

ECS 2390 Syllabus
Tuesday/Thursday
10:00 AM

Course Information

<i>Course Number/Section</i>	ECS 2390
<i>Course Title</i>	Professional & Technical Communications
<i>Term</i>	Spring 2025

Professor Contact Information

<i>Professor</i>	Melissa Hernandez-Katz, PhD
<i>Office Phone</i>	972-883-6672
<i>Email Address</i>	mhkatz@utdallas.edu
<i>Office Location</i>	JO 3.542
<i>Office Hours</i>	By appointment (in person or TEAMS)
<i>Other Information</i>	I check email at least once between 9 am – 3 pm Monday-Friday Please allow 48 hours for a response. If you email over the weekend please allow until the next business day to respond to you. I expect professionalism in all correspondence. You may also contact me through MS TEAMS chat. Same response timelines apply to TEAMS Chat.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Required Texts

The book used for this class is listed below. It is only available on-line. This is where the quizzes are available.

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

The online book is where the quizzes are located. This is the only place available for quizzes.

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

RHET 1302. Need computer access.

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.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Student outcomes reflect if you (the student)

- Fulfill learning objectives for the class and complete course assignments with excellence.
- Employ rhetorical strategies that develop logical arguments.
- Support your ideas and arguments with analysis and evidence from credible, cited sources.
- Use correct mechanics and strong style and structure. Edit and proofread all documents.
- Manage your time effectively to meet deadlines.
- Ethically present information, address copyright, and correctly cite resources.
- Present yourself professionally in all communication and respect your classmates and instructor

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.

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

ECS2390 is designed to help you achieve the following:

- *Enhance credibility* through communication that adheres to professional norms.
- *Adapt tone and voice* to different purposes, situations, and audiences.
- *Develop arguments* with front-loaded claims and appropriate and persuasive evidence.
- *Apply principles of visual rhetoric* to relay data and to enhance message effectiveness.
- *Collaborate* in a team to research, plan, and present information.
- *Research, draft, and edit documents* that adhere to technical and professional standards.
- *Prepare and present organized speeches* with appropriate verbal and nonverbal delivery.
- *Cite sources* in IEEE citation style.

ABET Student Outcomes

The following outcomes align with accreditation requirements:

<i>Programs</i>	<i>Student Outcomes</i>
BE, CE, EE, ME, SE and TE Programs (Engineering Accreditation Commission)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding of professional and ethical responsibility• Ability to communicate effectively
CS Program (Computing Accreditation Commission)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding of professional, ethical, legal, security, and social issues and responsibilities• Ability to communicate effectively with a range of audiences

Technical Requirements

In addition to a confident level of computer and Internet literacy, certain minimum technical requirements must be met to enable a successful learning experience. Please review the important technical requirements on the [Getting Started with eLearning](#) webpage.

Course Access and Navigation

This course can be accessed using your UT Dallas NetID account on the [eLearning](#) website.

Please see the course access and navigation section of the [Getting Started with eLearning](#) webpage for more information.

To become familiar with the eLearning tool, please see the [Student eLearning Tutorials](#) webpage

UT Dallas provides eLearning technical support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The [eLearning Support Center](#) includes a toll-free telephone number for immediate assistance (1-866-588-3192), email request service, and an online chat service.

Communication

This course utilizes online tools for interaction and communication. Some external communication tools such as regular email and a web conferencing tool may also be used during the semester. For more details, please visit the [Student eLearning Tutorials](#) webpage for video demonstrations on eLearning tools.

Distance Learning Student Resources

Online students have access to resources including the McDermott Library, Academic Advising, the AccessAbility Resource Center, and many others. Please see the [eLearning Current Students](#) webpage for more information.

Server Unavailability or Other Technical Difficulties

The University is committed to providing a reliable learning management system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and also contact the online [eLearning Help Desk](#). The instructor and the eLearning Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Class Materials

The Instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved AccessAbility Resource Center accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Class Attendance

You may miss THREE class days this semester with no questions asked. I advise you to use these absences for any sick days or emergencies. Think of these 3 days as PTO, like you will have when you enter the work force. PTO allows you to take time off, but you are still responsible for submitting your work on time, just like you are responsible in the real world.

If you have a positive COVID test or have been in close contact with someone, please stay home until you test negative. It is YOUR responsibility to notify me ASAP so we can make accommodations until you are well. A doctor's note is required if missing more than 2 class sessions. I do not need to know the medical reason, just a doctor's note. This also applies to just not feeling well. If you are running a fever, have been sick please stay home. Again, notify me ASAP so we can make accommodations.

Be mindful if you are not in attendance for your presentation. If you do not have a positive COVID test or have a valid excuse such as hospitalization or a death in the family—(note required) then you will receive a 0 on your presentation,

COURSE MODALITY AND EXPECTATIONS

Instructional Mode	In person
Course Platform	All tools are UTD approved. Follow UTD policies and maintain security of all UTD passwords. Tools include <ul style="list-style-type: none">• eLearning and MS Stream for course materials• TurnItIn for assignment submission• Online tools—UTD email, TurnItIn, & Teams .
Expectations	Students are required to follow all course standards in this syllabus as well as all UTD policies and guidelines .

You may not publish, reproduce, or share any course materials or recordings without instructor or UTD administration approval; reproduction or sharing of any course materials is a violation of the [UTD Student Code of Conduct](#).

To succeed,

- Check email daily and read weekly announcements.
- Read all course materials and complete reading quizzes on textbook Website.
- Complete assignments on time and with excellence and submit per instructions.
- Engage with your team.
- Communicate with your instructor if you have questions.

Class Participation

Regular class participation is expected. Students who fail to participate in class regularly are inviting scholastic difficulty. A portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class through in class assignments. It also includes engaging in group or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on homework assignments, readings, or materials covered in the lectures. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to University requirements, as presented in this syllabus. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Class Recordings

Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the AccessAbility Resource Center has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved AccessAbility Resource Center accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

The instructor may record meetings of this course. These recordings will be made available to all students registered for this class if the intent is to supplement the classroom experience. If the instructor or a UTD school/department/office plans any other uses for the recordings, consent of the students identifiable in the recordings is required prior to such use unless an exception is allowed by law.

Grading Policy

ASSIGNMENTS

ECS 2390 is a 3-hour college course. Some weeks may just be reading and taking the quiz, other weeks may involve several writings and readings. Planning ahead is key to making sure you are not submitting an assignment last minute. Assignments are due at 11:59 PM on the assigned date.

Job/Internship Related

Resume	100
Cover Letter	50
Interview Questions in Class	100

Team Related

Report (1 person from group submit)	100
Presentation	100
Evaluation	100

Individual Assignments

Quizzes (10 x 2.5) – Located in book online	25
Individual Presentation- Teach Me Something	100
Individual Proposal	50
Status Memo	50
Reflection Memo	25
2 Discussion Boards (25 pts each)	50

In Class Assignments

We will have a minimum of 4 in class assignments. They will each be worth 25 points. If you are absent you are unable to make-up as these are in class assignments.	100
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GRADING AND CALENDAR

Grades are posted in E-Learning, and the instructor seeks to deliver grades within 2 weeks. If you are missing a grade, you are responsible to contact the instructor promptly. **I will not accept missing grades or assignments at the end of the semester.**

A—Outstanding work that meets all objectives in strength and analytical value and with excellence and integrity (These students manage their time well, read course materials, and submit work with cited support and strong writing and design.)

B—Satisfactory work (These students accomplish the course objectives well but may have missed work or struggled in some element of the course.)

C—Average work that fulfills course requirements but that contains issues that decrease the student's effectiveness or indicate limited understanding (These students struggle or fulfill the work but with issues in more than one elements of the course.)

D—Subpar work that contains numerous issues and does not meet course objectives. (These students need to repeat the course; they need additional help to fulfill the course objectives.)

F—Unacceptable or missing work (These students do not complete coursework that meets UTD or professional standards or they missed work in the course.)

Students receive grades according to the following (standard UTD) scale of 1000 points:

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90-100 = A+	930-969 = A	900-929 = A-
870-899 = B+	830-869 = B	800-829 = B-
770-799 = C+	730-769 = C	700-729 = C-
670-699 = D+	630-669 = D	600-629 = D-
0-599 = F		

Grades are calculated per the above scale **with no rounding**. Grades are *earned* rather than given.

Grade Disputes

You are required to wait 24 hours before contacting me to dispute an assignment grade. Within that time, I expect that you will review the assignment details and reflect on the quality of the work you turned in. If you would still like to meet, email me to set up a meeting (I cannot discuss grades over email). You should come to our scheduled meeting with **specific examples that demonstrate** that you earned a higher grade than you received. If you miss your scheduled meeting, you forfeit your right to a grade dispute. If you do not contact me to schedule a meeting within five days of receiving your grade, you also forfeit your right to a grade dispute.

Course Policies

Make-up exams

There are no exams in this course

Extra Credit

You may earn 10 points by completing a certificate through Linked In Learning. The certificate should center around communication, working in a team, presentations. Everyone has access to this through the library at the following: <https://library.utdallas.edu/utdlynda/>

You will need to create an account. Once you complete a certificate you can download the certificate and submit through Turn It In. **You may complete up to 2 certificates for up to 20 points total extra credit.** These must be submitted by the last day of class.

Late Work

Allow at least 1 hour for submission. You must submit work by deadlines for credit; late work will be assigned a zero (0), unless you are hospitalized or you lose a family member. (Inform the instructor immediately if you are experiencing loss or hospitalization.) Students experiencing difficult life circumstances may be encouraged to pursue non-academic withdrawal.

Classroom Citizenship

In this classroom, we believe in fostering a community of learners who contribute positively to our shared educational experience. We value respect, responsibility, and collaboration, and we commit to upholding the following principles:

1. **Respect for Others:** We recognize and appreciate the diverse perspectives and backgrounds of our classmates and professor. We treat each other with kindness, empathy, and courtesy. We actively listen to others and consider their opinions and ideas.
2. **Respect for Learning:** We understand the importance of creating an environment conducive to learning. We come to class prepared, ready to engage in discussions, and actively participate in activities. We value our education and demonstrate a commitment to our academic responsibilities.
3. **Responsibility:** We take responsibility for our own learning and behavior. We complete assignments on time, seek help when needed, and actively participate in class discussions and activities. We also take care of our classroom materials and maintain a clean and organized learning space. (Clean up after yourself)
4. **Collaboration:** We recognize the power of collaboration and teamwork. We work cooperatively with our peers, sharing ideas and supporting each other's learning. We understand that everyone has unique strengths, and we

celebrate our collective achievements. Should issues come up we agree to discuss and seek our professors assistance if needed.

5. **Open Communication:** We encourage open and honest communication. If we have concerns or questions, we express them respectfully and seek solutions together. We value feedback from our teacher and peers as an opportunity for growth.

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

UNIVERSITY AND COURSE POLICIES

Visit the [UTD Syllabus Policies](#) webpage for all UTD policies and procedures. The following are policies highlighted specifically for this course. In addition to [UTD policies and guidelines](#), students will abide by the following course policies.

References, Copyright, and Plagiarism

The copyright law of the United States governs reproduction of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying, reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner's rights, and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes “fair use” under the Copyright Act. As a UTD student, you are required to follow [The UT System's intellectual property policy](#).

UTD has a no-tolerance policy for plagiarism, copyright infringement, or scholastic dishonesty (including missing citations), and academic work requires citations. *If you do not cite sources in every assignment with in-text and end-of-text citations using IEEE citation format (or an alternative with consent), if you include direct quotes without quotation marks, or if you publish someone else's work without permission, your work will be referred to UTD's Office of Community Standards and Conduct for investigation.*

AI/Chat GPT statement

I expect your work to be original.

- **You must get my permission** to use any AI composition software to assist in your assignments.
- You also must **cite when you use any AI tool**. ChatGPT is not a reliable source for citations. Most of the time, citations are fake. ChatGPT is a great brainstorming tool, but not a very good composition tool. You must vet all information and be critical of all information it gives you. You **MUST** cite that you used AI in all your work. It's a source. It's not original.
- ChatGPT is great at being a different type of search engine. Go find the original source. Go find the information it spits out to you to use. But don't rely on the information that it gives you. ChatGPT is a starting point, not an end point.

How can I tell if students use AI? Remember I can go to ChatGPT and enter the essay question prompt, and I, too, will receive the same answer as you submitted. Also, I've been teaching for over 15 years now. That's a long time. **I know how students write**. When I see different writing that sounds flat and has too much verbiage, and also when I see bulleted points with subheadings as part of the answer, I start to investigate. There are now AI TELL signs I can pinpoint. You don't want me to investigate. **Also, when you submit through Turn It In it gives me a % of AI generated. Anything above 30% I will submit you to Academic Integrity.**

AI is great at brainstorming. It's great at giving us quick ways to do everyday tasks in the workplace. It's not a great academic writing tool. It fakes citations and quotations. It gives the SAME answer to the SAME prompt no matter if you are here in Texas or across the globe.

ChatGPT and AI can be useful tools at times. But, for academia, it needs to help us become original and critical thinkers. That's why we must learn, with guidance, how to use AI. Don't allow ChatGPT to think FOR you. **Your professors want to know what YOU think, not what the collective Internet thinks.**

I know this is a long statement about AI. I want to teach you how to use the tool ethically.

Visit [UTD's Standards for Academic Integrity](#), [UTD's Student Policies](#), [UTD's Examples of Academic Dishonesty](#), and the [UTD Student Code of Conduct](#) for information and examples.

Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students.

Please go to [Academic Support Resources](#) webpage for these policies.

Accommodations from the UTD Office of Accessibility Resource Center

UTD seeks to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. However, written notification from the ARC is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation, schedule an appointment with the instructor. The UTD ARC works with students to register disabilities, in compliance with the 1972 Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information, visit [the ARC's Website](#) or contact the ARC's for a confidential discussion.

Title IX and Student Safety and Confidentiality

UTD is committed to eliminating IX issues and creating a safe environment. Students who are victims of harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, or stalking are encouraged to report these incidents to the UTD Police Department at 972.883.2222 or to the Title IX Coordinator at 972.883.2218.

Students considering sharing personal information must understand that *faculty members and teaching/research assistants are required by UTD policy to report information about sexual misconduct to the UTD Title IX Coordinator*. If you experience sexual assault, harassment, or misconduct and you report the situation to me, I am available to meet with the Title IX Coordinator with you to provide support.

Students who wish to confidentially discuss incidents related to sexual harassment or misconduct should contact one of the following resources:

<i>Resource</i>	<i>Contact Method</i>
UTD Student Counseling Center	972.883.2527 after hours 972.UTD.TALK or 972.883.8255
UTD Basic Needs Center	972.883.8255
Timely Care	<u>https://timelycare.com/utdallas/</u>

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the catalog sections regarding the [credit/no credit](#) or [pass/fail](#) grading option and withdrawal from class.

Please go to [UT Dallas Syllabus Policies](#) webpage for these policies.

1	Readings	Activities (In Class)	Assignments Due at 11:59 PM through E-Learning unless otherwise noted
Week 1 January 21st	Readings: Chapter 1 Principles of Professional and Technical Communication	Welcome Go over syllabus, expectations of class, introductions Discuss AI and how to use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter Quiz 1 (Quizzes are in your eBook)
Week 2 January 27th	Readings: Chapter 5 Working & Writing Collaboratively	Will break into your groups. Begin to discuss your group project In Class Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 quiz
Week 3 February 3rd	Chapter 3 Gaining, Retaining and Advancing Employment	Will go over resume styles and formatting. How to write a cover letter. Go over Resume/Cover Letter Assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring Rough Draft of Resume/Cover Letter • Chapter 3 Quiz
Week 4 February 10th	Readings: Chapter 7 Telephone, Text, Email, Letters & Memos	Go over proper etiquette of texts, emails, letters, memos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity in Class • Chapter 7 Quiz
Week 5 February 17th	Readings: Chapter 2 Audience	Discuss different audience types including how culture plays into knowing your audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity in Class • Chapter 2 Quiz
Week 6 February 24th	Group Work Day/Prepare for Raising Cans Event	Tuesday – Group Work Day Thursday – Prepare for Comet Cans Event	
Week 7 March 3rd	Readings: Chapter 8 Reports, Proposals, and White Papers	Formatting of Reports, Proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8 Quiz

Week 8 March 10th	Readings: Chapter 9 Stand Alone & Supplemental Documents	Review Stand Alone Documents & Instructions	Activity in Class Chapter 9 Quiz
Week 9 March 17th	Spring Break	Nothing Due	Be safe & Rest
Week 10 March 24th	Readings: Chapter 6 Document, Poster and Presentation Design Group Work Day	Begin going over Chapter 6 Use Thursday to work in Groups	I will meet with each group on Thursday to access how project is going Chapter 6 Quiz
Week 11 March 31st	Chapter 6 (con't) Chapter 4 – Social Media & Intellectual Property	We will discuss how Social Media is used in the job process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 Quiz • Discussion Board Goes Live / Due April 9th at 11:59 PM
Week 12 April 7th	Chapter 10 Presentations	Will discuss do's & don'ts of presentations Go over upcoming Individual Presentations	Chapter 10 Quiz
Week 13 April 14th	TBD	TBD	
Week 14 April 21st	Individual Presentations	10 students will present on Tuesday/9 students present on Thursday	Students not presenting please be attentive during your classmates presentations
Week 15 April 28th	Group Work Day	You will use this week to complete your Group Report/Presentation	Group Report Due by 11:59 PM on May 1st
Week 16 May 5th	Group Presentations	2 Groups will Present on Tuesday and 2 on Thursday (groups presenting need to send me the slide deck by beginning of class)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last day for Extra Credit LinkedIn by May 8th at 11:59 PM • Reflection Memo due May 8th at 11:59 PM • Peer Evaluations at end of class

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.