Studies in Technical Communication

ENGL 4391.005: Independent Study
Summer 2017 | CARH 604
Dr. Christian Worlow

Rev: 24 May 2017

Contents

General Information & Course Overview

Instructor:	Dr. Christian Worlow
Office:	CARH 604
Departmental Phone:	(817) 272-2692
Meeting Times:	M 10-11:30 AM in CARH 604 (5 June to 10 July)
	TBA 17 July to 10 August
Office Hours:	by appointment (5 June to 10 July)
	M-Th 1:00-2:30 PM (10 July to 10 August)
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This course offers an advanced overview of the fundamentals of technical communications with a focus on preparing technical and professional documents for specific professional environments, as appropriate for individual students.

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 design case studies (flyers, brochures, posters), instructional materials, and proposals/reports. Furthermore, you will work on a PowerPoint and oral presentation based on your proposal/report. 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, culminating in a Writing Style Exam.

Warnings!
As students often fail to pay attention to the syllabus, I have marked certain key parts of the syllabus with a warning icon to call your attention to common problems for students in my classes.

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 your previous writing experience 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.

Please note that this syllabus includes a FAQ just before the **Tentative Schedule.** You will also find a **Syllabus Contract** and a form for **Permission to Use Student Writing** on the last page.

Student Learning Outcomes

A. Students will be able to analyze rhetorical situations to understand audience, purpose, and occasion.
B. Students will be able to understand the importance of ethical technical communication.
C. Students will be able to create documents using clear and concise writing appropriate to their audiences' needs.
D. Students will be able to create documents using effective graphic design elements to most successfully achieve their rhetorical purposes.
E. Students will be able to create a variety of technical and professional documents, including memos, instructional materials, and proposals/progress reports.
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 or otherwise professional context.

Required Texts

Tebeaux, Elizabeth and Sam Dragga. *The Essentials of Technical Communication.* 3rd edition. Oxford University Press. ISBN 9780199379996

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

Grade Breakdown

Writing Style Exercises	10%	6/19
Writing Style Exam	10%	6/26
Reflection	5%	7/3
Design Case Studies	15%	7/10
Instruction Project	15%	7/24
Proposal/Progress Report	15%	8/10
PowerPoint & Presentation	10%	8/10
Participation	20%	weekly

Projects that fail to meet the minimum required length earn a zero. Late assignments earn a zero.

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

Writing Style Exercises (10%)

These exercises ask you to apply concepts found in the textbook and that you will learn about in lecture first. You can find Word documents with these exercises pre-typed for you on Blackboard. Allot yourself three hours at least for each set of exercises. Although these exercises are primarily completion grades, we will go over them on June 19. I average both grades together.

Writing Style Exam (10%)

For this 80-minute online exam, you must do the following:

- **Identification & Revision** (60%): For six sentences, you will need to identify all the writing style problems in each sentence and then offer your rewrite of the sentence that corrects those errors and avoids introducing new ones.
- **Paragraph Revision** (30%): Revise a paragraph (choose one of two paragraph options) to ensure the revised paragraph has a unified, focused topic, including a topic sentence and development.
- **Identify *To Be* Verbs** (10%): Identify all *to be* verbs from a list.

Reflection (5%)

You will author a digital memo (PDF format) to Dr. Worlow reflecting on the kinds of audiences and writing associated with the organization you will be writing for over the course of the term, identifying their needs and purposes. You should think about what kinds of documents they could use in terms of brochures, flyers, posters, instructional materials, and proposals/progress reports. You should also propose tentative topics for these documents as they will constitute the projects that you will then focus on.

Design Case Studies (15%)

You will design three documents in some combination: flyers, brochures, and/or posters. You will include PDF digital copies and hard copies you can print through the main English office in color.

Instruction Project (15%)

You will create an instructional document to teach your audience how to perform some procedure. Examples from other classes have included the following:

- How to assemble a tent
- How to tie a tie
- How to do a waltz
- How to make slime/ooze
- How to do origami
- How to do various exercises

You may choose to do either a wholly electronic document (preferably a PDF, optimized for a smartphone or tablet), or you may produce a physical document (but you are responsible for the cost of printing and binding—and the printed document must be professional in appearance), and I will show you several examples from previous courses. You will also test each other's instructional projects (usability testing).

Proposal/Progress Report (15%)

You will research and prepare a (10+ page) proposal of some kind (new policy, procedure, initiative, program, etc.) as a formal proposal *or* research and prepare a progress report on an ongoing initiative (for social media). You will design this document in full color with illustrations as a PDF digital document.

PowerPoint & Presentation (10%)

You will prepare a PowerPoint presentation based on your Proposal/Progress Report and then make an oral presentation to Dr. Worlow (and possibly one or two other persons). I will base your assessment on the design and usability of your PowerPoint as well as your professionalism and preparedness for the presentation.

Participation (20%)

All students should *fully prepare before each class by reading the assigned texts for the day and taking notes*. Students should participate actively in class discussion by asking questions, answering questions, offering their opinions and responses, and arriving punctually. **For every class you miss, your Participation grade will decrease by 15 points to a minimum of zero**. I will also determine your participation grade based upon your participation in class discussion via questions, answers, and discussion. Please keep in mind that participation should be *civil* participation, even if you disagree with another's perspective.

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study

This course entails extensive writing, revision, and design work each week. I would expect at least 15 hours of out-of-class study and preparation time *on average*.

Class Policies

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 .docx Word document (unless otherwise specified) to ensure that I can open them on my computer. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have saved and submitted all your work in the correct format. **If you submit work in the wrong format, then you will receive a zero for the assignment.**

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.

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.

If you are an armed forces reservist and you are called to active duty or otherwise have a schedule conflict, I need to see documentation in a timely manner that acknowledges your service commitment.

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/Imagr/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 readings, workshops, 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 officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/).

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.

NB: Because this course has only two students, you should not have an SFS to submit.

Final Review Week

For long semester 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. 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 4391.005 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 4391.005: Question about Project*.)
- 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 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.

Library & Research Assistance

University-level research requires university-level sources. Contact the Library for personalized help in navigating research resources and locating the sources you need.

- **Librarian**: Your librarian is Diane Shepelwich (dianec@uta.edu). If you need help getting started with your research or have questions along the way, contact Diane for personalized assistance.
- **Research Coach**: [Research Coaches](#) are UTA students trained to help you frame your research questions, develop search strategies, understand citation styles, and select and evaluate relevant resources.
- **Library Staff**: Find library staff at the Service Zone, Central Library first floor, or at the branch libraries, by phone at (817) 272-3395, by text at (817) 727-8395, email at AskUs@uta.edu, or chat on the [library's homepage](#).
- **Research Consultation**: [To set an appointment](#) to meet with your librarian or research coach.
- **Research Guides**: [For a list of useful guides](#) to help you start your research.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
FAQ on Class Policies

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 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. Where is your office? When are your office hours?
A. Look at the cover page of this syllabus.

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.

FAQ on Sources & Citation

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.

FAQ on Technical Writing Projects & Documents

Q. Do I need to submit a hard copy of this assignment?
A. Only for those assignments that so specify under **Major Assignments**. 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. 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*.

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.

Figure 1: A serif and sans serif *G*

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 Trebuchet for the headings while the body is black Georgia (12 point).

FAQ on Project Logs, Team Meeting Minutes, and Style Sheets

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 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 55-point white with black outline
  - Other information on cover in Trebuchet bold 24-point white with black outline
  - Cover image: public domain photo from Pixabay with identifying information in alt-text
- **Margins**: 1" on all sides
- **Body Font**:
  - Georgia 12-point black, ½" indent from margin, full justification with automatic hyphenation
  - Block quotes indent a further ½" and use 10-point size with blank line before and after
- **Captions**: Trebuchet 9-point black bold under the image, centered within the caption
- **Headings**:
  - Heading 1: Trebuchet 18 point UTA blue, black border on bottom
  - Heading 2: Trebuchet 14 point UTA blue
  - Heading 3: Trebuchet 12 point UTA blue, ½" indent from margin
- **Footer**: on pages after cover page, "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
- **Tentative Schedule:** 1-point black table borders with titles of columns "Week" and "Date" in Trebuchet 12-point black bold. Numbers of weeks are in same format, otherwise using body. Class session date format: number of month/day.
- **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 ½" from body with bullets ¼" to left, and nested bullets begin a further ½" further indented.
  - Use filled circles for all bullets.
  - Include a blank line between paragraphs and lists.
  - Render important deadlines on schedule in UTA blue.
  - Use warning icon (public domain image: yellow image with black !) as necessary, with alt-text "WARNING icon").

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

- Be ready to discuss readings on the days they are due.
- All assignments are due at the beginning of class unless otherwise noted.
- Major deadlines appear in blue.
- **Dates are tentative for the weeks in question and are subject to change with advanced notice**. **(TBA for Weeks 7-10)**

Week	Date	Readings & Activities
1	6/5	Chapters 1-3 Opening discussion & questions
2	6/12	Chapter 4 Lessons on Writing Style
3	6/19	Writing Style Exercises (parts 1-2) Go over exercises
4	6/26	Chapters 5-6 Writing Style Exam due Word Orientation Canva Orientation
5	7/3	Chapter 7 Graphic Design Basics Reflection due Designing Flyers, Brochures, Posters
6	7/10	Chapter 10 Design Case Studies due Instructions, Procedures, Policies
7	7/17	Chapter 9 Researching & Writing Proposals & Progress Reports Usability testing for Instruction Project
8	7/24	Instruction Project due Workshop on Proposal/Progress Report
9	7/31	Oral Reports PowerPoint & Its Discontents Workshop
10	8/7	Proposal/Progress Report due PowerPoint due Oral presentation to Dr. Worlow
Finals		This class 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_____