

TECM 4180 Advanced Technical Writing

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Office Hours By appointment

Text & Materials Sims, Brenda. *Technical Communication in the Information Age*. Kendall Hunt Publishers, 2012. ISBN 978-1-4652-0242-0
Flash drive or other memory saving device

Course Objectives In this course, we will

- Develop the writing skills needed in the business and professional settings
- Practice writing the types of documents used in business and professional settings
- Learn the characteristics of effective technical style and develop those characteristics in your writing
- Learn to write as a member of a team and to interact and work with business and industry professionals and technical experts

Your Semester Grade

Daily Exercises & Participation	5%
Style & Design Exam	15%
Individual Project	20%
Group Projects	60%

Daily Work

Each day, we will work on something that related to completing the formal assignments. You must come to class prepared to take notes and to participate in class discussions. You should also prepare for unannounced reading quizzes, in-class writing and completion of homework assignments.

Except where otherwise noted, homework assignments are due at the beginning of class. If you must miss class, you must turn in any work that is due – as scheduled.

I do not accept late work for any reason

Participation

A small, yet significant portion of your grade will depend upon your participation in class discussions, as well as my estimation of your progress in the course. Think of our classroom as your workplace, and conduct yourself with the same professionalism with which you would treat a job. Arrive on time, prepared to work. Actively demonstrate that you understand professional behavior. Keep in mind that I assess your participation each class day.

Late Papers

I do not accept late papers for any reason. Except where otherwise specifically noted, papers are due at the beginning of the class period, on the assigned dates.

Open Door Policy

I welcome and encourage you to visit me whenever you wish to discuss a paper or an issue as it relates to this class. If you need to contact me outside of class, e-mail me (LJackson@unt.edu).

Please put your first and last name, as well as the course number, the days, and time you attend class in your e-mail. I try to read my e-mail frequently and will send you a prompt reply.

Absence Policy

I both expect and demand regular and punctual attendance.

Good students attend class. That says it all. You will be counted absent if you are more than ten minutes late for class. Although I will take attendance on a daily basis, you are responsible for keeping up with the number of absences you incur.

Neither the university nor I recognize temporary illness or personal emergencies as excused absences. If you are ill, please stay at home; send me an e-mail at Ljackson@unt.edu to notify me that you will miss class. You may miss class up to three times for illness or personal emergencies. Use your allotted absences wisely. For more information on the university's policy on temporary illness, go to: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/temporary_illness

Students who are late two or more times will make a zero in participation for the semester. Students who miss class three or more times will fail the course. No exceptions.

Whether you are in class or not, you remain responsible for all assignments made and policies announced each day. If you must miss class, you must still turn in any work that is due – as scheduled.

UNT's Criteria for Excused Absences

The only excused absences recognized by the University of North Texas are those wherein a student is representing the university in an official capacity. You must bring me appropriate documentation to have your absence excused. Athletes and other students who will miss class for an official university activity must advise me in writing at least 48 hours in advance of the absence.

**Classroom
Correspondence—
BlackBoard &
Text Messages
Via Remind101.com**

Occasionally I may need to communicate with you and your classmates. I will use your university e-mail address for this purpose. If you do not use your university e-mail as your primary e-mail account, you will need to change your e-mail settings in MyUNT.edu to forward your messages to your primary account. To access MyUNT.edu, go to:

<https://my.unt.edu/>

I will also use BlackBoard to post copies of the course syllabus, assignments sheets for major technical documents, copies of TC Lab orientations, course materials, and miscellaneous announcements. You are responsible for regularly checking on this type of information. To access BlackBoard, go to:

<https://learn.unt.edu/>

You may want to sign up for Remind.com, which allows me to send you text messages about this course. To receive text messages about class assignments and announcements via Remind.com, you should

- Use any mobile device
- Send the text @tecm4180 to 81010
- Receive a confirmation text that you're enrolled
- Complete your enrollment by responding with your name

Neither your phone number nor mine will ever be displayed. These texts are for classroom purposes only. You cannot text me from this number.

You should consider exchanging e-mail addresses or other contact information with one of your classmates so that you may contact them to get notes or assignments you may have missed.

UNT Eagle Alerts & Inclement Weather Notifications

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in an emergency. Eagle Alert allows UNT administrators to quickly contact campus community members by phone about emergency situations affecting the safety and well-being of people on and around the UNT campus. The system sends voice messages to the phones, including cell phones, of all active faculty, staff and students. The system also can send text messages to cell phones if you grant the system permission to do so beforehand. **I strongly urge you to sign up for these notifications.**

Eagle Alert is only used in critical situations including:

- severe weather with imminent dangerous conditions affecting campus, such as tornado warnings
- campus closings due to inclement weather
- health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence

If the university is closed for more than one day, you should check the UNT website for the latest information. The university will continue providing updated information on Facebook and Twitter, to campus telephone operators, and will inform news media. For more information on the UNT Eagle Alert system, go to:

<http://www.unt.edu/eaglealert/>

UNT Website

<http://www.unt.edu>

UNT Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/northtexas>

UNT Twitter

<https://twitter.com/untnews>

Technical Communication Computer Lab (TC Lab) & Color Printing

As a technical communication student, you may use the Technical Communication Computer Lab (TC Lab) in the Auditorium Building, room 307. The TC Lab has IBM-compatible computers for you to use. These computers have the latest version of Microsoft® Office, including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, as well as Adobe® software including InDesign and Photoshop.

We will have several orientations in the TC Lab. You must attend these orientations because the TC Lab tutors do not give individual tutoring sessions.

The highly-trained TC Lab tutors are here to help you if you have computer issues while you are working in the TC Lab.

You may print as many copies of black and white documents for your technical communication class as you like. Later in the semester, you will receive a color copy card. This card entitles you to print four multiple-page documents in color. The card is only good for this semester, and it is only good for assignments for this course. If you lose your color copy card, you will not be issued a new card. Please mark your color copy card with your name and e-mail address, and place it in safe location like your wallet.

The TC Lab is open

Monday—Thursday 8:00 A.M. – 10:00 P.M.

Friday 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Computer Etiquette

While we will be using the computers in the classroom to complete both homework assignments and papers, I expect you to use good computer etiquette during class time.

Turn off your monitor during class unless I direct you to do otherwise.

Do not hack, surf the net, send/read personal e-mails, or complete work for other courses during class time. **Students who use the computers during class for anything unrelated to this course will receive a zero for class participation for the semester.**

In-class Writing Workshops

We will spend a significant amount of class time working on course assignments. Good students use this time to complete group and individual projects, and they benefit from working with the instructor on their assignments. Use this time wisely.

Group Work

As you work towards entering the workplace, you need to develop and sharpen your collaboration skills. Therefore, you will complete several assignments as members of a group. Your attendance at group meetings, whether the group meets inside or outside of class, impacts your grade for this course.

Save all group work on the public drive in the Technical Communication Lab (TC Lab). Show proper respect and courtesy to your group by arriving promptly for class—especially on the day your group assignment is due.

If you miss more than one group meeting—whether your group meets inside or outside of class—the highest grade you can receive on a group assignment is 75% of the group's grade. This includes in-class writing workshop days. **Students who miss class on the day a group project is due will make a zero for the assignment.** Additional deductions as outlined in your group's statement of work may also apply.

Keep in mind that I assess your participation as a group member each day you and your group work in class. I reserve the right to give a zero on group assignments to students who cannot perform as members of a group.

Format Requirements

As you prepare your assignments, make sure you

- Print the assignment on a laser printer
- Make the assignment look neat and visually appealing
- Proofread carefully so the assignment is absolutely free from spelling, grammatical, and typographical errors
- Staple the assignment once in the upper left-hand corner , or bind it in a manner appropriate for the assignment

This is not a suggestion—it is a mandate! Use spell check. Proofread. Do not hand write anything on your papers. Any assignment not prepared specifically according to instructions in format, organization, and/or style will receive an "F."

Essential Competencies

Essential competencies for this course include the ability:

- To attend class regularly and punctually
- To read and follow the course syllabus
- To have a basic understanding of English grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- To read and analyze technical documents
- To write clear, concise, and visually appropriate technical prose for the intended readers in response to various types of assignments
- To discuss, both in class and in small groups, technical documents
- To use a personal computer with various word processing, e-mail, and graphics software applications

Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the terms and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, I will cooperate with the Office of Disability Accommodation to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you will require accommodation, you must advise me of your needs in writing no later than the end of the second week of class.

For more information on disability accommodation, go to:

<https://disability.unt.edu/>

UNT's Policy on Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty

The University of North Texas considers plagiarism as the use of another's thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student's intent, including but not limited to:

- the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation
- the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials

You will be dismissed with an "F" in this course if

- You turn in a piece of writing all or part of which you have plagiarized
- You use unauthorized assistance of any kind in taking quizzes, tests, or in completing assignments
- You submit materials you have written for another class or for current or previous employment

I reserve the right to consider further action within the context of university guidelines.

Plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty are grounds for expulsion from the university. For more information on the university's policy on this topic, go to:

<http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm>

Classroom Civility

I expect you to conduct yourself as adults who practice the utmost civility to the instructor, to the TC Lab staff, and to your fellow classmates.

Do not read or send texts during class. Do not work on assignments for other courses or conduct personal business during class. Students who do so will automatically receive a zero in class participation for the semester.

As colleagues engaged in mutual inquiry about a common goal—becoming more effective technical writers—we shall extend to one another professional courtesies such as:

- Attending all meetings and arriving on time
- Preparing work by the date expected
- Respecting and learning from differences of opinion and experience
- Accepting responsibility to help the group and individuals within the class to achieve their goals

Failure to extend these courtesies will affect my evaluation of your work.

Any behavior that I deem as uncivil and/or inappropriate in any way will result in an "F" in the course and/or your permanent dismissal from the classroom. I reserve the right to pursue further action within the context of university guidelines. For more information on the university's policies on student conduct, go to: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

The Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. For more information on SPOT, go to:

<http://spot.unt.edu/content/welcome-spot>

Schedule of Readings, Activities, and Assignments

Week 1

Jan. 18	What we'll do in class:	Martin Luther King Jr. Day No class
Jan. 20	What we'll do in class:	Attendance Policy, Texts, Syllabus Discussion of Standard Documents Tools of the Trade Writing Lab Orientation

Week 2

Jan. 25	What we'll do in class: What to read: What's due:	Writing Easy-to-Read Documents Sims, Chapter 7 Chapter 7: Exercises 1-5
Jan. 27	What we'll do in class: What to read: What's due:	Using Reader-Focused Language Sims, Chapter 8 Chapter 8: Exercises 1-11

Week 3

Feb. 1	What we'll do in class:	Organizing Information Maintaining Parallel Structure Writing Reader-Oriented Headings
Feb. 3	What we'll do in class:	Building Effective Teams Interviews for Group Assignments Giving Professional Presentations

Week 4

Feb. 8	What we'll do in class:	Designing Documents
Feb. 10	What we'll do in class:	Using Color in Design Understanding Color Codes & Graphic File Types Designing Logos

Week 5

Feb. 15	What we'll do in class:	Style & Design Exam
Feb. 17	What we'll do in class:	Writing Manuals and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Discuss Individual Assignment

Week 6

Feb. 22	What we'll do in class:	Client Visit: Habitat for Humanity
Feb. 24	What we'll do in class:	Manual Orientation

Week 7

Feb. 29	What we'll do in class:	Writing Persuasive Proposals Using Social Media for Business Discuss Group Proposal
March 2	What we'll do in class:	Client Visit: DecodingMedicare.com

Week 8

March 7	What we'll do in class:	Discuss Group Design Project
March 9	What we'll do in class:	InDesign Orientation

UNT Spring Break—March 14 to March 18**Week 9**

March 21	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
March 23	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop Individual Project due (beginning of class)

Week 10

March 28	What we'll do in class:	Writing Progress Reports
March 30	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

Week 11

April 4	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
April 6	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop Group Project #1 Due

Week 12

April 11	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
April 13	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

Week 13

April 18	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
April 20	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

Week 14

April 25	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
April 27	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

Week 15

May 2	What we'll do in class:	Group Design Project Due (beginning of class)
May 4	What we'll do in class:	Reading Day. No class

Week 16

Your final exam consists of collecting your graded assignments and getting your course grade. Please come at the beginning of the exam period. Your final exam is scheduled on:
Monday, May 9 at 1:30 P.M.

To view the complete final exam schedule, go to:

<http://registrar.unt.edu/exams/final-exam-schedule>