

English 5331-001 | T,Th in TH 202

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Welcome to Technical Writing for International Graduate Students. My name is Dr. Estee Beck. I earned a PhD from the Rhetoric and Writing program at Bowling Green State University in 2015. I have been teaching college-level writing for eleven years. I research surveillance and privacy in writing spaces and digital technologies with an eye toward how these topics impact human and machine communication. I also identify as a digital rhetorician. If you would like to know what that means—then just ask!

The best way to get in touch with me outside of class is through university email. Just make sure to type in my email address in the “to” field. Do not use the auto-populate feature in mavs.uta.edu (if you have a mavs account). Faculty do not have those email extensions and will never receive the email. I also read and respond to emails during intervals Monday through Friday from 9am to 4pm.

Since this is a graduate class with students from multiple disciplines, my office hours are by appointment to best meet your needs. Just let me know when you would like to meet. We can also meet virtually on Google Hangouts or Skype.

### **Prerequisites**

This is a graduate course on the topic of writing for the disciplines. As such, I assume each junior scholar and researcher entering this course has the writing competencies outlined by our University’s admissions and State of Texas’ guidelines. However, we all have various levels of writing mastery (including me). Since this is an intensive graduate writing class, if you are concerned with your level of writing expertise, make an appointment with me so that we can figure out an action plan, set goals, and get you the support you need to succeed.

### **Course Overview**

If you have signed up for this course, it is my hope you have an interest in developing your writing habits and learning to write for your discipline. During this semester, we will learn how to write summaries, critiques, literature reviews, and proposals, and we will conduct revision and peer review. You will bring in your own content. Hopefully you have some research, a proposal or even a prospectus you want to work on this semester.

We will learn about academic language phrases most common in research and scholarship, how to identify and correct language use errors, how to adapt and learn new formatting styles, and most importantly—how to support and encourage each other.

### **Rights of the Learning Community**

*You and I have the right to a safe learning environment.*

This can take many forms. For many here, you have a full course load or heavy lab responsibilities. This can be overwhelming and can breed stress which may or may not effect learning and collaborating with each other. For others, the social and cultural registers of today’s political events—including micro-aggressions and outright discriminatory actions and comments—can lead to diminished learning capacity. In this class, no oppressive cultures or actions will be tolerated. At any time, if you should feel unsafe or unwelcome in this classroom (or in the University), I encourage you to approach me to talk.

*You have the right to a useful education.*

The purpose of education is to enrich the overall well-being of each person. Higher education extends far beyond the economic benefits that so often pervades cultural discourse surrounding reasons to attend college. However, if at any time, I present, propose or talk about a concept, application or action that feels distant to you, I encourage you to speak up for you and your fellow students. It is entirely possible I may lose sight of the realities you face and your needs for a useful education.

*You have the right to accessible learning.*

In addition to honoring all the required accessibility guidelines set forth by the University, I promise to make all materials as available as possible. If you have or suspect a disability, I encourage you to communicate with the Office of Disability Services. We will work in concert to make the material in this class accessible.

*You have the right to propose alternative coursework.*

This may seem like a strange thing for a professor to write. But, I acknowledge this space is as much yours as it is mine. If you and your peers decide at any time that the coursework is irrelevant or that your time is being wasted, or you prefer different learning/teaching styles, you should discuss and propose an alternative course of action. Do not wait until the end of the semester and record feedback on student surveys about items that were irrelevant. That would be too late. I will honor any reasonable consensus from peers and redirect the course material to appropriately match the realities of students.

Negotiation and speaking to perceived authority figures are two of the most difficult democratic skills to develop, but I hope during our time, we can learn from one another, and you each feel empowered to take control of your education in this class.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the conclusion of this course, you should be able to:

- create valid summaries, analyses, literature reviews, and proposals in an accepted ethical manner when conducting scholarship and research,
- examine the structures and functions of scholarly writing in different genres when researching and writing for the discipline,
- support empirical research through organization, structure, and accuracy of writing in commonly accepted discourse conventions for the communities receiving the research,
- develop a cohesively written proposal suitable for submission to crediting entities (graduate school, journals), and
- identify and correct up to three personal writing errors and continue developing strategies for overcoming additional writing errors.

### **Required Materials**

- Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills by Swales & Feak (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) [Required readings will vary based on student competencies]
- A writer's reference with resources for multilingual writers and ESL by Hacker & Sommers [Required readings will vary based on student competencies]
- Zotero & Eli Review software (Eli Review will cost \$25 for six-month access)

- Assorted example materials of summaries, analyses, literature reviews, and proposals supplied by Dr. Beck

### Course Projects

Note: All projects (except the word notebook and mini literature review) are due before class begins via BlackBoard

Note: All discussions are based on writing for the discipline, including review example materials, discussing techniques of writing, and how to identify errors in writing

**Diagnostic Essay:** Part of mentoring you through developing more writing skills means obtaining a baseline essay on your writing ability at the start of the semester. Based on observation, you will describe an object on campus, in writing with a word count between 350-500 words. **Due: Week 1, Thursday Jan 18.** 5% of course grade.

**Word Notebook:** During weeks 2-15, you will record, keep, and submit a weekly word journal. A minimum of ten words from the academic word bank that you are unfamiliar with are required. **Due: Weeks 2-15, at the start of each Thursday class with exception for Spring Break.** 10% of course grade.

**Summary:** Learning how to write accurate and effective summaries helps prepare you for summarizing other research/literature in your articles. You will find a scholarly journal article, in your discipline, read and summarize the article in 300 words or less, conduct reviews of your peers' summaries, and revise your first draft. **Due: Week 5, Tuesday Feb 12.** 15% of course grade.

**Analysis:** Learning how to write a critical analysis of research/literature helps prepare you to position your research as building from previous work. In this assignment, you will use the same journal article from the summary assignment, and in 500 words or less, critique and analyze the article, conduct reviews of your peers' analyses, and revise your first draft. **Due: Week 7, Tuesday Feb 27.** 15% of course grade.

**Mini Literature Review:** During weeks 2-6 you will collect five research/literature articles from your discipline (or current project). You should aim to collect and read 1 article a week and write a brief summary, analysis, and list keywords in your Zotero account. In this project, you will synthesize all five sources into a mini literature review with summaries and analyses of each article organized by themes in no more than 1,250 words. You will also conduct reviews of your peers' reviews and revise your first drafts. **Due: Week 8, Saturday Mar 10, on or before 11:59pm.** 20% of course grade.

**Proposal:** In the final half of the semester, you will work on learning the genre of proposals (business, academic, technical), document design, formatting style, table placement and captioning, and general academic phrases and moves of proposals. You will work on a proposal appropriate for your research. Proposals must be no more than 15 pages in length. You will also conduct reviews of your peers' proposals and revise your drafts. **Due: Final week, Thursday, May 3.** 35% of course grade.

### Grading

Since this is a graduate course, I will grade all assignments holistically. I will provide a rationale for the letter grade with each graded assignment. We will discuss expectations for each assignment, including how I will assess projects prior to project submission. All projects are graded on a 100-point scale and weighted based on their percentages. All grades are assigned along this scale: A=90-100, B=80-89.99, C=70-79.99, F=any grade below 69.99.

**Makeup Work/Extra Credit**

I do not offer either. I also do not round up grades.

**Office Hours**

I open my office to you as an extension of the classroom, including any virtual meetings or individual tutoring sessions with academic writing. There is no shame or embarrassment in asking for help. However, it is common to feel anxious about approaching one's teacher outside of class.

I promise to respect you and earn your trust through compassionate listening and understanding. As a teacher, I know there is a power-relation between us. While I can do my best to reduce this relation, I hope you think of me as an imperfect and vulnerable person (who may make silly mistakes, but I will own up to them), just like you.

**The university requires I state the following policies verbatim:****Attendance**

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.

(Dr. Beck's attendance policy: Since this is a graduate course, the expectation is attending every class. However, emergencies do happen, thus you may miss one (1) class unexcused and without penalty. If you miss more than one (1) class and for each additional missed class you can choose between the following two options: 1) an authored five-page essay by you on a topic of my choosing with 1" margins, double spaced due within one calendar week from the absence before class begins via email, or 2) a 5% penalty to the final course grade. If there is an extenuating circumstance, e.g., hospitalization, I will work with you so you can make up the work, but you need to inform me as soon as possible so we can make arrangements to keep you on track.)

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.

**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 (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations:** 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](http://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](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://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 [uta.edu/eos](http://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](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](mailto:jmhood@uta.edu).

### **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 at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

### **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 at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

### **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 <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

### **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 <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

### **Final Review Week**

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

Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

### **Emergency Exit Procedures**

Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. 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](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://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](mailto: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 <http://uta.mywconline.com>. Classroom Visits, workshops, and specialized services for graduate students are also available. Please see [www.uta.edu/owl](http://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. <http://library.uta.edu/academic-plaza>