

Computers & Writing: Technical Procedures & Manuals

Fall 2017 | ENGL 3372.001 | Dr. Worlow

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Rev.: 22 August 2017

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About this Course

This course focuses on the use of computers and computerized equipment to produce a variety of documents. Technical writing and professional communication includes a diverse selection of writing types, and in this course, students will learn to produce clear and concise, user-oriented documents. In particular, students will focus on technical procedures and manuals in a variety of formats.

After the first few weeks in which we focus on practicing using a clear and concise writing style for any audience, we move into developing several practical examples of instructional materials. Students will produce instructional/procedural documents as correspondence, brochures, booklets, and electronic/PDF formats.

In addition, this course participates within the Maker Literacies initiative in order to incorporate experiential learning practices into the curriculum. [Per the Library website:](#)

We believe that the competencies gained from hands-on, project based learning in the FabLab (for example, working in teams, time management and technical communication) will be vital skills for all UTA graduates. We seek to include courses from all programs of study, including the humanities, social sciences, fine arts, as well as traditional STEM fields.

Students will work with the UTA FabLab to help develop documentation for the FabLab even as students have the opportunity to learn more about and to practice the kinds of maker-driven competencies this program encourages. (That means, you get to make stuff at the FabLab and write about it.) I am hoping that (1) students will produce great documentation for users of the FabLab that (2) students can then include in professional portfolios and point to in their job searches.



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.

Student Learning Outcomes

I have adapted these in part from the [Maker Competencies List](#).

Students write in clear and concise style and can adapt their professional writing to a variety of audiences.

Students analyze rhetorical situations in terms of audience (composition, demography, expectations, needs), purposes (students'/organizations' and readers'), and occasions for writing in order to develop documents best suited to fulfilling the students' and readers' needs.

Students apply sound document and graphic design to enhance the readability and success of professional documents.

Students produce different kinds of technical and professional documents, including correspondence, manuals, guides, brochures, and similar works.

Students work with subject matter experts (SME) to better understand policies and procedures in order to articulate those procedures to a variety of audiences.

Students practice usability testing to identify and evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, revising as necessary.

Students work with SME to identify, consult, and evaluate procedures and to articulate safety and warning information to end-users of documentation.

Students develop a variety of instructional and procedural documents.

Students apply design praxes to define, analyze, and respond to problems or situations that instigate document projects.

Students demonstrate time management best-practices by keeping project logs and team meeting minutes.

Students assemble effective teams

- To collaborate with others
- To evaluate the costs & benefits of “Doing-it-Together” vs. “Doing-it-Yourself”
- To delegate responsibilities to those team members best suited to different tasks
- To solicit advice, knowledge, and specific skills succinctly from SME

Students employ effective knowledge management practices

- To communicate clearly with team members and stakeholders
- To articulate technical and “maker” jargon in clear, concise language
- To document work clearly

Students develop, maintain, and follow accurate style guides/manuals in order to ensure consistency of design and writing style on projects and in accordance with organizations’ professional personae.

SME?

This term refers to Subject Matter Expert(s), those persons who are experts on whatever topic or procedure you are writing about. For example, UTA’s OIT personnel are SME for IT questions relating to UTA topics (MavMail, Blackboard, etc.). Staff trained in different devices at the UTA FabLab are going to be your SME for FabLab equipment and policies.

Required Textbooks & Course Materials

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

All reading quizzes rely on this book and this edition.

I also recommend the following:

- USB flash drive
- Microsoft Word (Google Docs will only be useful for the textual side of composition)
- Cloud storage solution for sharing team project files (OneDrive, Google Drive, etc.)
- Access to a writing handbook: [OWL at Purdue](#) is a good start, but you may want to find a good cheap used copy of a handbook, too.
- A free [Canva](#) account for helping design graphics and images. (NB: Canva is a third-party service unaffiliated with UTA.) Alternatively, if you are a Photoshop whiz, feel free to use that or another app.
- Access to the [UTA Identity Guide](#) for questions of UTA design and style



NB: Save your work often, both in the labs and on your own computers! Save multiple versions of your projects as you progress, naming them with some system you can track the versions of your projects. Back up your files to multiple locations (or use a cloud storage service).

Major Assignments

All “Projects” below will include a detailed assignment document on Blackboard in PDF format that will include a rubric. Please note that Blackboard has a “General Rubric” PDF you should consult as a checklist as you work on Projects.

Daily Grade

Your daily grade includes Blackboard quizzes, drafts of major assignments, various exercises, pop quizzes, and other forms of homework. Your Daily Grade reflects the average of these kinds of assignments.

Style Exam

The style exam tests your ability to identify different writing style problems and to then revise/fix those problems without introducing more style problems or introducing grammar, spelling, or punctuation (GSP) errors. The Style Exam includes several sentences in which you will choose six to identify the style problems and then revise the sentences. You will also choose one of two paragraphs to revise in a similar manner. If you are going to write effective documentation or any other kind of professional writing/communication, then you need clear and concise writing. **This exam will be online**—available for a period and without timer.

Instructional Correspondence Project (ICP)

You will write correspondence (a business letter or memo) that instructs the reader(s) how to accomplish some task. This assignment requires you to format your correspondence professionally and to convey your instructions in a clear manner. I will supply you with a selection of prompts, audiences, and occasions you can choose from for this project.

Instructional Flyer Project (IFP)

You will create a short PDF document (a flyer or something similar) that communicates to your peers how to perform some task in Microsoft Word. I will assign these tasks at random, and you will engage in usability testing with your classmates to test and then refine your IFP. I will assemble these flyers on Blackboard as a resource for the whole class.

Team Instruction Project (TIP)

You will work with a team to develop a topic for this project and an audience, subject to my approval. Your team will then develop the instructions in an applicable format, and your team will test another's TIP before the final draft deadline. Your team will produce a hard copy of this project in full color in addition to those materials submitted on Blackboard.

Team Instruction Manual Project (TIMP)

Working with the same teams, you will work with SME from the FabLab to develop documentation for an apparatus at the FabLab. I will develop a starting FabLab style guide for these projects that you will adhere to or adapt with consultation as needed. Teams will engage in usability testing on your TIMP and then revise before final draft submission. Your team will print in black & white a booklet version of your TIMP for the FabLab in addition to materials you submit on Blackboard.

Team Document Redesign Project (TDRP)

Working with the same teams, you will identify and evaluate an existing instructional, procedural, or policy document of appropriate length/scope in order to redesign and improve that document, using the guidelines from this course and the skills you develop over the course of the term. You must seek approval from me for your document choice, and you should be working on this project over the course of the latter half of the semester. You will also engage in usability testing for this project before submitting the final TDRP on Blackboard.

Participation

Punctual attendance and participation is vital for succeeding in this course. Accordingly, for every absence you have, I will penalize your Participation grade by 5 points to a minimum of zero (0). Students with exemplary in-class contributions may salvage penalized Participation grades at my discretion.

Other Required Documents

When you submit your final drafts for each “Project,” you must prepare and submit 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 with your final drafts 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. Please note that many homework assignments require you or your team to submit provisional or **tentative** versions of these documents before the final draft is due. However, you must still submit **final** versions of these supplemental documents with your final drafts of the projects.



Component	Penalty	Brief Description
Thumbnail Sketch	-5	The thumbnail is a 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 collectively .
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 record of what you decided and who was responsible.
Audience Analysis Worksheet	-10	Complete this worksheet and consider your audience with as much specificity as you can.

Usability Testing Report	-25	This memo reports on your usability testing for the TIP and TDRP, as appropriate. You should include the date of the testing and a breakdown of the results and your team's plan to revise with those tests in mind.
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 individual grades for team projects.

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 period and use your attendance as a guide for your [Participation](#) grade (see above). 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. Do not assume I marked you down.

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](#).

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.

Course Grades

Component	%	Due Date
Daily Grade	10%	daily
Style Exam	10%	September 14
Instructional Correspondence Project (ICP)	10%	October 10
Instructional Flyer Project (IFP)	15%	October 19
Team Instruction Project (TIP)	15%	November 2
Team Instruction Manual Project (TIMP)	15%	November 28
Team Document Redesign Project (TDRP)	15%	December 5
Participation	10%	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.

I track all grading through Blackboard. Your “Weighted Grade” reflects your current grade in the course.

I will not discuss any grade you earn until at least 24 hours have passed since I posted that grade on Blackboard.

Make-Up & Late Assignments

All assignments are due by the time indicated and, unless otherwise specified, by the beginning of class at 7 PM on Blackboard. Late work earns a zero. Work that fails to meet any minimum length requirements also earns a zero. You may not revise final drafts or the Style Exam for better grades. As the Style Exam is due online and without a timer, you may not make up that exam, and you may not make up any quizzes.

Grade Grievances

Any appeal of a grade in this course must follow the procedures and deadlines for grade-related grievances as published in the current **University Catalog**.

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional nine (9) hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, and so on.

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](#).

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](#)), or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found [here](#).

Counseling and Psychological Services ([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 [here](#).

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 [here](#) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or by [email](#).

Academic Integrity

Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to 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 in their courses by 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. Additional information is available [here](#).

Electronic Communication

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 [here](#).

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

- Include ENGL 3372 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 3372: Question about TIP.*)
- 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.

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 [here](#).

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 [here](#).

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, which is located at the stairs at either end of the hall and then proceeding downstairs to the ground floor and the exit doors. When exiting the building during an emergency, one 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 make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

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 [here](#).

University Tutorial & Supplemental Instruction (Ransom Hall 205): UTSI offers a variety of academic support services for undergraduate students, including: 60-minute one-on-one tutoring sessions, Start Strong Freshman tutoring program, and Supplemental Instruction. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00am-5:00pm. For more information visit www.uta.edu/utsi or call 817-272-2617.

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. Students can drop in, or check the schedule of available peer tutors at www.uta.edu/IDEAS, or call (817) 272-6593.

The English Writing Center (411LIBR): The Writing Center offers FREE tutoring in 15-, 30-, 45-, and 60-minute face-to-face and online sessions to all UTA students on any phase of their UTA coursework. Register and make appointments [online](#). Classroom visits, workshops, and specialized services for graduate students and faculty are also available. Please see www.uta.edu/owl for detailed information on all our programs and services.

If your grammar or mechanics or paragraph writing skills need work, I strongly suggest you work with the Writing Center. While they cannot offer you help on how your instructions are working, they can help you with your writing in general.

[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.

Other Class Policies

Team Projects

The team projects for this course require students to work in teams of 3-5 persons to collaborate on documents. Teams will create team contracts for handling students who fail to do their work as well for setting team expectations. If a team member fails to complete their part of the work on time, the rest of the team **must** complete the work or risk a lower grade; however, the team can vote (if written into the contract) to remove the team member from the team. The removed team member will then be responsible for doing an entire project individually, and the project will be due on the same day as the team project.

Students will keep minutes of their team meetings, and they will turn in a final product to the instructor on the due date. If the final product fails to meet the assignment requirements, all team members will fail the assignment, thus team members must work proactively to complete the work on schedule even if someone fails to do their part. The reason for these strict rules is to teach the students to respect deadlines and complete projects on time with a team (and sometimes in spite of the team).

When you submit the final drafts of your team projects, you will also have the opportunity to submit a private team member evaluation, and I do take into account these evaluations and the consensus view of the team about its members when assigning **individual** grades.

Removed team members can petition to join their original team or a new team, but the removed team member must compose a formal application letter and participate in an interview moderated by Dr. Worlow with the petitioned team. That team will then elect whether or not to accept the individual who will be subject to that team's existing contract.

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 3372 are due by the beginning of class.

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

When you submit your final drafts on Blackboard, I ask you to please name your PDFs as follows:

- **For individual assignments:** lastname-ENGL 3372-assignment-name.PDF (for example: Anonymous-ENGL 3372-ICP.pdf)
- **For team and/or group projects:** team-name-or-number-ENGL 3372-assignment-name.PDF (for example: Pediatric Pandas-ENGL 3372-TIP.pdf)

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](#).

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 3372 readings and discussions each day. Bring book(s) and e-reserve readings (heavily annotated and carefully read) to every class. Students should par-

ticipate 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.

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

Restroom Breaks

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

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)

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 or email it to me as a Word doc ahead of time.** 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, hard-copy 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. 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. 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 “Georgia.” Georgia 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 “Arial,” 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 Arial, 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 Arial 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 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 Arial bold 46-point white with black outline
 - Semester line in Arial bold 24-point white with black outline
 - Other information on cover in Arial bold 24-point white with black outline, with information after colons indented to 2" from margin, except Revision data (Arial 18-point for size, no indentation after colon).
 - Cover image: Pixabay public domain image (attributed in alt-text)
- **Margins:** 1" on all sides
- **Body Font:**
 - Georgia 12-point black, 1/2" indent from margin, full justification with automatic hyphenation
 - Use italics for words used as words and MLA style titles for documents. Use bold for emphasis otherwise. Use red and bold for warnings.
 - Block quotes indent a further 1/2" and use 10-point size with blank line before and after
- **File name format:** OCR A Extended 12 point black
- **Headings:**
 - Heading 1: Arial 18-point UTA blue, black border on bottom
 - Heading 2: Arial 16-point UTA blue
- **Footer:** on pages after cover page, "ENGL 3372.001" on left, semester (TERM YEAR) in middle, page number on right, Arial 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.
- **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.
 - Bold **Due** and **Quiz** items on schedule, and bold major projects for their final draft deadlines.
 - 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

As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.

All assignments are due at the beginning of class (7 PM) unless otherwise specified. Most assignments are due **on Blackboard**.

August 24	Course Introduction Rhetorical Situations (Chapters 1-3)
August 29	Chapter 1-3 Quiz Due Chapter 4 & Quiz Writing Style Part 1 Syllabus Quiz Due Grammar Quiz Due Syllabus Contract & Permissions Due
August 31	Writing Style Exercises Part 1 Due (budget 3 hours to do)
September 5	Writing Style Part 2
September 7	Writing Style Exercises Part 2 Due (budget 3 hours to do)
September 12	Practice Style Exam Due (discuss in class)
September 14	Style Exam Due (before class) Chapter 5 & Quiz Designing Documents
September 19	Introduction to Graphic Design
September 21	Word & Canva Orientation (in-class grade)

	Assign ICP
September 26	Chapter 10 & Quiz Instructions in General ICP Audience Analysis Due
September 28	FabLab Orientation (meet at the UTA FabLab in the Central Library)
October 3	Chapter 7 & Quiz Correspondence & Instructions
October 5	ICP Draft 1 Due ICP Workshop
October 10	ICP Workshop & Usability Testing ICP Draft 2 Due Assign IFP
October 12	ICP Final Draft Due IFP Tentative Style Guide & Thumbnail Due in class IFP Workshop IFP Audience Analysis Due
October 17	IFP Workshop IFP Draft 1 Due
October 19	IFP Usability Testing IFP Draft 2 Due Assign TIP Assign TDRP
October 24	IFP Final Draft Due Team Contracts & TIP topic approval in class
October 26	TIP Tentative Style Guide & Thumbnails Due TIP Audience Analysis Due TIP Workshop
October 31	TIP Draft 1 Due TIP Workshop
November 2	TDRP Progress Report 1 Due TDRP Audience Analysis Due TIP Usability Testing in class TIP Draft 2 Due Assign TIMP
November 7	TIP Final Draft Due TIMP Style Guide & Thumbnails Due TIMP Audience Analysis Due TIMP Workshop
November 9	TIMP Prototype Due TIMP Workshop
November 14	TIMP Draft 1 Due TIMP Workshop
November 16	TIMP Draft 2 Due TIMP Workshop TDRP Progress Report 2 Due

November 21	TIMP Usability Test Reports Due TIMP Workshop
November 23	Thanksgiving (No Class)
November 28	TIMP Final Draft Due TDRP Draft 1 Due TDRP Workshop
November 30	TDRP Workshop TDRP Draft 2 Due
December 5	TDRP Workshop TDRP Final Draft Due by 11:59 PM
Finals	This class has no final exam

Emergency Phone Numbers: In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at **817-272-3003** (non-campus phone), **2-3003** (campus phone). You may also dial 911. Non-emergency number 817-272-3381

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 that relates specifically to the UTA FabLab to be shared with the UTA FabLab for their possible use.

Student's signature_____

UTA ID_____

Date_____

Beyond This Class: Technical Writing & Internships

Dr. Worlow teaches Technical Writing (and more), and the Department offers a [Certificate in Technical Writing and Professional Communications](#). You might want to go check it out: technical writing offers any student a good skill-set that helps distinguish and market themselves when on the job market.

In addition, Dr. Worlow is the Internship Coordinator for the Department of English. [Internships](#) can count towards the above Certificate, and they can give you vital **professional experience** before you graduate.



The High-Impact Activity for the Department of English is internships. We are proud to offer a host of internship possibilities for our students. The Coordinator for our internships is Dr. Chris Worlow (worlow@uta.edu).

An infographic with a dark blue background and orange accents. At the top, the word 'go!' is written in large, blue, lowercase letters, with an orange exclamation point. Below this, the text 'TECHNICAL & PROFESSIONAL WRITING CERTIFICATE' is written in orange. A horizontal bar separates this from the 'Department of English' text in white. To the right, an orange box contains the text 'TOP 10 STATES HIRING TECHNICAL WRITERS' in white, followed by a list of states. Below the bar, a paragraph of text describes the career path of technical writers. To the right of this text is an image of a hand writing the word 'CREATE' in block letters. Below this, the text 'OUTLOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT' is written in orange, followed by a paragraph about employment projections. At the bottom, there is an image of a white mug with the text '<tech_w good >/tech_w' and the University of Texas Arlington Department of English logo.

Technical writers often begin their career as research assistants or specialists; additional experience may bring opportunities to work on more complex projects. Prospects for advancement include positions such as senior technical writer and technical publications manager. Some technical writers operate on freelance contracts, working for multiple clients.

CREATE

TOP 10 STATES HIRING TECHNICAL WRITERS

1. Minnesota
2. Utah
3. Nebraska
4. Michigan
5. Florida
6. Massachusetts
7. New York
8. Maryland
9. Oregon
10. California

Source: *Forbes*
18 August 2015

OUTLOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT

Employment of technical writers is projected to grow by 10% through 2024, exceeding the average rate of 7% for all occupations, according to May 2016 data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

