# TECM 1700: Introduction to Professional, Science & Technical Writing

## **Course Information**

Term: Summer 2025  
Location: Online via Canvas

## **Instructor Information**

Instructor: Professor Stevie Kilpatrick, MA

Office hours: By Appointment  
Office location: Zoom or Teams

Email: [Steven.Kilpatrick@unt.edu](mailto:Steven.Kilpatrick@unt.edu) (or Canvas message)

## **Course Summary**

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. 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 time-management
* 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

## **Textbook**

The required text for this course is

Lannon and Gurak’s *Technical Communication*, 15 ed (2019). ISBN: 9780134271958.

Supplemental readings will be available on Canvas or through iFixit.

## **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 collaborative (work that involves feedback from the iFixit technical writing team), requires substantial contribution and solid evidence of audience analysis, ethical considerations, and problem-solving skills.

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 |
| Assignments and Minor Quizzes | Canvas | 20% |
| Major Quizzes | Canvas | 20% |
| iFixit Sign-up & Profile | iFixit – Individual | 15% |
| iFixit Fast Fix Proposal | iFixit – Individual | 15% |
| iFixit Checkpoint #1 | iFixit – Collaborative | 10% |
| iFixit Checkpoint #2 | iFixit – Collaborative | 10% |
| Grammar and Mechanics Exam | Canvas | 10% |

## **Grading**

The following 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.

### Participation

### Your participation in this course is mandatory, not optional. You cannot perform well in this course unless you actively engage with me and with the team at iFixit.

### Drop Dates

Please be aware of the below deadlines as well as the changes in grading policies. UNT students can no longer receive a grade of WF, and they can drop a course online without the instructor’s signature. However, students have 5 business days to decide if they want to be re-instated in a dropped course.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date | Description |
| June 10th | Beginning this date, a student who wishes to drop a course must complete the drop process by submitting an online drop form to the Office of the Registrar (student receives W). |
| July 11th | Last day for a student to drop a course (student receives W). |
| July 12th | Beginning on this date, a student who qualifies (i.e., 75% complete and passing) may request an Incomplete, with a grade of I. |

### Medical Withdrawals

If a student must withdraw due to medical reasons, prior to the withdrawal deadline as indicated in the academic calendar, a student may do so through the regular withdrawal process. If a student is incapacitated or unable to make the request on his/her own, please contact the Dean of Students Office for assistance at 940-565-2648. For details regarding the withdrawal process, go to <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/withdrawals>.

## **General Technology Requirements**

### Computer Operations and Access Requirements

As this is an online course, you are expected to be familiar with the day-to-day operation of computers including UNT email (and sending attachments), Canvas, and standard software.

You are also expected to have regular access to computing technology, whether it be your personal computer, or the computer labs provided by UNT.

### Device Requirements

Your device must be equipped with a word processor and internet access capabilities. Tablets or devices with cloud-based word processors, such as GoogleDocs, are not recommended because they do not give you the full capabilities required in this TECM course. As a UNT student, you can install a free version of MS Office Suite on your personal computer. Visit <https://it.unt.edu/installoffice365> for more information.

### 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](http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/). A corrupted disk or crashed hard drive does not constitute an excuse for late or unsubmitted work.

### Email & Communication Requirements

I prefer to communicate through Canvas. However, if you choose to use email, please remember that all students must have a valid UNT email address, as it is the only email address I can use to communicate with you. 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 and the announcement tab of our Canvas course regularly.

**Assignment Submission and Grading**

### Format

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

### Due Dates You must complete and upload your assignments to Canvas (or iFixit when applicable) by the set date and time.

* I have a due date for each assignment, but I also have a "lock" date for those assignments.
* If you miss the due date, but turn an assignment in before the lock date, I will accept that assignment with a 10% penalty.
* If you don't turn something in before the lock date, you'll have to write me a professional memo to request an extension.
  + **Remember:** If an assignment is locked, ***I do not accept email or message submissions***. The lock is not an accident, it's intentional.

*Document Template Usage*You may not use program templates (e.g., Word templates) to format any of your documents — these don't encourage you to learn how to format your documents and generally result in dull, unpersuasive documents. If you use a template, I will deduct 10 points from your final grade.

## **Exception: Please use any templates provided by the iFixit team.** Part of professional writing is meeting and matching the standards of our clients and employers. iFixit acts as our client and collaborator this semester, so we want to make their jobs easier by matching their needs.

## **Student Behavior**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the course, and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct (UNT Policy 17.012). The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct applies to your interactions with everyone involved in this course: the instructor, classmates, your project liaisons, or lab/university staff.

## **Academic Integrity**

I follow UNT’s academic integrity and dishonesty policies. UNT defines six acts of academic dishonesty (see [UNT Policy 06.003](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003.AcadIntegrity.Final_.pdf)). Below is a brief description of these act and the related 1700 penalty for committing each act:

* ***Cheating* —** 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. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves cheating.
* ***Plagiarism* —** the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgement. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves plagiarism.
* *Forgery* — altering a score, grade, or official academic university record or forging the signature of an instructor or other student. You will receive a final grade of F in the course for any act of forgery.
* ***Fabrication* —** intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves fabrication.
* ***Facilitating academic dishonesty* —** intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves facilitating academic dishonesty.
* ***Sabotage* —** acting to prevent others from completing their work or willfully disrupting the academic work of others. You will receive a final grade of F in the course for any act of sabotage.

All acts of academic dishonesty will be reported to UNT’s Academic Integrity Office. You can read UNT's policy at <http://tinyurl.com/nuwo42u>.At the beginning of the semester, we will review the six acts of academic dishonesty and their related penalties. You must also complete a quiz on the subject, which will certify that you understand the policies and procedures.

## **Accommodations (Special Arrangements)**

### UNT Office of Disability Accommodations

In accordance with university policies and state and federal regulations, the university is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. To this end, all academic units are willing to make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies in order to facilitate equality of educational access for persons with disabilities.

To receive accommodations, you must [register with the ODA](http://disability.unt.edu/services/apply) and then [request a Reasonable Accommodation form](http://disability.unt.edu/services/request), which you should present to me within the first two weeks of class (see UNT Policy 16.001). You can read UNT’s policy on disability accommodation for students and academic units at <https://tinyurl.com/y7jshaqx>.

### Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. (See UNT Policy 16.005)

UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of [on-campus and off-campus resources](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/sexual-misconduct) to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT’s Student Advocate. She can be reached through email at renee.mcnamara@unt.edu or by calling 940-565-2648.

### Religious Holidays

Students who need to miss classwork due to the observance of an officially recognized religious holy day are asked to consult with me at least one week in advance so we can schedule missed work accordingly.

## **Schedule**

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

| **Module & Agenda** |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Pre-Class Module & Module 0 – Policies, Resources, and Introduction to 1700** | | |
| **Module 1 – Audience is Everything / iFixit Signup and Profile Creation** | | |
| **Module 2 – Fast Fix Proposal and 1st Mechanics Diagnostic** | | |
| **Module 3 – Professional Design and Introduction to Fast Fix Project** | | |
| **Module 4 – Collaboration and Parts of Speech / Fast Fix Project Proposal** | | |
| **Module 5 – Professional Style & Structure / Finish Fast Fix Checkpoint 1** | | |
| **Module 6 – Writing With Purpose / Finish Fast Fix Checkpoint 2** | | |
| **Module 7 – Fast Fix Wrap-up / Grammar & Mechanics Final** | | |