TECM 4180
Advanced Technical Communication
Spring 2022

Instructor	Dr. Ryan Boettger
Location	This section of 4180 is *asynchronous*, which means we do NOT meet on a designated day and time each week. Course content can be accessed through Canvas (https://unt.instructure.com).
Office Hours	By appointment.
	I respond to all student email quickly, so if you'd like to meet, let me know and we can chat on either Zoom or the Chat feature in Canvas.
Office Location	Zoom (https://unt.zoom.us/my/docboettger)
E-mail Address	ryan.boettger@unt.edu (email directly rather than through Canvas)
Textbooks	You have two required texts for this course –

- *Organizing Ideas* by Matthew Spence (ISBN-10: 1495984931)

- *Think Smarter, Critical Thinking to Improve Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills* by Michael Kallet (ISBN-10: 1118729838)

Supplemental readings will be available on Canvas.

Course Summary	Professionals in all fields are increasingly called upon to evaluate processes, improve outcomes, and lead change. To make sound conclusions and to influence others, you need to gather information, ensure that it's valid and credible, and present your findings and recommendations in a clear compelling way. In this course, you'll gather information through interviews, surveys, and secondary research. You'll hone your critical thinking skills. You'll learn how to organize your content for maximum impact. And you'll develop memos, articles, reports, and graphs.

By the end of this course you should be able to—

- work in a team;
- make decisions and solve problems;
- plan, organize, and prioritize work;
- communicate verbally;

- obtain and process information;
- analyze quantitative data;
- understand technology related to the job;
- use software proficiently;
- create and/or edit reports; and
- sell and influence others.[1]

Assignments

The assignments in this course are designed to provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate and develop your writing abilities. As this is a writing-intensive course, each assignment, whether individual or group, requires substantial contribution and solid evidence of audience analysis, ethical considerations, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

Below is a brief description of the major assignments you will complete in this course and the assignment grade weights.

Complete assignment descriptions and assessment rubrics are available in Canvas.

Student interview report (individual), 10%

Interview a fellow student and then write a report (using the Spence method) that presents information and recommendations to your readers.

Client interview report (individual), 15%

Interview someone who is a leader in a non-profit organization, the owner or manager of a business, or a professional in a field that interests you. Write a report (using the Spence method) that presents information and recommendations to your readers.

Intercultural communication report (individual), 20%

Conduct secondary research to explore an intercultural communication situation that is critical to the success of an organization. Synthesize information from multiple sources to report your findings and recommendations.

Proposal pitch (individual), 15%

Write a persuasive summary of secondary research and a proposal for a primary research project. Pitch this proposal to your assigned team. Team members will discuss all the proposals and choose which to develop into a survey.

Survey report (group), 25%

Work as a group to identify research goals and to conduct a survey. Analyze your survey results and report your findings verbally and visually.

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[1] Adams, Susan. "The 10 Skills Employers Most Want In 20-Something Employees." *Forbes*, 11 Oct. 2013, https://www.forbes.com/sites/susanadams/2013/10/11/the-10-skills-employers-most-want-in-20-something-employees/#545cb7e86330. Accessed 21 Aug. 2017.

| Professionalism, Drafts, Peer Reviews, and Critical Thinking (individual/group), 15% | Complete assignment drafts, peer reviews, critical thinking activities, and assigned readings as well as conduct yourself as a professional communicator. |

Format and Deadlines

All assignments must be submitted through Canvas. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.

Assignments must be completed and uploaded to Canvas by the beginning of the designated class period, unless specified otherwise. I do not accept late work unless you have documented extenuating circumstances related to university events or the observance of a recognized holy day.

It is your responsibility to turn in your work on time. Computer-related excuses will not be accepted as per the above technology requirements.

Lastly, you may not use program templates (e.g., Word templates) to format any of your documents — these don't encourage you to learn the programs and generally result in dull, unpersuasive documents.

Grading

Grading criteria serve as general guidelines for evaluating all assignments.

"A" (90-100%): A manager would be very impressed and would remember the work when a promotion is discussed. In this course, that means work that is a pleasure to read, with excellent content, grammar, sentence structure, mechanics, and visual design. In addition, work is thorough, complete, coherent, well organized, supported sufficiently, and demonstrates a superior understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale.

"B" (80-89%): A manager would be satisfied with the job, but not especially impressed. This means that documents are well written and well produced, and demonstrate a substantial addition to the learning process. Work is sufficiently developed, organized, and supported, and demonstrates a solid understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale.

"C" (70-79%): A manager would be disappointed and ask you to revise or rewrite sections before allowing clients and others to see the work. In other words, the document may have clear, but underdeveloped ideas, or it might not engage or affect the reader.

The documents may contain some errors in grammar, mechanics, or logic.

"D" (60-69%): A manager would be troubled by the poor quality of work. This level of work forces the reader to work too hard to understand the main ideas. The documents may contain incomplete information, have serious grammar and mechanical problems, lack clear organization, or be conceptually unclear.

"F" (0-59%): A manager would start looking for someone to replace you. In particular, work fails to address the tasks of the assignment, is so underdeveloped as to demonstrate incompetence, and is mechanically and grammatically incomprehensible. This grade will also be assigned for any evidence of plagiarism.

Online Learning, Attendance, and Communication

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

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

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

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

Technology Requirements

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

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

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

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

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

- UNT Help Desk
- Hardware and software necessary to use Bb Learn
- Browser requirements
- Computer and Internet Literacy

Netiquette Guide

When communicating online, you should

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

Email Policies

- Please read my email policies carefully. Email professionalism is a skill that correlates with the most successful workplace communicators.
- I want you to be successful in this course, and I am looking forward to our interactions. To help make our interactions respectful, polite, and courteous, follow these guidelines when emailing me:
- I respond to email within 48 hours of receiving it. I only respond to email during business hours (8am-5pm) on Monday–Friday.
- You must have a valid UNT email address, and you must check this account regularly. I often use email to send class updates and advisories.
- I send my responses to the account where your email originated. Do not email me from one account, for example, and ask me to reply to another. You are responsible for managing your email accounts.

- Check the syllabus or assignment schedule before you send your email as I will not respond to requests for information contained in the course materials or texts.
- I do not discuss major assignment grades over email. Instead, please schedule an appointment with me. When contacting me, provide three possible dates/times when you are available to meet via Zoom.
- Do not SPAM me or your team members. I define *spamming* as sending multiple emails before the recipient has had an appropriate amount of time to respond. Think carefully before sending multiple emails (in *any* situation).
- Your email should address me by name. My name is Dr. Boettger (pronounced Bet-ger), so you can address me as Dr. Boettger.
- Your email should include a short, informative subject line (e.g., TECM 4180: Question about Student Interview Assignment). Do not leave the subject line blank.
- Keep email concise. If your question is short or direct, a one-sentence email (plus a greeting and a signature) is just fine and also preferred.

Academic Integrity

I follow UNT's academic integrity and dishonesty policies. UNT defines six acts of academic dishonesty (see UNT Policy 06.003). All acts of academic dishonesty will be reported to UNT's Academic Integrity Office.

Below is a brief description of these act and the related 2700 penalty for committing each act. Submission of your first major assignment certifies that you understand these policies and procedures.

Cheating

Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves cheating.

Plagiarism

The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgement. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves plagiarism.

Forgery

Altering a score, grade, or official academic university record or forging the signature of an instructor or other student. You will receive a final grade of F in the course for any act of forgery.

Fabrication

Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves fabrication.

Facilitating academic dishonesty	Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity. You will receive a grade of 0 for any assignment that involves facilitating academic dishonesty.
Sabotage	Acting to prevent others from completing their work or willfully disrupting the academic work of others. You will receive a final grade of F in the course for any act of sabotage.
Drop Dates	Please be aware of the below deadlines as well as the changes in grading policies. https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide UNT students can no longer receive a grade of WF, and they can drop a course online without the instructor's signature. However, students have 5 business days to decide if they want to be re-instated in a dropped course.
Accommodations (Special Arrangements)	The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://disability.unt.edu/. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Federal Regulation for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

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

The paragraph reads:

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

University of North Texas Compliance

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

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

1. Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

2. Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should

contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. (See UNT Policy 16.005)

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT's Student Advocate. She can be reached through email at renee.mcnamara@unt.edu or by calling 940-565-2648.

Information on Returning to Campus

Please visit this link to read about the University of North Texas' plans and policies for on campus safety pertaining to COVID-19.

This section of 4180 is *asynchronous*, which means we do NOT meet on a designated day and time each week. I cannot meet with you face-to-face; however, I will be available to you during my office hours and by email. We can also schedule one-on-one Zoom meeting for times that are convenient to your schedule. I'm here to help you be successful this semester, so don't hesitate to reach out to me with questions.

Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule for this section of 4180. The schedule is subject to change based on our progress over these next 15 weeks.

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

Module (Date)	Topic	Readings	Mid-Week Activities	End-of-Week Activities
Module 1 (Jan 18–Jan 23)	Introduction to the course, develop interviewing skills	▪ Spence, Ch. 1 ▪ Kallet, pp. 3–22 ▪ Rowley, "Conducting interviews"	▪ Spence 1 discussion	▪ Critical thinking 1
Module 2 (Jan 24–Jan 30)	Audience analysis	▪ Spence, Chs. 2, 3, and 5	▪ Audience awareness discussion	▪ Critical thinking 2
Module 3 (Jan 31–Feb 6)	Synthesize data, report technical information	▪ Spence, Ch, 12	▪ Student interview report (draft) ▪ Student interview peer reviews (due Thursday)	▪ Student interview report (final)
Module 4 (Feb 7–Feb 13)	Develop a professional network, employment outlook	▪ Kallet, Ch. 4 and 6	▪ Client interests	▪ Critical thinking 3
Module 5 (Feb 14–Feb 20)	Skills for "cold emails," researching professionals	▪ Spence, Ch. 7	▪ Spence 2 discussion	▪ Client interview form
Module 6 (Feb 21–Feb 27)	Sharpen peer review skills, develop revision skills		▪ Client interview (draft)	▪ Client interview peer reviews
Module 7 (Feb 28–Mar 6)	Intercultural communication	▪ Intercultural readings ▪ Kallet, Ch. 20	▪ Client interview report (final)	▪ Critical thinking 4
Module 8 (Mar 7–Mar 13)	Use secondary sources to make recommendations	▪ Spence, Ch. 10		▪ Group micro-report
Spring Break Mar 14–Mar 18				

Module (Date)	Topic	Readings	Mid-Week Activities	End-of-Week Activities
Module 9 (Mar 21–Mar 27)	Clarity in persuasion	▪ Kallet, Ch. 9 and 12-3 ▪ Spence, Ch. 14	▪ Critical thinking 5 ▪ Intercultural communication report (draft)	▪ Intercultural report peer reviews
Module 10 (Mar 28–Apr 3)	Pitch proposals	▪ Spence, Ch 13 ▪ Kallet, Chs 15-18	▪ Intercultural communication report (final)	▪ Critical thinking 6
Module 11 (Apr 4–Apr 10)	Oral presentation skills, critical thinking	▪ Kallet, Chs 22-23	▪ Critical thinking 7	▪ Pitch proposal (final)
Module 12 (Apr 11–Apr 17)	Surveys	▪ Kallet, Chs 32, 34	▪ Group decision on pitch	▪ Survey question list
Module 13 (Apr 18–Apr 24)	Survey questions, Qualtrics		▪ Submit survey	▪ Survey completion
Module 14 (Apr 25–May 1)	Team writing	▪ Spence Ch 12-2	▪ Survey report (draft)	▪ Survey report peer reviews
Module 15 (May 2–May 8)	Course recap, final survey report	▪ Spence, Chs 1–3 (refresher)		▪ Survey report (final)