



**Course** ECS 3390 Professional and Technical Communication,  
Sec 004  
**Professor** Deborah W. Dickson  
**Term** Fall '16  
**Meetings** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. in JO 4.504

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## Professor's Contact Information

**Office Phone** 469-233-1920  
**Office Location** JO 3.534  
**Email Address** Dwd150030@utdallas.edu  
**Office Hours** 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays and other days and times by appointment.

## General Core Area 010 Communication

**Description:** 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

## General Course Information

**Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions** RHET 1302 and junior standing.

**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.

**Required Texts & Materials**

Textbook:

Business and Technical Communication: A Guide to Writing Professionally, Second Edition by Maribeth Schlobohm and Christopher Ryan. Copyright 2014 by Kendall Hunt Publishing Company. ISBN: 978-1-4652-7633-9. (Please note: it is important that you purchase the second edition of this text.) Alternatively, an electronic version may be purchased at <http://kendallhunt.com/store-product.aspx?id=216492>.

**Suggested Texts, Readings, & Materials**

Internet connectivity is a requirement for the course. The course uses eLearning, which you should check frequently. Reliable connectivity is necessary for class preparation, submission of assignments, and work on group projects. All assignments that are to be submitted through eLearning must be submitted via eLearning for credit. (Submitting assignments via e-mail is only acceptable if there is a problem with the eLearning system. Otherwise, submission of assignments by any other method for work that is assigned to be submitted through eLearning, will not be accepted and will result in a grade of zero.) Assignments should be submitted in MS Word files (not pdf, .odt, etc.) so that grading comments and edits can be tracked.

**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)**

- a) An understanding of professional and ethical responsibility.
- b) An ability to communicate effectively.

**For the CS program (Computing Accreditation Commission)**

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

## **Assignments & Academic Calendar**

*[Topics, Reading Assignments, Assignment Due Dates]*

The schedule for class topics, readings, and assignments (aside from low-impact assignments which will be provided in class) is as follows (and please note that all chapter readings are expected to be completed before each class on the dates the chapters are assigned.):

August 25

Introduction of syllabus, textbooks, students, and instructor  
Importance of professional and technical communication

August 23

Technical communication  
Reading: Chapter 1 (Principles of Technical Communication)  
Return signed copy of syllabus

August 25

Ethical considerations

August 30

Audience  
Reading: Chapter 2 (Audience)

September 1

Communication in the pursuit of employment (part I)  
Reading: Chapter 9 (Gaining, Retaining, and Advancing Employment)

September 6

Communication in the pursuit of employment (part II)  
No reading assignment

September 8

ECS Intern Fair, 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

September 13

Correspondence  
Reading: Chapter 5 (Telephone, text Messaging, Email, Letters, and Memos)  
Submit cover letter and resume

September 15

Career Expo (for STEM majors) 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

September 20

Cross-cultural audiences  
No reading assignment

September 22

Working in teams  
Reading: Chapter 4 (Working and Writing Collaboratively)  
In class: Select teams for team project  
Submit cross-cultural assignment

September 27

Reports and Proposals  
Reading: Chapter 6 (Reports, Proposals, and White Papers)  
Submit Career Expo assignment

September 29

Instructive communications

Reading: Chapter 7 (Stand-alone and Supplemental Documents)

October 4

No class (in exchange for attending Career Expo or Intern Fair on a non-class day)

October 6

Design

Reading: Chapter 3 (Document and Presentation Design)

October 11

Presentations

Reading: Chapter 8 (Presentations)

October 13

Presentations, part 2

No reading

October 18

Social media

Reading: Chapter 10 (Social Media and Intellectual Property)

October 20

Write individual project proposals (In class)

October 25

Team reports due

Personal statements

October 27

Presentation practice: Individual project proposal presentations (in class)

October 29

Team Presentations

No assigned reading

November 1

Individual meetings; Review rough draft of Recommendation Report

Only those with appointments need to attend.

November 3

Individual meetings; Review rough draft of Recommendation Report

Only those with appointments need to attend.

November 8

Individual meetings; Review rough draft of Recommendation Report

Only those with appointments need to attend.

November 10

Individual meetings; Review rough draft of Recommendation Report  
Only those with appointments need to attend.

November 15

Individual presentations; all attend  
Individual Recommendation Reports due for all

November 17

Individual presentations; all attend

November 22 and 24

No classes; Fall Break and Thanksgiving Holidays

November 29

Individual presentations; all attend  
Final Reflection and Revision Assignment due

December 1

Individual presentations; all attend

December 6

Individual presentations; all attend

December 6

Individual presentations; all attend

December 8

Presentation, Christmas cookies  
End of class

## Course Policies

### Grading

#### Assignment and Grade Values

Grading is based on the UTD Undergraduate Catalog and a 1000-point cumulative scale for points earned from assignments. Grades are awarded as follows:

Grade	Cumulative Credit Points
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

Credit points are awarded based upon the following maximum values per assignment or competency:

<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>VALUE</b>
Resume and Cover Letter Assignment	85
Cross-Cultural Assignment	80
Career Expo	85
Team Recommendation Report	100
Team Presentation (and Team Collaboration)	100
Individual Feasibility Report	125
Individual Presentation	125
Final Reflection and Revision	100
Communication Competency	100
Minor/Low Impact Assignments	100
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>1000</b>

Note: Students must complete and submit major assignments (Team Recommendation Report and Individual Feasibility Report) and complete the Team and Individual Presentations to pass the course.

<b>Make-up Exams</b>	No exams will be given, so no make-ups are necessary.
<b>Extra Credit</b>	No extra credit will be offered.
<b>Late Work</b>	<p>All assignments are due on the assigned date. Similarly, all presentations are to be conducted on the assigned dates. If the date for your presentation or any deliverable is a problem, you must notify me as soon as possible so that we can address the situation and consider any alternatives. Do not request a new date and time for a presentation in class on the day your presentation is scheduled. It cannot be rescheduled at that point, and you will receive a zero for your grade if you are not able to present.</p> <p>Late submissions for written work will receive a 33% deduction if submitted within 24 hours of the deadline. Another 33% (for a total of 66%) deduction will be applied if submitted between 24 hours and 48 hours after the deadline. After 48 hours, no credit will be given for the assignment. Please note that the time posted in eLearning will serve as the official time of submission. Incorrect attachments will be evaluated as final submissions, unless alternative submissions are made to the instructor via UTD email prior to the assignment's deadline. If class is canceled for any reason, including inclement weather, the posted assignment due date is still the deadline for the assignment.</p>
<b>Special Assignments</b>	Aside from attendance at either the Intern Fair or Career Expo, no special assignments are anticipated.
<b>Class Attendance</b>	You are expected to attend all classes, read assigned material, perform all assignments, and contribute to the class. Although I expect you to attend all classes, you may miss one class without explanation or penalty. Additional absences will be reflected in your Communication Competency grade. Absences are also likely to adversely affect your grades in additional ways, as low-impact assignments conducted in class cannot be made up outside of class. Just as in a business, I encourage you to let me know in advance if you know when you are going to miss a class and explain your absence if you have missed a class for which you did not give me advanced notice. More than three unexcused absences could result in a failure of

	the course (grade of “F”). Out of respect for your fellow class members and your instructor, you are expected to be on time for class, too. Each set of three tardy arrivals is treated as one absence.
<b>Personal Circumstances</b>	If personal circumstances impact your performance, please address the circumstances with me as soon as possible. It is possible that we will be able to work around your situation if we can address the circumstance when it arises. Initiating the conversation late in the semester or well after the situation has arisen will limit the likelihood of us finding alternatives or any opportunity to work around your personal circumstances.
<b>Deadlines</b>	In industry-related technical communication and in just about any other part of the working world, deadlines are a reality. Failure to meet deadlines leads to issues such as costly delays in product releases, breaking of contracts, lost current or future business, and inconvenienced co-workers. Consequently, this class will focus on the need to meet deadlines. Late or incomplete assignments will be penalized 33% of the assignment grade. For late assignments, the 33% deduction applies to each 24-hour period following the assignment deadline. After 72 hours, an assignment that has not been submitted will receive a score of 0.
<b>Classroom Citizenship</b>	Students are expected to operate in the classroom in a civil and professional way. Similarly, when working with classmates on projects outside the classroom, students are expected to work with fellow students in a cooperative manner.
<b>UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures</b>	<i>The information contained in the following link constitutes the University’s policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.</i>  <i>Please go to <a href="http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies">http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies</a> for these policies.</i>

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

Please acknowledge that you have reviewed this syllabus.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student’s Printed Name