

TECM 4250 Technical Procedures and Manuals

Instructor Dr. L.G. Jackson
Office Auditorium Building, Room 207
E-mail Ljackson@unt.edu
Office Hours By appointment

Recommended Materials

Flash drive or other memory saving device.

Course Objectives

Technical Procedures and Manuals is an applied writing course that prepares you

- To conduct needs assessments and audience analyses
- To write task-oriented procedures
- To prepare and perform usability tests
- To design visually appealing documents
- To write clear, concise, and accurate documents
- To collaborate effectively on interdisciplinary teams

Your Semester Grade

Individual Manual: 35%

Students will complete a project for a client. We will discuss the details of the project during class.

Group Project: 60%

Students will collaborate as a team to complete a project for a client. We will discuss the details of the project during class.

Daily Work & Participation: 5%

Students will work on in-class writing assignments aimed at helping them to practice the principles we discuss during lectures. Participation is evaluated on a sliding scale of the student's attendance and professionalism.

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.

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. Additional deductions as outlined in your group's statement of work may also apply.

Students who miss class on the day a group project is due will make a zero for the assignment.

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.

Client-Based Group Project

In this course, you will be completing a group project for a real client. I will provide you detailed instructions, including the due dates and the grade values for each part of the assignment. I expect you to handle the excitement and challenges of the client-based portion of the course with maturity and professionalism.

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 must keep up with the number of absences you have.

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

Whether you come to 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.

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.

Neither the university nor the instructor recognizes illness or personal emergencies as excused absences. Use your allotted absences wisely.

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.

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

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."

Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty

"The term 'plagiarism' includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials"

(UNT 2013 – 2014 Undergraduate Catalog).

If you turn in a piece of writing all or part of which you have plagiarized, you will be dismissed with an "F" in the course. If you use unauthorized assistance of any kind in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations, you will be dismissed with an "F" in the course. Further action within the context of university guidelines may be considered. **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>

Computer Lab

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 attend several orientations and conduct several in-class writing workshops in the TC Lab.

The TC Lab tutors have undergone extensive training so that they can help you with a wide range of questions.

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 use 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. **Students who use the computers during class for anything unrelated to this course will receive a zero for class participation for the semester.**

Do not hack, surf the net, send/read personal e-mails, or complete work for other courses during class time. Failure to adhere to these rules will result in dismissal from the classroom, and will count as an absence and/or a zero on any daily work for that class day.

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, the instructor 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.

Open Door Policy

I welcome and encourage you to visit me whenever you wish to discuss a paper or a problem 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 including the day and time you attend class in your e-mail. I try to read my e-mail frequently and will send you a prompt reply.

**Classroom
Correspondence—
BlackBoard &
Text Messages**

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 to forward your messages to your primary account.

I will also use BlackBoard to post copies of the course syllabus, assignments sheets for major technical documents, and miscellaneous announcements. You are responsible for checking on this type of information.

You may want to sign up for Remind101.com, which allows me to send you text messages about this course. To receive text messages about class assignments and announcements via Remind101.com, you should

- Use any mobile device
- Send the text @tecm4250 to 920.645.2166
- Look for a text confirming your enrollment

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.

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. Use appropriate discretion in using electronic devices during class time.

Do not read or send texts 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 the instructor deems 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 code of conduct, go to: <http://www.unt.edu/csrr>

Student Evaluation of Teacher Effectiveness (SETE)

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) 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. I consider the SETE an important part of your participation in this class.

Schedule of Readings, Activities, and Assignments

Week 1

January 14	What we'll do in class:	Attendance policy, texts, syllabus Introduction to course Review of technical writing principles Standard technical writing documents Interviews for Group Assignments
------------	-------------------------	--

Week 2

January 21	What we'll do in class:	Analyzing Your Readers Group Assignments Announced Developing a Style Sheet Developing a Statement of Work In-class writing assignment: Mini-manual
------------	-------------------------	---

Week 3

January 28	What we'll do in class:	Designing Documents Organizing Information InDesign Orientation
------------	-------------------------	---

Week 4

February 4	What we'll do in class: What's due:	Collaborating & the Workplace Understanding Ethical & Legal Challenges Mini-manual (beginning of class)
------------	--	--

Week 5

February 11	What we'll do in class:	Discuss Individual Project Writing User-Oriented Instructions Preparing Front & Back Matter Manual Orientation
-------------	-------------------------	---

Week 6

February 18	What we'll do in class:	Client Visit
-------------	-------------------------	--------------

Week 7

February 25	What we'll do in class:	Using Social Media Effectively Discuss Group & Individual Project
-------------	-------------------------	--

Week 8

March 4	What we'll do in class:	Conducting Basic Research In-class writing workshop
---------	-------------------------	--

Spring Break March 10-14**Week 9**

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

Week 10

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

Week 11

April 1	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
---------	-------------------------	---------------------------

Week 12

April 8	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
---------	-------------------------	---------------------------

Week 13

April 15	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop Individual Project due at Beginning of class
----------	-------------------------	--

Week 14

April 22	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
----------	-------------------------	---------------------------

Week 15

April 29	What we'll do in class:	Group Project Due Teacher evaluations
----------	-------------------------	---

Week 16

May 6	What we'll do in class:	Return of graded projects
-------	-------------------------	---------------------------