

ECE 3390 Course Information

Sec 501: M/W 5:30 - 6:45

Sec 505: M/W 7:00 - 8:15

1/16/21

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Textbook

Business & Technical Communication, Edition 3, by Maribeth Schlobohm and Christopher Ryan.

The textbook is available *online only* from the publisher, Kendall Hunt. You can purchase the book at this link:

<https://he.kendallhunt.com/product/business-and-technical-communication-guide-writing-professionally-0>

Assignments and Revisions

The following table lists course assignments and their point values.

	Value
Resume and Cover Letter	150
Instructions	150
Informal Report	150
Individual Proposal	250
PowerPoint Presentation	100
Group Report/Proposal	150
Textbook Quizzes	50
Class Participation (Note: you can participate in class even if you're asynchronous by emailing comments after you've viewed each class).	0, +1/3, +2/3 +3/3

Late papers are downgraded one letter grade for each week late.

Revisions

Under the circumstances outlined below, you can revise your papers for a higher grade. However, it is not an automatic right.

If you are attending and participating in classes regularly, or (if asynchronous) you are emailing me the important points covered in each lecture after you've watched it, you will have the option to revise an assignment for a higher grade. You will have this ability for all assignments if these conditions are met each time.

If I see no evidence that you've been attending or watching classes, you will **not** have the opportunity to revise. See the Asynchronous Students section below for more details.

As part of the revision process, the resume and proposal assignments have required appointments with me. If you do not set up or do not attend these appointments by the required deadline, that assignment will receive an automatic F with no possibility of revision.

Plagiarism

If you turn in a paper with text copied from another source, I will submit it to the committee for academic integrity for disposition.

Asynchronous Students & Classes

If you are taking the entire course—or a couple of classes—asynchronously, follow the procedures below.

- **Watch the classes.** I cannot stress this enough. If you are not watching the classes, you are not learning what you should be learning. You will not be able to do well in the course just by reading the book and completing the assignments (see below). When we are on campus, I allow students to miss 2 classes. The same will apply to **the online course**.
- **Class participation.** You can still get the class participation grade bump even if you are asynchronous. Here's how: After you've watched each class, email me notes and comments on the class. If you do this for almost every class and repeat the important points of the class, you can get the 1/3 letter grade bump. If you also add your own commentary on what we're looking at in class, you can get the 2/3 or 3/3 letter grade bump. You needn't send an individual email for each class—you can bundle them. Note: You can't just do this from time to time and get credit. It must be most classes, same as comments in the online course. Similarly, the comments that you make must demonstrate that you are paying attention while playing the class videos.
- **Revisions.** Whether you are asynchronous or taking the class online, if you turn in a paper where it is clear you did not watch or pay attention to the classes, you will not have the option to revise. However, you can appeal this decision. If you have watched the classes, let me know and I will arrange a time to call you in Teams to discuss the classes and your paper.

Spring 2021 Fall Class Schedule-Online

Note: While the course will follow in this order, the schedule is subject to change.

Jan 20: Class Introduction

Jan 25: Resume: Lecture. 3 audiences.

Jan 27: Resume. Continue Lecture. Look at student examples. Look at my resume.

Jan 31: Chapter 1, 2 & 3 quizzes due

Feb 1: Cover Letter: Read assignment. Discuss cover letters. Look at examples.

Feb 3: Resume & cover letter examples

Feb 7: Chapter 4 & 5 quizzes due

Feb 8: Interviews & LinkedIn

Feb 10: Instructions: Opening lecture on consequences of bad instructions; How people actually use instructions. Ikea vs. Lego. As a group, develop a set of instructions for plunging a toilet. Read though instructions assignment.

Feb 14: Resume & Cover Letter due

Feb 15: Individual Resume Appts.

Feb 17: Individual Resume Appts.

Feb 21: Chapter 6 & 7 quizzes due

Feb 22: Instructions: Look at examples of student-written instructions.

Feb 24: Text Formatting: Go through all the tips and tricks for formatting text for this and future assignments.

Feb 28: Instructions due

Mar 1: Informal Report: Read assignment. Discuss credibility. Read Boguski article.

Look at flat earth website. Do research for cloud vs. in-house report.

Mar 3: Informal Report—Create report outline for cloud vs. in-house computing. Look at report examples.

Mar 7: Chapter 8 & 9 quizzes due

Mar 8: Informal Report: Students present topics. Look at more example reports.

Mar 10: Proposal introduction. Discuss elements of proposals and look at examples in class.

Mar 14: Informal Report due

Mar 15: Spring break: No class

Mar 17: Spring break: No class

Mar 22: Evaluating arguments. Look at a series of proposals in PowerPoint to determine common pitfalls in argumentation.

Mar 24: Proposal group exercise. As a class, go through the process of creating a proposal.

Mar 28: Chapter 10 Quiz Due

Mar 29: Proposal topics. Present your proposal topic for discussion. Practice adding charts and graphs to Word documents.

Mar 31: Group proposal assignment. Go over assignment and meet in groups to discuss topics for group proposal. Look at examples of group proposals.

Apr 5: PowerPoint assignment and instruction. We'll practice using PowerPoint and review slide conventions.

Apr 7: PowerPoint slide instruction combined with ethics training.

Apr 11: Individual Proposal due

Apr 12: Individual Proposal meetings. Group proposal meeting time.

Apr 14: Individual Proposal meetings. Group proposal meeting time.

Apr 18: PowerPoint Presentation due

Apr 19: Individual Proposal meetings. Group proposal meeting time.

Apr 21: Group Proposal

Nov 16: TBD

Nov 18: TBD

May 2: Group Proposal due

May 3: Group proposal meetings

May 5: Group proposal meetings

Pre-requisites

To take ECS 3390, you must have credit for RHET 1302. An upper-level class, ECS 3390 assumes you have college-level writing skills as well as written and oral proficiency in English. It also assumes knowledge of Microsoft Office functions. You need sufficient technical knowledge to contribute to project design and to write and speak knowledgeably about technical content.

General Core Area 010 Communication

Courses in this category focus on developing ideas and expressing them clearly, considering the effect of the message, fostering understanding, and building the skills needed to communicate persuasively. Courses involve the command of oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.

Core Objectives:

- Critical Thinking (CT)–to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
- Communication (COM)-to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
- Teamwork (TW)-to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal
- Personal Responsibility (PR)-to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

Course Description

Expands students' professional and team communication skills and strategies in technical contexts. Integrates writing, speaking and group communication by developing and presenting technical information to different audiences. Written assignments focus on creating professional technical documents, such as proposals, memos, abstracts, reports and letters. Presentation assignments emphasize planning, preparing and delivering dynamic, informative and persuasive presentations. Attendance at first class mandatory.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Ability to enhance credibility through communication that adheres to professional and ethical norms.
2. Ability to adapt to different purposes, constraints, and audiences.
3. Ability to develop arguments with front loaded claims and appropriate evidence.
4. Ability to use visual rhetoric to enhance message effectiveness.
5. Ability to collaborate in a team to research, plan, and present information.
6. Ability to research, draft, and edit documents that adhere to technical and professional standards.
7. Ability to prepare organized speeches and present them with appropriate verbal and nonverbal delivery.

ABET Student Outcomes

For the BE, CE, EE, ME, SE and TE programs (Engineering Accreditation Commission)

1. An understanding of professional and ethical responsibility.
2. An ability to communicate effectively.

For the CS program (Computing Accreditation Commission)

1. An understanding of professional, ethical, legal, security, and social issues and responsibilities.
2. An ability to communicate effectively with a range of audiences.

Grading Criteria

I will assign grades according to the 2010-12 UT Dallas Undergraduate Catalog scale:

A	930-1000
A-	900-929
B+	870-899
B	830-869
B-	800-829
C+	770-799
C	730-769
C-	700-729
D+	670-699
D	630-669
D-	600-629
F	0-599

The following descriptions explain the different grade levels:

A – Outstanding work. Your supervisor or manager would be impressed with your superior work and remember it when discussing performance evaluations and promotions. These impressive qualities include a sense that the work:

- Shows a superior completion of the assignment
- Exhibits a fluent, polished style that strengthens the message's impact
- Fits the rhetorical needs of the particular situation
- Has few mechanical errors
- Makes skilled use of professional visual elements (if applicable)
- Shows insight, perceptiveness, originality and thought

B – Good work. Your manager would be satisfied with the work but not impressed. If asked to describe your work, your manager might say the assignment rises above the minimum requirements but contains minor problems that a superior assignment would not have. However, it remains strong work because it is prepared skillfully enough that it does not detract attention from the intended message. Good work:

- Shows judgment and tact in the presentation of material appropriate for the intended audience and purpose
- Has a thorough, well-organized analysis of the assignment
- Supports ideas well with concrete details
- Has an interesting, precise and clear style

- Is free of major mechanical errors
- Includes visual aspects in the document design but not as effectively as outstanding work

C – Meets all basic requirements. Your manager would be disappointed in your work and would ask you to revise sections before allowing anyone outside of the department or the organization to see the work. This work product shows reasonable competence in style, but it contains repeated problems that detract from the assignment’s effectiveness although they don’t constitute serious errors. Adequate work meets the minimal assignment requirements and also:

- Demonstrates a satisfactory analysis of the task, subject and audience
- Accomplishes its purpose with adequate content but supporting evidence may lack sufficient detail
- Contains repeated carelessness errors
- Demonstrates an understanding of concepts discussed in readings and class discussions but fails to implement them effectively

D – Meets the assignment but is weak in one of the major areas. Your manager would be seriously troubled by the poor quality of your work because it contains significant problems in content, organization, or style. Your work could trouble your manager if it:

- Lacks a strong sense of the rhetorical situation, often from a vague sense of audience or purpose.
- Seems generally substandard but has some redeeming features.
- Contains major stylistic or argumentation problems that distract the audience and/or interfere with its reception of the intended message.

F – Unacceptable work in one or more of the major areas. Your manager would start looking for someone to replace you. The assignment’s style and/or content detract from its effectiveness and undermine your attempts to present yourself as a credible professional. Work may be considered unacceptable if it:

- Fails to meet one or more of the basic assignment requirements.
- Lacks adequate organization or shows confusion or misunderstanding of rhetorical context.
- Uses an inappropriate tone, poor word choice, excessive repetition or awkward sentence structure.
- Contains frequent and distracting carelessness errors.
- Fails to develop and support strong arguments.
- Fails to cover essential points, or may digress to nonessential material.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 3.200 in the Student Services building. If you anticipate issues related to the format

or requirements of this course, please visit with the Office of Disability Services. It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professor of the need for accommodations. Letters are provided to students to present to faculty to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Please contact me after class if you need special accommodations.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated. The student is encouraged to notify the instructor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence (for the purpose of observing a religious holy day) or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.