**Overview**

This advanced professional writing course is designed to provide you with the skills necessary to create workplace quality procedures and manuals that demonstrate sound research, critical thinking, and rhetorically effective writing.

Every profession, regardless of the field, requires solid oral and written communication skills—the ability to communicate with an audience inside and outside of the profession. By using technical procedures and manuals as the primary genres, this course provides you with the opportunity to identify a problem and provide solutions and alternatives to help your audience make informed decisions.

Workplace quality skills you should possess at the end of this course include, but are not limited to:

- Understanding purposes, audiences, and processes of written, oral, and visual communication.
- Mastering the conventions of technical instructions, process explanations, and manuals
- Collecting information from a variety of primary and secondary sources and presenting it in an effective manner.
- Developing a writing style appropriate for a variety of workplace contexts.
- Using the Microsoft Suite and Adobe Acrobat to produce persuasive documents, presentations and graphs.
- Using grammar/language effectively and correctly.

**Required Texts**

The required text for this course is


Supplemental readings will be linked off the course Engrade.

**Course Assignments**

**Document Redesign and Rationale — 10%**

For this first assignment, you will redesign two documents from an actual manual produced by the Texas Army National Guard. What's this assignment got to do with manual writing? Plenty. As Chapter 7 points out, document design is not just about adding a piece of clip art to liven up your prose; design adds clarity and consistency to your documents while also presenting readers with alternatives to reading and interpreting technical information.
Comparative Analysis — 10%
In this collaborative assignment, you will work in groups of four (4) and, based on some preliminary data, research alternatives and make a recommendation to an assigned client.

You will submit two documents for this assignment. First, submit a brief analysis of your client. This document was be in memo format and addressed to me. Second, submit your comparative analysis. The analysis submission should be two (2) to three (3) single spaced pages in length and be an informal report (memo format), addressed to your client.

Research Resource Guide — 20%
This manual has two phases: one is gathering information and understanding research sources while the other is producing an informational report in the form of a research guide. To get you started, I've created a series of knowledge statements whose answers require you to make some in-depth investigations into what the library offers. As well, these knowledge statements will help engage you with sources beyond the library you may not have previously considered. Chapter 6 of your textbook includes additional resources you may wish to explore. This task is generally more productive (and fun) in groups.

For the second phase, you create an informational guide that lays out what you've found in a pleasing, user-friendly document. This document is one you design to be visually interesting and appealing; as well, it contains all the key elements of user navigation and usability in addition to substantive material on research. You can do the document alone or in groups.

The document needs to be a specialized guide for a particular discipline (Accounting, History, etc.) here at UNT or, it could be a guide to researching a specific topic i.e., your final report topic. **No generalist guides will be accepted** -- they're too broad in scope and end up being more trouble than they're worth.

It's up to you to decide your audience, your focus and whether you'll ultimately work in a group or by yourself.

Annotated Bibliography — 15%
Write 6 annotations on a topic that you will cite within the process explanation.

Process Explanation — 20%
Process explanations describe the stages of an action of system either in general (how photosynthesis occurs) or in a specific situation (how an experiment was conducted). Readers of a process explanation do not intend to perform the action themselves, but they need to understand it for a variety of reasons.

Any scientific (or laboratory experiment) contains process explanation. Anytime you have to describe an event that has occurred (such as an accident on the playground) you are writing a process description. Additionally, process explanations are written for commercial purposes (to sell a product or to give customer satisfaction) and may be included with instructions in the use of the device or procedure being described. Thus, the water-filter manufacturer may include with the instructions on maintaining the filter a description of how the filter cleans the water and the benefits of said cleaning.
For the process explanation you should determine three points before beginning the writing:

- Your intended audience (i.e., repair or maintenance staff, customers, sales staff);
- Why your intended audience needs to know the details of this procedure, and
- What graphic elements can be used to improve the readability, usefulness, and flow of the description.

Your process explanation should be between 2-4 pages and include appropriate graphic or visual elements to complement the text. In a note preceding the description, specify your audience and indicate the type of description (general or particular) you are writing. If you prefer your may write a shorter process for a general as well as a specific audience; however, both pieces of writing must read drastically different (no cut-and-paste jobs here).

**Technical Manual — 25%**

The final manual is the detailed, formal document that covers your investigation of a problem and the possible solution(s). Manuals are considered to be a document genre (type) - they have specific conventions, referred to as a superstructure, in our course textbook. Manuals have major parts: front matter, body matter and back matter and each of these parts contains specific elements. As we progress through the class, we'll be reviewing different kinds of manuals and go into greater detail on the content and structure of the final document.

**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 3365. The schedule is subject to change pending our progress this semester.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Agenda</th>
<th>Readings Due</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>What are Manuals and Procedures?</td>
<td>Chapter 1, Chapter 7 (pp 218-230 only) (WtW),</td>
<td>Log into Engrade Buy textbooks</td>
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<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>&quot;About Readers and Manuals&quot;</td>
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<td>In-Class Memo</td>
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<td>Graphics Orientation</td>
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<td>June 3</td>
<td>Understanding Audience Design Workshop</td>
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<td>Assign Doc Redesign</td>
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<td>June 4</td>
<td>Personal Styles</td>
<td>Personality Types</td>
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<td>Basic Business</td>
<td>Chapter 8 (WtW)</td>
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<td>Correspondence</td>
<td>Time Article</td>
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<td>June 5</td>
<td>Criteria Exercise</td>
<td>Chapter 2 &amp; 10 (WtW)</td>
<td>Document Redesign &amp; Rationale</td>
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<td>Informal Report Exercise</td>
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<td>June 6</td>
<td>Comparative Workshop</td>
<td>Chapter 3 (WtW)</td>
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<td>June 9</td>
<td>How is My Writing?</td>
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<td>Comparative Analysis</td>
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<td>How to Write Like an 8th Grader</td>
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<td>Your Research IQ</td>
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<td>June 10</td>
<td>Library Research Demo</td>
<td>Chapter 5 &amp; 6 (WtW)</td>
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<td>Assign Research Resource Guide</td>
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<td>Three Websites</td>
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<td>June 11</td>
<td>Focus on Instructions</td>
<td>Chapter 14 (WtW)</td>
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<td>June 12</td>
<td>&quot;Structure and Organization,&quot; &quot;Standard Contents&quot;</td>
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<td>Another Design Workshop</td>
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<td>June 17</td>
<td>Front and Back Matter</td>
<td>Reep &quot;Writing Process Explanations&quot;</td>
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<td>October</td>
<td>Manual Design Orientation</td>
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<td>June 18</td>
<td>PDF Workshop</td>
<td>&quot;Page and Screen Design,&quot; &quot;Methods of Presentation&quot;</td>
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<td>June 19</td>
<td>Drafting Paragraphs</td>
<td>&quot;Writing Style&quot;</td>
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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. I take roll at the beginning of each class.

Any student who accumulates more than 3 absences during the semester will have his/her overall course grade lowered one letter.

Any student who accumulates 6 absences during the semester will be dropped from the course via a formal written request to the college dean. You will be notified at absence #5 that a drop is pending. If you have missed 6 classes, you have missed 20% of the semester. You will not have received sufficient exposure to the material to meet the goals and learning outcomes of the course.

Lates (tardies): These 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.

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

As this is a senior-level course, 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**
Assignments for this course are to be submitted electronically unless otherwise noted. In the event that I require a hardcopy, please do not arrive to class expecting to print. There is no guarantee that the lab printers are working or that they have paper or toner.

**Due Dates**
Electronic assignments are due at the beginning of the designated class period, unless specified otherwise. You will lose one letter grade (or 10%) per calendar day late for major assignments. If extenuating circumstances apply, your work will be due the day after you return from your athletic event or the day after you attend the emergency appointment or funeral.

You will fail the class if you do not attempt and submit ALL major assignments. Assignments more than a week (7 days) late automatically receive a grade of zero (0). 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, 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. Additionally, the incident 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); or 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; and 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.

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Boettger

E-mail address: ryan [dot] boettger [at] unt [dot] edu
Office number: AudB 314/317D

Office hours: Tuesdays 2-3pm, Wednesdays 10:30-11:30 am, or by appointment

E-mail questions will be answered as promptly as possible. I usually respond within 24 hours. If you have not gotten a response from me within 48 hours of your e-mail, please contact me again. I am happy to set appointments for times outside of my office hours. However, please make sure you keep such appointments or, for courtesy's sake, give me notice via e-mail that you are canceling your appointment.