

ENGL 2338: Technical Writing

Fall 2016 | Dr. Worlow | PH 310

Sections: .006 and .009
Class Times: Section 006 | TR 7:00 PM - 8:20 PM
Section 009 | TR 11:00 AM - 12:20 PM
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Course Description

What is technical writing? You can think of technical writing as including technical and professional writing and communications, and in this class, you will learn how to prepare several kinds of these documents. You will work on resumes and cover letters, instructional materials, and formal reports. Furthermore, you will work on revising and editing a document that requires you to use all of the skills you will learn in this class as you help prepare documentation for the Arlington Public Libraries. Before you begin working on these projects, you will also experience a crash course in writing style that emphasizes concision and clarity and in basic graphic design.

In all cases, you should focus on creating documents that keep their readers' goals and needs in mind even as you try to fulfill *your* purposes in these documents. If First Year Writing (1301 and 1302) taught you to prepare persuasive documents for community and academic audiences, then this course teaches you to prepare persuasive documents for most any other audience.

ENGL 2338: Technical Writing

This course covers the processes of researching, drafting, designing, editing, and revising technical reports, proposals, instructions, resumes, and professional correspondence for specific audiences. Prerequisites: ENGL 1301, ENGL 1302.

Student Learning Outcomes

- A. Students will be able to analyze rhetorical situations to understand audience, purpose, and occasion.
- B. Students will be able to create documents using clear and concise writing appropriate to their audiences' needs.
- C. Students will be able to create documents using effective graphic design elements to most successfully achieve their rhetorical purposes.
- D. Students will be able to create a variety of technical and professional documents, including resumes, letters of application, memos, meeting minutes, instructional materials, and formal reports.
- E. Students will be able to create and deliver an oral presentation with visual aids.
- F. Students will be able to identify and apply the characteristics of effective technical and professional communication.
- G. Students will be able to demonstrate their application of these skills in a service learning context.

Required Texts & Materials

Sims, Brenda R. *Technical Communication*, Third Edition ISBN: 9781465280244.
Publisher: Kendall Hunt Publishing

- Only this edition of the textbook is acceptable for the course.
- You will need the book to pass this course.
- You must have the book by the first full week of class—no extensions for failing to purchase the book.

I also recommend a good writing handbook (or website) that you can refer to for grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style.

Other Materials

- USB Drive (or easy access to cloud or other forms of storage)
- A MavID with “MavMoney” for Pharos Printing (Pay-As-You-Go)—our printer in PH310 costs 4 cents per page, and it only prints one-sided.
 - [You can find Instructions for printing here.](#)
 - [You can add money to your card or check your balance here.](#)

Grade Breakdown

Assignments	Percentage	Due Dates
Quizzes & Homework Average	10%	Daily
Resume & Cover Letter	10%	10/13
Team Career Study	25%	11/3
Team Careers Presentation	15%	11/15-17
Formal Project	15%	12/6
Participation	25%	Daily

Students should demonstrate a mastery of grammar, spelling, and punctuation (GSP) as well as the writing skills developed in Composition & Rhetoric I and II. In the professional world, you will seem unprofessional if you have these kinds of errors.

Students should keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see **Student Support Services** below.

Major Assignments

Quizzes & Homework Average (10%)

This part of the grade is a combination of daily quizzes over assigned readings and completed homework that is separate from the major projects. I average these grades over the course of the term.

Reading Quizzes

These daily reading quizzes help prove whether students have read the required material before class. Complete the quizzes due for a particular day (see the **Tentative Schedule**) on Blackboard **by 11:00 AM**. Be sure whatever computer you are using for the quiz can properly run Blackboard. Students will not be able to make up quizzes. Most quizzes appear on the schedule, **but your instructor will occasionally include pop quizzes during class.**

Homework Grades

These grades usually include completion grades to show the instructor that you prepared for class by completing work outside of the class. Sometimes, this grade will include drafts of parts of major assignments.

Participation Grade (25%)

This grade depends on student behavior such as

- Arriving on-time for class
- Arriving prepared for class
- Staying for the entire class period
- Handing in work on time in the appropriate format
- Speaking respectfully to classmates and instructor
- Avoiding playing games
- Avoiding texting or emailing during class
- Respecting the time of the instructor and other classmates
- Communicating responsibly with the instructor about problems, absences, or other needs

For each class you miss, you lose 5 points from this grade, to a minimum of zero.

Career Development Project

This project has several parts and represents one of the biggest arcs of the semester's work. In general, this project should help students learn about intended career paths, how to prepare for a career in that path, and to produce materials relating to seeking a job in that path. In addition, students learn to produce resumes, cover letters, formal reports, instructional and presentational materials, and they will need to use good writing style and graphic design principles.

Resume/Cover Letter (10%)

Students will write a resume and a letter of application (also known as a cover letter) to apply for job. Although the job that students use for this assignment may fall outside of their currently intended *career* path, they should gain a good understanding of the principles of resume and cover letter design and writing. Students will receive an assignment sheet and a detailed rubric. Students will submit these documents as full-color Adobe Acrobat (PDF) files to Blackboard along with other required documents.

Team Career Study (TCS) (25%)

This project will group students pursuing the same or related majors together onto teams. These teams will then prepare a formal report and instructional materials for pursuing a career in their intended field. Students will research several aspects of the career path, including the following and perhaps more:

- Best education paths
- Best volunteer and internship opportunities
- Best networking strategies
- The professional organizations related to the field
- Hazards and pitfalls related to pursuing this career
- The role of graduate school for the intended career
- The certifications that may best help potential jobseekers in that field
- General advice for pursuing a job in the field

Teams will submit these documents as full-color Adobe Acrobat (PDF) files to Blackboard along with other required documents.

Team Careers Presentation (TCP) (15%)

Teams will adapt their TCS into a 15-minute presentation that they will present to the class. Their presentation must include audio-visual materials such as Microsoft PowerPoint or other methods. Teams will also submit these documents as full-color Adobe Acrobat (PDF) files to Blackboard along with other required documents.

Formal Project (FP) (15%)

Students will redesign and revise documentation for Arlington Public Libraries. Students will begin this project early in the semester and work to complete it outside of class during most of the semester. This FP will be a team project. A formal assignment sheet for this project will be forthcoming.

Other Required Documents

Each major assignment will require students to prepare several other documents as part of the process for practicing technical writing and professional communications. If you or your team fails to submit the required documents to the appropriate place on Blackboard, then you will suffer cumulative penalties. For example, if your project is lacking the thumbnail sketch and style sheet, your project suffers a -15 penalty on its grade.

Component	Penalty	Brief Description
Thumbnail Sketch	-5	The thumbnail is a by-hand rough sketch of how you envision organizing pages in your document in terms of text and visuals. You should create a thumbnail (or several) as you decide how you plan to format and layout your document.
Style Sheet or Style Guide	-10	This document catalogues the various design decisions you make regarding the layout and format of your document, including the following: typefaces, sizes, colors, and styles, including your headings and your body text; general color decisions; paper formatting; and any and all other design decisions. You will also delineate in this document your document's content decisions: How do you abbreviate? What do you abbreviate? Which terms will you use (for example, <i>patrons</i> , <i>customers</i> , or <i>the public</i>) for consistency, and so on? You should also include your image credits and references/sources at the end of this document, but you will likely also include those in your main documents.
Project Log	-10	This document lists the dates you worked on projects, when on those dates, for how long, and what you did (generally). On team projects, you will keep individual project logs and a team log tracking what you do <i>collectively</i> .
Minutes for Team Meetings	-10	Only on the team projects, your minutes for your team meetings tracks when you have team meetings (including in class), who is present, what courses of action do you decide upon, and who is responsible for them. Refer to chapter 14 for examples, but your minutes should be informal (bullet points are fine). In part, the meeting minutes provide you and your team a <i>record</i> of what you decided and who was responsible.
Team Evaluations	—	On team projects, you should privately fill out the form for evaluating team members in which you “grade” their contributions to the project and provide your reasoning for the evaluation you offer. You will then submit your team evaluations to a private submission site on Blackboard. I do consider these evaluations when assigning <i>individual</i> grades for team projects.

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study

The readings for this class typically include general concepts and strategies for technical communication, and when I lecture over those chapters, I intend to supplement and build upon the readings. Students will also work on a variety of projects and practical exercises (especially in the earlier part of the term) relating to these skills.

In regards to the main projects, many of these documents are *team*, collaborative assignments, and most projects include in-class workshop time to allow students to ask questions and to receive feedback from the instructor. In many cases, students must submit successive drafts reflecting progress on their projects, but these drafts primarily demonstrate whether you are proactively keeping up with the work. That is, most of those rough drafts and related homework assignments are completion grades.

Otherwise, students are learning and practicing how to design, to draft, to revise, and to edit technical writing and professional documents: students must necessarily entail out-of-class diligence and effort. I estimate that students will spend an *average* of 10-12 hours per week outside of class working on assignments and studying.

Class Policies

Blackboard Quizzes

Prior to each class, students are responsible for completing any reading quizzes on Blackboard. These quizzes constitute many of your primary Daily Grades in the course. Take note that quizzes for 2338 have a deadline of 11:00 AM on the morning they are due.

Extra Credit Opportunities

Opportunities for extra-credit may arise over the term. I will offer more information as the term progresses.

Late Work and Make-Up Policy

I will not accept any late assignments for credit. Late work earns a zero for a grade. **No exceptions.** If you know you will miss class, then you are still responsible for submitting your assignments on time. Similarly, I will not give make-up quizzes or exams except in instances of excused university absences for the exams, but you must schedule alternative exam arrangements with me in advance of the exam dates.

Turning in Assignments to Blackboard

You will submit all major assignments in this course to Blackboard. You must save all assignments submitted to Blackboard as a .pdf (unless otherwise specified) to ensure that I am able to open them on my computer **complete with your formatting**. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have saved and submitted all of your work in the correct format. **If you submit work in the wrong format, then you will receive a zero for the assignment.** I have decided to move away from requiring hardcopies of assignments.

I will not discuss any grade you receive on an assignment until at least 24 hours have passed.

Late Enrollment Policy

Though I realize that at times enrolling in a course after the start date is unavoidable, please be advised that you are responsible for the class periods that you have missed even if you were not enrolled in the course. I will not allow you to make up missed opportunities for participation points or any other assignments that occurred before you enrolled. If you enroll in class after the start date, then your responsibility is to contact your peers in order to catch up on the schedule and any announcements that occurred in your absence. This policy also applies to students who drop and add.

Paper Reuse Policy

You may not reuse papers from prior classes in this course or any other course that you have taken at any institution. If you feel your situation constitutes a clear or significant exception to this rule, you must discuss this situation with me prior to the due date of the assignment. Otherwise, I will consider you in violation of the provisions under **Academic Integrity**.

Attendance Policy

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I will take attendance every class session, and absences count against your **Participation** grade. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients "begin attendance in a course." UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

If you are late to class or tardy, you are responsible for coming to me *immediately after class* to tell me you were late. If you are very tardy, I reserve the right to count you absent nonetheless.

Missed Class

If you miss a class, do **not** come to me to ask what you missed. I recommend you exchange emails with your classmates, so you can find out what we did in class when you were absent. Please note that missing class *does* affect your **Participation Grade**.

Excused Absences

The only excused absences recognized by the University of Texas at Arlington are those wherein a student is representing the university in an official capacity and those religious holidays the student informs the instructor of at the beginning of the term in writing. *These absences will not count as excused without appropriate documentation.* 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**. Notice only lets the instructor know that a student will be missing class; this notice does not extend due dates for assignments or allow the student to make up missed quizzes. Students must arrangements with the instructor at least 48 hours prior to the absence for turning in the work. Expect no guaranteed extensions.

Classroom Behavior

Class sessions are short and require your full attention. You should work on whatever in-class activity we are working on that day. If I find you working on work for other classes, surfing the web, texting, or updating your Tumblr™/Imgur™/Whatever account, I will dismiss you from the class and count you as absent for the day. Although secondary readings are available on Blackboard in many cases, you are responsible for coming to class with a hard copy so you can refer to the text in class.

Remove all earpieces while in class. Store materials from other classes, reading not related to this class, bulky bags, and other distractions so that you can concentrate on the ENGL 2338 readings and discussions each day. Bring book(s) and e-reserve readings (heavily annotated and carefully read) to every class. Students should participate respectfully in class, should listen to other class members, and should comment appropriately. I also expect consideration and courtesy from students. Address your instructors appropriately, and communicate professionally.

According to *Student Conduct and Discipline*,

students are prohibited from engaging in or attempting to engage in conduct, either alone or in concert with others, that is intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with, or that in fact obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any instructional, educational, research, administrative, or public performance or other activity authorized to be conducted in or on a University facility. Obstruction or disruption includes, but is not limited to, any act that interrupts, modifies, or damages utility service or equipment, communication service or equipment, or computer equipment, software, or networks. (UTA Handbook or Operating Procedures, Ch. 2, Sec. 2-202)

Students who do not respect the guidelines listed above or who disrupt other students' learning may be asked to leave class and/or be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/.

Classroom Visitors

Only students officially enrolled in this section may attend class meetings. Students may not bring guests (children, spouses, friends, family) to class unless an academic request has been submitted and approved by the instructor well in advance of the proposed class visit. Children may not attend class as visitors at any time

Academic Integrity

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses must adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University:

Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts" (Regents' Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2)

You can get in trouble for plagiarism by failing to indicate correctly where you are making use of the work of another or by colluding with another to prepare assignments. You are responsible to familiarize yourself with the conventions of citation by which you indicate which ideas are not your own and how your reader can find those sources. Remember your First Year Writing courses and consult a writing handbook for more information on quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, and citing properly to avoid plagiarism. If you still do not understand, **ask your instructor**. I will refer all students caught plagiarizing or cheating to the Office of Student Conduct.

Disability Accommodation

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

- **The Office for Students with Disabilities**, (OSD) www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability.
- **Counseling and Psychological Services**, (CAPS) www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

Non-Discrimination Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/eos.

Title IX Policy

The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act

(SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.

Drop Policy

Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw officially if they do not plan to attend after registering. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.

Restroom Breaks

- Students may leave the class and return without asking permission for restroom breaks.
- Be polite and quiet.

Student Support Services

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php.

The IDEAS Center (2nd Floor of Central Library) offers free tutoring to all students with a focus on transfer students, sophomores, veterans and others undergoing a transition to UT Arlington. To schedule an appointment with a peer tutor or mentor email IDEAS@uta.edu or call (817) 272-6593.

The English Writing Center (411LIBR): The Writing Center Offers free tutoring in 20-, 40-, or 60-minute face-to-face and online sessions to all UTA students on any phase of their UTA coursework. Our hours are 9 AM to 8 PM Mon.-Thurs., 9 AM-3 PM Fri. and Noon-6 PM Sat. and Sun. Register and make appointments online at uta.mywconline.com. Classroom Visits, workshops, and specialized services for graduate students are also available. Please see www.uta.edu/owl for detailed information on all our programs and services.

The Library's 2nd floor Academic Plaza offers students a central hub of support services, including IDEAS Center, University Advising Services, Transfer UTA and various college/school advising hours. Services are available during the library's hours of operation. library.uta.edu/academic-plaza

Librarian to Contact: [Diane Shepelwich](#) (English Subject Librarian)

Student Feedback Survey

At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students' anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/sfs.

Final Review Week

For semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit:

1. Exit the classroom
2. Walk towards the stairwells at either end of the hall.
3. Take the stairs down until you reach the bottom floor.
4. Exit the building through the glass doors just past the bottom step.

When exiting the building during an emergency, you should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will arrange to assist individuals with disabilities.

Electronic Communication Policy

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php.

However, please note the following requirements and guidelines regarding email communications for this course:

- Include ENGL 2338.n (where *n* is the appropriate section number) and a detailed topic in the subject line of all emails. **I will not open emails that do not include a correct subject line.** (For example: *ENGL 2338.006: Question about Resume.*)
- Sign your first and last name at the bottom of each email, so I know who you are.
- I check email daily, except on the weekends. I try to respond to emails within 24 hours. I will not check email after 5 PM.
- If you email me after noon on Friday or over the weekend, you will likely not hear back from me until Monday.

Conferences and Questions

The office hours indicated on the syllabus are for students to drop by or to make an appointment to discuss course assignments, grades, or other class-related concerns. I will be happy to make other appointment times for you if your class schedule conflicts with regular conference times or if I am not available on certain days, but please note I am only on campus on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Syllabus and Schedule Changes

Instructors try to make their syllabuses as complete as possible; however, during the course of the semester I may be required to alter, add, or abandon certain policies/assignments. Instructors reserve the right to make such changes as they become necessary. Students will learn of any major changes in writing.

Headphones and Music

I do allow students to listen to their own music on headphones during *workshop portions* of the class as long as the volume is low enough that students can hear me if I need to bring something to their attention.

Computer Etiquette

While we will be using the computers in the classroom to complete both homework assignments and papers, you must use good computer etiquette during class time. You may not hack, surf the net, send/read personal emails, 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 a zero on any daily work for that class day.

Students may bring their own laptops or tablets to class, but the student is then responsible for having all the software needed for the course and for using the software.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q. Can I turn in late work?

A. No. If your work is late, you get a zero.

Q. What if it is a couple of minutes late?

A. Tough. Do not wait until the last minute.

Q. Can I revise for a better grade?

A. No. Turn it in right the first time. Besides, in my experience, students don't "revise" so much as fix a comma or two and call that a "revision." So no, you can't revise.

Q. What if my assignment is too short/doesn't meet the minimum length required?

A. Then it earns a zero.

Q. What if my assignment is longer than the listed maximum length?

A. If you are a little over the maximum, then do not worry about it. If you are well over the maximum (for example, 10 pages rather than 5), then I am only reading and grading until page 5.

Q. Can I have an Incomplete?

A. No.

Q. Can I do anything to get a better grade?

A. Do the work in the first place the first time around. If we are approaching the end of the term and you are worried about passing, then you probably should have done more/done a better job/gotten help sooner. If I have already offered extra credit, then do that, but do not expect to change magically a failing grade into a passing one.

Q. But I need [some particular grade] for financial aid/to graduate/to get into [some program]!

A. Maybe you should have done better before this point.

Q. How many absences can I have?

A. I used to have a maximum number of absences policy, but UTA has no official attendance policy. I take roll each class, but you have no “maximum” number of absences. Of course, if you miss several classes and several daily/in-class grades, then you will fail under your own power.

Q. Can I go to the restroom?

A. Yes. Stop asking me. Just go. Be discrete and do not disrupt class, but you are not in high school anymore.

Q. Can you look at my draft for me and give me feedback?

A. Sure. Bring it by my office **as a hard copy. Do not bring your laptop.** I will send you on your way if you slide your MacBook towards me. *Print out your draft.* Be aware: My job is not to edit/copyedit/revise your work. I will point to issues or give you guidance on how to improve your draft, but I do not give out a formula to students for specific grades. That is, I do not say, *If you do this and this and this with your draft, you will earn an A.*

Q. But you said my draft looked fine! Why did I get [grade I do not want]?

A. Because your work earned that grade. Do not mistake “You’re on the right track” or “This looks okay” for “This gets an A.” A *D* is passing. A *C* reflects *average* work.

Q. But I worked so hard on this!

A. Effort does not equal competency or success.

Q. But I submitted my assignment to Blackboard/I had a Blackboard issue!

A. If it is before the deadline, try using a different browser or another computer. If that does not work, email it to me **before the deadline as an attachment.** If it is after the deadline, start thinking about how to avoid having this problem on the next assignment. If a quiz has an issue, then take a screenshot of the error and contact me before class.

Q. Do you drop any grades?

A. I typically drop one of your lowest daily grades at the end of the term. If you have perfect attendance, I will drop *another* lowest daily grade.

Q. I was late to class! What should I do?

A. Come to me at the end of class to let me know you were present but late. Do not *assume* I marked you down. If you came in *very* late, then I will likely mark you absent nonetheless.

Q. What does it take to earn an A on an assignment?

A. For papers, projects, essays, etc., the assignment must satisfy all requirements. It must have few if any errors, and it should be engaging to read, demonstrating a mastery of the material and concepts the project addresses. It should demonstrate *excellence*, not merely *goodness*, *seems good*, *well*, or *it is doing most of what I asked you to do*. It should demonstrate all of the following: good writing style; mastery of grammar, spelling, and punctuation; effective organization; engaging content and rhetoric appropriate to the intended audience and purpose; concision and clarity; and mastery of the subject matter at hand.

For technical writing projects, it should demonstrate excellent writing style (including few if any passive constructions or other style issues) and excellent document/graphic design based upon the principles taught in class.

Q. Can I have a letter of recommendation?

A. Two things: Firstly, you cannot have a recommendation until after the class is over. I want to see if you are the kind of student I feel confident and comfortable in recommending for something. Also, I might have something to *talk about* by that point. I have used students' work and projects in my classes as specific examples to *justify* why I recommend students for scholarships, academic programs, etc. Secondly, I only write letters of recommendation for students who earned A's in the course overall.

Q. Can I use Wikipedia, Ask Jeeves, About.com, Ask.com, Metafilter, Reddit, or some other general internet resource as a source in my paper/project?

A. No. You should be searching for reputable sources and have a good understanding of what reputable sources *are* and which are appropriate to the project or discipline within which you are working.

Q. What citation style should I use for my projects/assignments?

A. For Technical Writing, choose a citation style and stick to it on particular projects. Note that choice on the Style Sheet. You will have a Works Cited, References, or Bibliography section as appropriate to the style you choose.

Please note that the library can direct you to more information about those specific styles. I recommend you *avoid* using Citation Machine and similar web services to generate your Works Cited entries unless you are working with printed, hardcopy sources like books and journal articles.

Q. Where is your office? When are your office hours?

A. Look at the cover page of this syllabus.

Q. Do I need to submit a hard copy of this assignment?

A. No. You will submit all major documents/projects as Adobe Acrobat PDF files on Blackboard. For thumbnails, you *must* show me the hard copy of the thumbnail in class or include a photo or scan of it in the appropriate submission site on Blackboard.

Q. Do you post your PowerPoints or lecture notes on Blackboard?

A. No. I have found that, when I do so, no one pays attention in class. So no, I do not post any notes on Blackboard, but I will typically do so if we miss class (snow/ice days, emergencies, etc.) to help make up for lost time.

Q. Can I center [this thing on a document]?

A. No. I will count off if you center *anything* other than table cells or the MOW logo.

Q. Can I use all-caps for this heading or warning?

A. No. I will count off if you do so.

Q. What is the difference between a serif and sans serif typeface/font?

A. The body text—like this answer and its question—appears in a serif font called “Minion Pro.” Minion Pro is an *example* of a serif font. A *serif* itself is one of the flourishes and strokes at the ends of characters. Look at Figure 1. Notice how the *G* on the left has little bits at the ends of the character that the right *G* lacks. Those “bits” are serifs, and if a typeface has serifs, then it is a serif typeface. In addition, serif typefaces typically have varying stroke thickness on the characters. Notice how the left *G* has a thinner stroke along the top of the character compared to the left side of the *G*.



Figure 1: A serif and sans serif *G*

In contrast, the *G* on the right lacks serifs, so it is a *sans serif* font (*sans* is French for *without*, thus *without serif*). In particular, I have written that *G* in “Frutiger,” an *example* of a sans serif font. Also, notice how the stroke thickness tends to be uniform rather than in the *G* on the left. Sans serif fonts tend to have that feature.

NB: *Serif* and *sans serif* fonts are broad *categories* of fonts. Individual fonts will be serif or sans serif. For example, good serif fonts include Times New Roman, Book Antiqua, Goudy, and Caslon. Good sans serif fonts include Frutiger, Tahoma, Trebuchet, and Helvetica.

Q. When should I use serif and sans serif fonts?

A. Use serif fonts for body text: studies show that when you have to read a good amount of text, you will read it 10-15% faster if you write it in a serif font. Those serifs help guide the eye from one letter to the next. In contrast, use sans serif fonts for headings. Sans serif fonts stand out more than serif typefaces, and you want to distinguish headings from the body. If you do not use the right kind of typeface in the right places, then I will count off points.

Q. What color should my headings be in?

A. Your headings should be in a different color than your body text (which should typically be black). That said, your headings should be in a distinct but *easily read* color that stands out from the page and the black body text. For example, this syllabus uses UTA blue (R 0/G 100/B 177) and Frutiger for the headings while the body is black Minion Pro (12 point).

Q. What goes into a Project Log?

A. A project log should record the days you worked on a project, the times on those days you worked, and how many hours you worked on that day, and it should also indicate what general activity you performed during that time for the project. You can find a simple template Word document on Blackboard that you can use and adapt. Project logs show me (and your team) how much time you put in on the project.

Q. What goes into team meeting minutes?

A. You should record the time, date, and location of the team meeting (including meetings in class), who was present, and what business or decisions you made. You should also note action items (things that the team needs to do) complete with who is responsible for them. These minutes serve as records for your team's activities, decisions, and processes.

Q. What goes into a style sheet?

A. Your style sheet records every style and formatting decision you make for a document/project. This information includes what fonts you use. For example, this syllabus's style sheet would include:

- Cover Page:
 - Main title in Trebuchet 48-point white with black outline
 - Semester line in Trebuchet 20-point white with black outline
 - Other information on cover in Trebuchet bold 14-point white with black outline, with information after colons indented to 2½" from margin
- Margins: 1" on all sides
- Body Font:

- Georgia 12 point black, 1/2” indent from margin, full justification with automatic hyphenation
- Block quotes indent a further 1/2” and use 10-point size with blank line before and after
- Captions: Trebuchet 9-point black bold under the image
- Headings:
 - Heading 1: Trebuchet 16 point UTA blue, black border on bottom
 - Heading 2: Trebuchet 14 point UTA blue
 - Heading 3: Trebuchet 12 point UTA blue, 1/2” indent from margin
- Footer: Technical Writing on left, semester (term year) in middle, page number on right, Trebuchet 12 point UTA blue, with black horizontal line above
- Accent Bar: UTA orange (R 245/G 128/B 38) accent bar on left margin (7/8” width) on all pages after cover
- Notes:
 - FAQ section starts questions with “Q:” and has questions in bold. Answers begin with “A:” in normal body.
 - Top-level bulleted lists have text indented further 1/2” from body with bullets 1/4” to left, and nested bullets begin a further 1/2” further indented.
 - Use filled circles for all bullets.
 - Include a blank line between paragraphs and lists.
 - Render important deadlines on schedule in UTA blue.

An accurate style sheet should reflect all of that information and more. A style sheet helps keep you consistent as you design and draft a document, and you should be able to share your style sheet with a team so that everyone formats their documents *accurately* and *consistently*.

Tentative Schedule

- All readings are due the day indicated below, along with any quizzes, which you should complete on Blackboard *before* class.
- **All quizzes and homework (submitted on Blackboard unless otherwise noted) are due by 11 AM on the day indicated below.**
- All assignments are due at the beginning of class unless otherwise noted.
- All readings come from the textbook.
- Major deadlines appear in blue.
- Unless otherwise stated, you should submit all HW assignments below as Word .doc or Adobe PDF files on Blackboard. **If you fail to do so, then you will earn a zero for the assignment.**
- Unless otherwise stated, you should submit all *final* drafts on Blackboard as an **Adobe PDF file** and submit the “deliverables” per the assignment’s rubric and assignment sheet.

Week	Date	
0	8/25	Course Introduction
1	8/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus Quiz • Grammar Quiz • Chapter 2 Reading Quiz • Syllabus Contract • APL Permission Form • Chapter 2: Audiences • Ad Exercise (in-class)
	9/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12 Reading Quiz • Chapter 12: Correspondence • Practice Email Exercise
2	9/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 Reading Quiz • HW: Chapter 7 Exercises (submit on Blackboard; bring a copy with you to class; give yourself at least 3 hours to complete) • Chapter 7: Writing Style part 1
	9/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8 Reading Quiz • HW: Chapter 8 Exercises (submit on Blackboard; bring a copy with you to class; give yourself at least 3 hours to complete) • Chapter 8: Writing Style part 2
3	9/13	Writing Style Workshop
	9/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Style Quiz (before class—counts as two quiz grades) • Practice Style Exam (before class—bring a copy with you) • Writing Style Workshop
4	9/20	Writing Style Workshop
	9/22	Word Orientation
5	9/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Reading Quiz • Chapter 6: Organizing Content • Assign Resume & Cover Letter
	9/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 13 Reading Quiz • Chapter 13: Resumes & Cover Letters
6	10/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: Text Content for Resume & Cover Letter • Chapter 11 Reading Quiz • Chapter 11: Visual Information • Chapter 10: Graphic and Document Design
	10/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: Resume Draft • Resume Workshop

7	10/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: Cover Letter Draft • Cover Letter Workshop
	10/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resume & Cover Letter Due • Chapter 18 Quiz • Chapter 18: Instructions • Assign teams • Assign TCS & TCP
8	10/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed Team Contracts due in class • Thumbnail for TCS in class • Chapter 15 Quiz • Chapter 15: Formal Reports • Assign Formal Project • TCS Workshop
	10/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: Style Guide for TCS & TCP • TCS Workshop
9	10/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: First Draft of TCS • TCS Workshop
	10/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: Revised Draft of TCS • TCS Workshop
10	11/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rough Draft of TCS (hard copy) in class • Peer Review of TCS
	11/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCS Final Draft Due • HW: TCP Rough Draft (as PDF on Blackboard) • TCP Workshop
11	11/8	Library Day (class does not meet)
	11/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: Revised Draft of TCP • TCP Workshop
12	11/15	TCP Presentations (Day 1)
	11/17	TCP Presentations (Day 2)
13	11/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: Rough Draft of Formal Project • FP Workshop
	11/24	Thanksgiving Break
14	11/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: Second Draft of Formal Project • FP Workshop
	12/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW: Third Draft of Formal Project • FP Workshop
15	12/6	FP Final Draft Due by 11:59 PM (class does not meet)
Finals	N/A	This course has no final exam.

Syllabus Contract

I have read and understood the syllabus, and I agree to abide by the course policies.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Permission to Use Student Writing

Student's Name _____

Class Number and Section _____

Instructor Name _____

I give my permission for my writing to be used as an example of student work and/or as a teaching tool for future classes. I understand that my name will be removed from my work before it is shared with other students. I also give my permission for my writing—specifically my Formal Project—to be shared with the Arlington Public Library for their possible use.

Student's signature _____

UTA ID _____ Date _____