectives | Spence, Chps. 3-4 plus, p. 48, p. 74 Supplementary Reading: "Conducting Interviews" (see Canvas) | Data-driven learning homework |
| Week 3 | Peer review of student interview draft, critical thinking discussion | Kallet Ch. 1, 2 , 4-6, 27, 29, 31 Spence Ch. 8-9 Supplementary Reading: Qualitative Research Techniques | Evaluative adjectives homework Student interview report (draft) |
| Week 4 | Assign client interview assignment, interview transcript activity, reporting verbs | CT 7-9 Read interview transcripts for class prep | Student interview report (final) |
| Week 5 | Peer review of client interview, critical thinking discussion , passives | Spence Ch. 14 | Reporting verbs homework Client interview report (draft) |
| Week 6 | Intro to intercultural communication, assign multicultural report, UNT related library resources | Supplementary Reading: "Writing for International Readers" (see Canvas) | Passives homework Client interview report (final) |
| Week 7 | Data storytelling, data visualization, work on multicultural report, hedges and boosters | CT 15-17 Supplementary Reading: Lead with a Story | |

| Date | In-Class Activities | Readings Due | Assignments Due |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 8 | Peer review of multicultural report, critical thinking discussion | | Hedges and boosters homework Intercultural communication report (draft) |
| SPRING BREAK | | | |
| Week 9 | | Kallet Ch. 32 (criteria) | Intercultural communication report (final) |
| Week 10 | Transitions | | |
| Week 11 | Peer review of secondary research pitch, critical thinking discussion | Kallet Ch. 21 Spence Ch. 12 (again) | Transitions homework Proposal/pitch (draft) |
| Week 12 | Team members pitch their survey idea, intro to Qualtrics and survey design | Complete Qualtrics Tutorial #1 before class SPENCE Ch. 12 (again) Kallet 22-23 | Proposal/pitch (final) |
| Week 13 | In-Class Survey Workshop: Question Formulation and Survey Construction | Watch: Designing a Questionnaire Read: Questionnaire Design | |
| Week 14 | In-Class Survey Workshop: Data Analysis and Reporting | Submit Synthesis Matrix Spence Ch. 10 and 11 | |
| Week 15 | Group report writing, course wrap up | Kallet 33 Spence Ch. 12 (again) | Group survey report (final) |
| Finals Week | NO FORMAL CLASS | | Team evaluations on group survey due by end of final exam period |