

TECM 5550

Studies in the Teaching of Technical Communication

Fall 2021

Instructor	Dr. Ryan Boettger
Office Hours	By appointment. If you'd like to schedule an appointment, please email me with your availability
Office Location	Zoom at docboettger
E-mail Address	ryan.boettger@unt.edu
Textbooks	Lannon, John M and Gurak, Laura J. <i>Technical Communication</i> . 14 th or 15 th ed. Pearson, 2017/2019. Supplemental readings will be available on Canvas.
Course Purpose	<p>This course prepares you to teach introductory technical writing courses at the college or university level.</p> <p>We focus on four major areas: (1) <i>content</i>, the forms, meanings, and uses of technical writing; (2) <i>learning</i>, the needs and constraints of diverse student populations; (3) <i>classroom</i>, the planning and environment of the writing classroom; and (4) <i>instruction</i>, the teaching and assessing of writing.</p> <p>This course is required for teaching fellows and students in the teaching of technical writing graduate certificate. It functions as an elective for students in the professional and technical communication MA.</p>
Course Objectives	<p>You will engage in a range of theoretical, pedagogical, and reflective activities that will enable you to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• describe the student populations and the internal and external needs of a technical communication service course;• identify variables that influence communication in writing classrooms, including teacher's control over the patterns of classroom communication, students' perceptions of these patterns, and students' knowledge and use of language;• develop an awareness of the various tools for coaching, responding to, and assessing student writing;• create and modify instructional materials, including assignments, activities, lesson plans, assessment instruments, and syllabi;• demonstrate knowledge of teaching technical communication to prospective employers.

Assignments

The course assignments provide you the opportunity to demonstrate and develop your teaching abilities and increase in complexity.

- Style Activity Lesson Plan, 15%
- LinkedIn Profile Headline and Summary, 5%
- Assessment Rubric, 20%
- Employment Outlook Report, 25%
- Syllabus, 10%
- LinkedIn Profile, 10%
- Professionalism, Activities, and Quizzes, 15%

I summarize each major assignment below. More specific instructions about each, including assessment rubrics, will be provided on Canvas.

Style Activity Lesson Plan

Create a 20–30-minute lesson for teaching 1 or 2 of the style principles discussed in Chapter 11 of Lannon and Gurak.

LinkedIn Profile Headline and Summary

Create a headline and summary for your LinkedIn profile. Your headline should function like the headline of an advertisement. It is designed to capture readers' attention and make them want to know more. Your summary is not a restatement of your resume. It is styled and organized to appeal to recruiters and hiring managers.

Assessment Instruments

Create two rubrics for assessing a technical writing assignment.

Employment Outlook Report

In small groups, research and report the employment outlook for your future profession. Each team member is responsible for locating and synthesizing data from the Occupational Outlook Handbook (Bureau of Labor Statistics) and 3 current job postings in your desired field and location. Each team member will also interview one relevant professional who works outside the university.

Original Syllabus

Create an original syllabus for a course with an intensive writing component.

LinkedIn Profile

Write the content necessary for an effective LinkedIn profile. The profile content should include a professional headshot and the headline, summary, experience, skills, and education.

Professionalism, Activities, and Quizzes

Complete assigned readings, activities, and quizzes and conduct yourself as a professional teacher of technical writing.

Grading

Grading criteria serve as general guidelines for evaluating all assignments.

"A" (90-100%): A manager would be 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.

Deadlines

Unless otherwise noted, mid-week activities are due by 11:59pm on Wednesdays, and end-of-week activities are due by 11:59pm on Sundays. Major assignments are always due on Sundays.

Please refer to the calendar in Canvas for detailed information. As a general rule, you will NOT be able to make up missed assignments. It is your responsibility to keep up with your assignments.

Students with an excused absence (hospitalization, jury duty, or family emergency) may be asked to produce proper documentation in order to make up graded work. Any make-up work is at the discretion of the instructor.

Online Learning, Attendance, and Communication

This course has been developed to promote asynchronous learning. The instructor and students do NOT meet on a designated day and time each week.

For each lesson, there is a timeframe to complete all activities and assignments, and you may work at your own pace within that timeframe. However, you must adhere to the deadlines outlined on the calendar. You should log into the course daily to check for updates, review lessons, and participate in activities.

You can expect meaningful feedback on written assignments within 7–14 days of the deadline. Questions about grades or other individual issues should be emailed to the instructor, not posted on the discussion forum.

NOTE: When you are corresponding with the instructor or your classmates, please use appropriate language and etiquette.

Technology Requirements

To successfully complete this course, you should have access to a reliable internet source. You should also have these technical skills:

- Using the Canvas learning management system
- Using email with attachments
- Creating and submitting files in commonly used word processing program formats
- Copying and pasting
- Downloading and installing software
- Using spreadsheet programs
- Headset/Microphone (if required for synchronous chats)
- Word Processor

Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm.

- Don't share your password with anyone.
- Change your password if you think someone else might know it.
- Always log out when you are finished using Canvas.

The following information has been provided to assist you with the technological aspect of the course.

- [UNT Help Desk](#)
- [Hardware and software necessary to use Bb Learn](#)
- [Browser requirements](#)
- [Computer and Internet Literacy](#)

Netiquette Guide

When communicating online, you should

- Treat others with the same respect you would show in a face-to-face classroom.

- Err on the side of being too formal rather than too informal. You should take your cue for the right level from how your professor interacts with you and other students.
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as it can easily be misunderstood.
- Be careful with personal information (both your own and other people's).

Email Policies

Please read my email policies carefully.

I want you to be successful in this course, and I am looking forward to our interactions. Teaching about teaching is my favorite subject, and I'm always happy to provide additional materials or strategies that help you achieve your course/teaching goals.

To help make our interactions respectful, polite, and courteous, follow these guidelines when emailing me:

- I respond to email within 48 hours of receiving it. I only respond to email during business hours, Monday–Friday.
- You must have a valid UNT email address, and you must check this account regularly. I often use email to send class updates and advisories.
- I send my responses to the account where your email originated. Do not email me from one account, for example, and ask me to reply to another. You are responsible for managing your email accounts.
- Check the syllabus or assignment schedule before you send your email as I will not respond to requests for information contained in the course materials or texts.
- I do not discuss major assignment grades over email. Instead, please schedule an appointment with me. When contacting me, provide three possible dates/times when you are available to meet via Skype or Google Hangouts.
- Do not SPAM me or your team members. I define *spamming* as sending multiple emails before the recipient has had an appropriate amount of time to respond. Think carefully before sending multiple emails (in *any* situation).
- Your email should include a short, informative subject line (e.g., TECM 5550: Question about Lesson Plan Assignment). Do not leave the subject line blank.
- Keep email concise. If your question is short or direct, a one-sentence email (plus a greeting and a signature) is just fine and also preferred.

Academic Integrity

I follow UNT's policy for academic dishonesty. You can access these guidelines and the UNT policy at <http://tinyurl.com/nuwo42u>. You are responsible for knowing and following the student standards for academic integrity.

Accommodations (Special Arrangements)

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable 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 a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course.

You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable 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 reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class.

Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student.

For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://disability.unt.edu/>. You may also contact them by phone at [940.565.4323](tel:940.565.4323).

Federal Regulation for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website at <http://www.ecfr.gov/>. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

1. Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
2. Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

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Studies in the Teaching of Technical Communication Fall 2021

Below is the topic and reading schedule for this semester. The schedule is subject to change based on our progress over these next eight weeks.

Unless otherwise noted, mid-week activities are due by 11:59pm on Wednesdays, and end-of-week activities are due by 11:59pm on Sundays. Major assignments are always due on Sundays.

Week (Date)	Topic	Readings	Mid-Week Activities	End-of-Week Activities
Week 1 (Aug 23–Aug 29)	Welcome! Learning to teach and the tech comm service course	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 1 (L&G)• Pickett’s “The TC service course serves”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your technical writing experience• Correspondence case
Week 2 (Aug 30–Sep 5)	Teaching tech style and creating lesson plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 11 (L&G)• Bean’s “Dealing with...grammar and correctness”• Farrell’s “Lesson planning”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Snow policy memo discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grammar reflection• Chapter 11 quiz
Week 3 (Sep 6–Sep 12)	Teaching tech design and professional branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapters 13 and 16 (L&G)• Palmer’s “LinkedIn” article	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design critique	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Style lesson plan• Chapter 13 quiz
Week 4 (Sep 13–Sep 19)	Assessing tech comm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 12 (L&G)• Bean’s “Using rubrics to develop and apply grading criteria”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LinkedIn profile headline and branding statement• Technical graphics activity• Chapter 12 quiz
Week 5 (Sep 20–Sep 26)	Managing your classroom comm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 5 (L&G)• Bean’s “Bringing more critical thinking into lectures”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 5 quiz• Academic integrity quiz	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team charter• Classroom management discussion

Week (Date)	Topic	Readings	Mid-Week Activities	End-of-Week Activities
Week 6 (Sep 27–Oct 3)	Collaboration strategies and workplace research skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 7 & 9 (L&G) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment rubrics • Chapters 7 & 9 quizzes
Week 7 (Oct 4–Oct 10)	Writing syllabi and teaching philosophies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johnson’s “Best practices in syllabus writing” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment outlook report
Week 8 (Oct 11–Oct 15)	Wrapping it up (with a big ole bow)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Braniff’s “A curriculum for technical communication” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to teach history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original syllabus • LinkedIn profile <p>(NOTE: Both assignments are due on Saturday, October 15 by 11:59pm)</p>