

## **TECM 4250 Technical Procedures and Manuals**

**Instructor** Dr. L.G. Jackson  
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**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 is related to completing the formal assignments. You must come to class prepared to take notes and to participate in class discussions. You should also be prepared 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 be absent, you are responsible for turning 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.

## **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**

Group work is an integral part of technical communication. Your attendance at group meetings, whether they are held 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 it is held 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.

I reserve the right to give a zero on group assignments to students who are unable to perform as members of a group.

## **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.

**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 be absent, you are responsible for turning 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. These absences will not be excused without appropriate documentation. Athletes and other students who will be missing class for an official university activity must advise me in writing at least 48 hours in advance of the absence.

Illness and personal emergencies are not recognized by the university (or the instructor) 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. There is no excuse that is acceptable for turning a paper in late.

## **Format Requirements**

All assignments must:

- Be printed on a laser printer
- Be neat and visually appealing
- Be absolutely free from spelling, grammatical, and typographical errors
- Be either bound or attached with one staple 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 2011 – 2012 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. **Be aware that plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty are grounds for expulsion from the university.**

## 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. We will attend several orientations and conduct several in-class writing workshops in the lab.

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. 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.

## **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.

## **Essential Competencies**

Essential competencies for this course include the ability:

- To attend class regularly and punctually
- 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

## **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. The easiest and best way to contact me outside of class is to e-mail me (**LJackson@unt.edu**). I try to read my e-mail frequently and will send you a prompt reply.

## **Classroom Correspondence**

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 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.

## **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.**

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.

**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 to be an important part of your participation in this class.

## Schedule of Readings, Activities, and Assignments

### Week 1

August 29	What we'll do in class:	Attendance policy, texts, syllabus Introduction to course
August 31	What we'll do in class:	Review of technical writing principles Standard technical writing documents

### Week 2

Sept. 5	What we'll do in class:	<b>Labor Day</b> <b>No class</b>
Sept. 7	What we'll do in class:	Analyzing Your Readers Developing a Style Sheet Developing a Statement of Work In-class writing assignment: Mini-manual

### Week 3

Sept. 12	What we'll do in class:	Designing Documents Organizing Information
Sept. 14	What we'll do in class:	Choosing Effective Typography

### Week 4

Sept. 19	What we'll do in class:	InDesign Orientation Graphics Orientation
Sept. 21	What we'll do in class:  What's due:	Photoshop Orientation  <b>Mini-manual</b> <b>(beginning of class)</b>

**Week 5**

Sept. 26	What we'll do in class:	Writing User-Oriented Instructions Discuss Individual Project
Sept. 28	What we'll do in class:	Preparing Front & Back Matter Manual Orientation

**Week 6**

Oct. 3	What we'll do in class:	Using Social Media Effectively
Oct. 5	What we'll do in class:	Discuss Group Project

**Week 7**

Oct. 10	What we'll do in class:	Creating User-Oriented Web Sites
Oct. 12	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

**Week 8**

Oct. 17	What we'll do in class:	Creating & Delivering Oral Presentations
Oct. 19	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

**Week 9**

Oct. 24	What we'll do in class:	Conducting Usability Tests
Oct. 26	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

**Week 10**

Oct. 31	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
Nov. 2	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop <b>Individual Project due at beginning of class</b>

**Week 11**

Nov. 7	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
Nov. 9	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

**Week 12**

Nov. 14	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
Nov. 16	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

**Week 13**

Nov. 21	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
Nov. 23	What we'll do in class:	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday No class</b>

**Week 14**

Nov. 28	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop
Nov. 30	What we'll do in class:	In-class writing workshop

**Week 15**

Dec. 5	What we'll do in class:	<b>Group Project Due</b>
Dec. 7	What we'll do in class:	<b>Reading Day. No class.</b>

**Week 16**

*Please consult the university's web page for the date and time of your final exam.*