



**University of Texas at Dallas**  
The School of Arts, Technology, and Emerging Communication  
ATC 3.105, Main: (972) 883-4376

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**COURSE TITLE:** ECS 3390 - Professional and Technical Communication

**COURSE NUMBER:** ECS 3390.505-87835  
Thursdays and Thursdays, 5:30 PM – 6:45 PM  
August 23, 2016 – December 13, 2016

**INSTRUCTOR'S NAME:** Prof. B. Morgan

**COURSE LOCATION:** ATC 2.605      **OFFICE LOCATION:** ATC 3.102B

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** [Bem160830@utdallas.edu](mailto:Bem160830@utdallas.edu)      **PHONE:** (972) 883-7507

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**Office Hours:**

Fri/Sat/Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
	By Appointment	<u>Walk In:</u> 6:45 PM – 7:15 PM		<u>Walk In:</u> 6:45 PM – 7:15 PM

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NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to change any information contained in this document, when necessary, and with adequate notice given to the student. The student is responsible for obtaining any information missed due to absence, late arrival, emergency, or other situations.
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**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 is 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 that it is important to 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. Email submission of assignments is not acceptable. Assignments should be submitted in MS Word files (not pdf, .odt, and so on) 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; and

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.

### **Course Evaluation:**

Major Technical Writing Projects=40%  
 Unit Tests, Quizzes, Mid-term, and Other Assessments=15%  
 Technical Writing Assignments and the Technical Journal/Portfolio=20%  
 In-Class Assignments, Homework Assignments, and Writing Reviews=15%  
 Final Exam=10%

### **Grading Scale:**

Grading is based on the UTD Undergraduate Catalog as follows:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Cumulative Percentage</b>
A	93% - 100%
A-	90% - 92.9%
B+	87% - 89.9%
B	83% - 86.9%
B-	80% - 82.9%
C+	77% - 79.9%
C	73% - 76.9%
C-	70% - 72.9%
D+	67% - 69.9%
D	63% - 66.9%
D-	60% - 62.9%
F	0% - 59.9%

Please note that your Course Grade will be based entirely on assignments outlined in the above Course Evaluation. There will be no extra credit assignments. Please note also that there will be no additional “rounding up” whatsoever of final course averages.

### **Class Citizenship:**

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 each other in a cooperative manner.

### **Attendance:**

You are expected to attend class regularly and to arrive on time. If you do not plan to attend regularly and arrive on time, then it is possible that you may not do well in this course. If you must miss a quiz or other in-class work as a result of an absence or late arrival, no credit (0) will be given for the missed assignment.

### **Late Work:**

It will be in your best interest to be in class when in-class assignments are done and to submit out-of-class assignments when they are due. Missed, short quizzes or assignments at the beginning or end of class cannot be made up.

An assignment is late if it is not turned in by the assigned, due date and time. With the exception of in-class work, assignments will be submitted through the Blackboard environment and will no longer be visible once the deadline has passed. Assignments may be turned in early but never late. No late assignments will be accepted. It is suggested that assignments be submitted through the Blackboard environment a minimum of two hours before the final deadline to avoid technical difficulties. Please communicate with the instructor in advance regarding extenuating circumstances. *Please consult due dates on the syllabus and also on Blackboard to ensure prompt submission of assignments.*

**A score of zero (0) will be assigned to any work that is not submitted by the deadline.**

**Presentations:** For any assignment which includes a required, presentation element, all students must be present and prepared to deliver information on the due date of that presentation. Similarly, students are encouraged to save digital information and documents in more than one location and to have the ability to access such information using more than one method. Technical difficulties, lost files, and/or corrupt documents are not viable reasons for not presenting on the specified, due date. If students are absent, irrespective of the reason, or unprepared to present on the due date or initial, presentation date, those individuals must be prepared to present on the next class date immediately following the initial, due date. Please be advised that this is a courtesy extended to students—not a right—and should be treated as such since each class is designed for covering precise information during a definitive, time frame. Students who fall into this category will receive an automatic, score reduction of 25% of the full assignment. This reduction will be subsequently taken after the final scores for the assignment are available. Students who are absent again on the allotted, “make up” class date or who are still not prepared to present will receive a score of zero (0) for the assignment. This information only applies to the presentation portion of an assignment.

**Course Handouts:** I distribute course handouts of any type one time only. I do not bring to class handouts from previous classes. If you are absent and do not receive the handouts and/or assignment sheets for that class period, it is your responsibility to obtain the handouts/assignment sheets you missed by copying a colleague’s handouts or by accessing available information from the Blackboard environment. The majority of course documents and handouts will be available on Blackboard.

**Plagiarism:** Students are responsible for consulting the UT Dallas website at <https://www.utdallas.edu/library/plagiarism/> as well as the MLA website and other necessary resources for proper documentation. Ignorance of documentation formats is not accepted as an excuse for plagiarism. Assignments containing plagiarized work will not be graded and will receive no credit (0). Students who incorporate plagiarized work into an assignment may fail the course for the semester irrespective of the previous grade/average prior to submission of the alleged, inauthentic work.

- Portfolio/Journal:** Students are responsible for maintaining a Technical Journal/Portfolio which corresponds to the technical writing prompts, reading assignments, and additional course readings. The requirements for journal entries are as follows: 1 page minimum in length, typed, double-spaced, MLA format, Times New Roman, 1" margins, size 12.
- Writing Assistance:** The Writing Center is located in McDermott Library, MC 1.312, where students can receive free tutoring by appointment or on a walk-in basis. The phone number is (972) 883-6736. Students may schedule appointments or take advantage of walk-in visits. Since the walk-in visits are subject to staff availability, appointments are encouraged. Students may schedule visits online to ensure access. More information is available about the campus Writing Center at <http://www.utdallas.edu/studentsuccess/writing/>.
- Writing Incentives:** Students have the opportunity to increase their project and assignment scores by taking advantage of writing assistance offered through the Writing Center.

Students may earn quality points toward projects and assignments by adhering to the following guidelines:

- A) Students must arrive with a full draft, the assignment guidelines, and substantial evidence of having followed the guidelines. The requirements for all drafts and subsequent submissions are as follows: At least the minimum number of pages for the assignment, typed, double-spaced, MLA format, Times New Roman, 1" margins, size 12.
- B) Students must demonstrate substantial adherence to suggestions and must incorporate significant improvements from one draft to the next. Making "minor" revisions will not result in obtaining quality points.
- C) All drafts, revisions, notes, and proof of assistance received must be submitted before the assignment's due date to receive the quality points.
- D) Quality points may be assigned per project or assignment as follows:
  - a. First visit to the Writing Center with full draft and considerable evidence of following all guidelines: +5
  - b. Second visit to the Writing Center with substantial incorporation of suggestions and additions: +5
  - c. Third visit to the Writing Center with significant improvements and personal enhancements: +5
  - d. Fourth visit to the Writing Center with considerable development, correction, and revision: +10
- E) Students must bring previously reviewed drafts to each visit in order to obtain subsequent quality points.
- F) The instructor reserves the right to assign or to decline the assignment of quality points.
- G) Students must present confirmation of visits to receive the aforementioned, quality points.

**Note on Confirmation of Visits:** The Writing Center, at your request, will open an electronic form for you to complete that will send an email to your professor. Ensure that you have your instructor's correct

email address. If you have a 25-minute appointment, you must actively engage in the tutoring session for at least 20 minutes before the form is completed. If you have a 50-minute appointment, you must participate in the session for at least 40 minutes to receive confirmation of a visit. Quality points noted above are allotted for every 25-minutes of tutoring.

**Grade-saver Option:** I do not accept late work. Since unforeseen circumstances do emerge, students will have a one-time, opportunity to exercise the Grade-saver Option. In essence, a student will have the opportunity to rescue or “save” a grade from a Technical Writing Project or Technical Writing Assignment. If the student misses the deadline or window to turn in the assignment, that individual will have an opportunity to submit the assignment at a future, designated date. The student, however, must receive and submit confirmation of having visited the Writing Center four times (or 100 minutes of assistance) for the assignment. The four, Writing Center visits are required in order to exercise this option. None of the subsequent visits may occur within the same, 24-hour period. The incentive guidelines listed above for obtaining “quality points” are not in effect for the Grade-saver option. The student will not receive the corresponding, quality points. Instead, that student receives the opportunity to rescue a grade.

Similarly, if a student has submitted all assignments but wishes to increase a score on a previous, Technical Writing Project or Technical Writing Assignment, that individual will also have a one-time, opportunity to exercise the Grade-saver Option. This student is required to Visit the Writing Center three times (or 75 minutes of assistance) for the assignment. Again, none of the subsequent visits may occur within the same, 24-hour period.

More information about the Grade-saver Option will be disseminated during class.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Please show the necessary maturity and respect for your colleagues, your instructor, and yourselves by always adhering to the following Classroom Environment Guidelines:

1. Class will begin promptly at the scheduled time.
2. Please be courteous and pay attention when another student is speaking or when I am speaking to the class. Please refrain from carrying on outside conversations—spoken, written, or by text—during class.
3. Please focus on the task at hand during in-class assignments and activities. Please avoid working on assignments for other classes during this class.
4. Please do not bring any food or drink into the classroom—except for water in a sealed container—if you cannot clean up after yourself. Food or drink in the computer lab is not permitted.
5. Please **silence and put away** your phones. Please do not leave class to make or receive calls and/or texts during exams. Texting is not acceptable during class.
6. Please **turn off and put away** electronic devices, including walkman-type devices. Laptop computers, iPads, tablets, and internet-accessible devices for research and course work are permissible.
7. Please do not sleep during class. If you are unable to keep your head up and eyes open during class, then please feel free to quietly excuse yourself for a stretch break.

8. Please do not anticipate the end of class by prematurely packing up books or by starting conversations. Such behavior is discourteous and may cause you or your colleagues to miss important assignments or information addressed at the end of class.
9. In general, please avoid any behaviors in class that will be distracting to your colleagues or to your instructor.

**Special Notes:**

1. You will need access to word processing software for assignments for this class. I do not accept handwritten papers, assignments, or projects. (There are places on campus where you can access computers with word processing capabilities.) The only exception is for in-class, writing assignments.
2. When you submit a Technical Writing Project, you will be required to submit accompanying documents such as peer critiques and drafts if applicable. *Unless otherwise instructed, all final assignments will be submitted in Blackboard by the appropriate due dates and times.*
3. Technical Writing Assignment papers and Technical Writing Journal Entries will also be submitted in the Blackboard environment. Assignments that are not submitted by the due date and time are considered late. All papers, including major projects, must be: typed, double-spaced, MLA format, Times New Roman, 1" margins, size 12.
4. Students are encouraged to access the Writing Center for assistance with all assignments.
5. All assignments, including reading assignments, are due on the date under which they are written on the Schedule of Assignments. Students must come to class already prepared for and already having read the assignment listed for that day.
6. The documentation style, MLA format, is referenced throughout this document; however, students may opt to correctly utilize other formats such as APA or Chicago. Proper documentation is required for all assignments and projects, and only one documentation style should be utilized per assignment. Mixing of documentation styles in a single assignment is disallowed.
7. **\*Note: The instructor reserves the right to change any information contained in this document, when necessary, and with adequate notice given to the student.**

## Schedule of Assignments

Unless otherwise noted, all assignment submissions are due in the Blackboard environment by 11:59 PM on the due date. Exceptions include assignments which are due before the beginning of class. These assignments will have a designated, time deadline of 12:00 PM on the due date.

On a weekly basis, students are also expected to watch tutorial videos, complete reference assignments, and read handouts and other reference materials in the Blackboard, class folders prior to the beginning of class.

Tuesday, 8/23 (Week 1)

Overview of Course - Course Introduction; Brief Review of Course Syllabus; Clarification and Review of Course Handouts and Blackboard Content; In-class Activity; Overview of Technical Writing; (Preview for Technical Writing Project #1); Trial Submission for Blackboard Overview.

### Reading assignments:

Blackboard – Technical Writing Introductions, Week 1 Folder

Thursday, 8/25

**Blackboard Trial Submission due.** Review of Technical Writing Elements and Style; Diagnostic Technical Writing Sample (*BTC*, 17-19 ); In-class Activity; Critical Thinking and Analysis; Assigned Readings; Review of Technical Writing Project #1 guidelines.

### Reading assignments:

*Business and Technical Communication (BTC)* – Chapter 1 (Principles of Technical Communication)

Tuesday, 8/30 (Week 2)

**Technical Writing Review I due.** Management and Work Styles; Team Vision; Timelines; Maximizing Talents; Team Writing; Final Review of Technical Writing Project #1.

### Reading assignments:

*BTC* – Chapter 4 (Working and Writing Collaboratively)

Thursday, 9/1

**Technical Writing Project #1a - #1c due.** Review of Projects; Team Collaboration and Building; Team Assessments.

### Reading assignments:

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 9/6 (Week 3)

**Technical Writing Review II due.** Job Search Process; Important Considerations; Background Checks; Ethics; Overview of Resume Writing and Cover Letters.

### Reading assignments:

*BTC* – Chapter 9 (Gaining, Retaining, and Advancing Employment)



Thursday, 9/8

**Technical Writing Assignment #1 due.** Resume Writing; Cover Letters; Interviewing; Preparation.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Friday, 9/9

**ECS Intern Fair, 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM**

Tuesday, 9/13

(Week 4)

**Technical Writing Journal Entry A due.** Audience; Purpose; Informing; Persuading; Types of Audiences.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 2 (Audience)

Thursday, 9/15

**Technical Writing Project #2a - #2c due.** Overcoming Communication Barriers; Cultural Obstacles; Cross-Cultural Communication; Gender Neutrality.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 9/20

(Week 5)

**Technical Quiz I due.** Internal vs. External Communication; Informal vs. Formal Communication; Choose the Best Platform.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 5 (Telephone, text Messaging, Email, Letters, and Memos)

Thursday, 9/22

**Team Mini-Workshops (Ch. 5) due.** Letters; Memos; Email; Etiquette; Professional vs. Personal Formats.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Friday, 9/23

**Career Expo (for undergraduate STEM majors) 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM in Activity Center**

Tuesday, 9/27

(Week 6)

**Technical Writing Assignment #2 due.** Counter-offers.

**Technical Writing Review III due.** Limitations of Written Communication; Texting; Telephone; Formats.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 5 (Telephone, text Messaging, Email, Letters, and Memos), Continued

Thursday, 9/29

**Technical Writing Journal Entry B due.** End of Chapter 5 – Exercises; Selecting the Best and Most Appropriate Communication Methods.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 8 (Presentations)

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 10/4

(Week 7)

**Technical Quiz II due.** Live vs. Electronic Media; Informative Presentations; Poster Presentations; Persuasive Presentations.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 8 (Presentations)

Thursday, 10/6

**Technical Writing Project #3a - #3c due.** Presentations; International Environment Presentations; Speaker's Professional Presence.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 10/11

(Week 8)

Mid-term Review. Class Review of Chapters 1, 4, 9, 2, and 5 for Mid-term Assessment

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Review Chapters 1, 4, 9, 2, and 5 for Mid-term Assessment

Thursday, 10/13

**Mid-term Assessment** – Information based on *BTC* Chapters 1, 4, 9, 2, and 5

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 10/18

(Week 9)

**Technical Writing Project #4a - #4c due.** Presentation Design; Graphics; Visual Composition.

**Technical Writing Review IV due.** Basic Design Elements; Written Document Design; Headings; Font Size and Type; Spacing; Illustrations; Charts.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 3 (Document and Presentation Design)

Thursday, 10/20

Technical Writing Project #4a - #4c Continued. Illustrations; Animation and Multi-Media Clips.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 10/25 (Week 10)

**Technical Quiz III due.** Social Network; Screen Reading; Creating, Monitoring, and Sanitizing Personal Social Media Usage; Social Media Use and/in Employment; Blogging and Tweeting Guidelines.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 10 (Social Media and Intellectual Property)

Thursday, 10/27

**Technical Writing Assignment #3 due.** Corporate Uses of Social Media; Newsworthy Uses of Social Media.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 11/1 (Week 11)

**Technical Writing Project #5a - #5c due.** Intellectual Property; Trademarks; Copyrights; Plagiarism and the Fair Use Doctrine.

**Technical Writing Journal Entry C due.**

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 10 (Social Media and Intellectual Property), Continued

Thursday, 11/3

Technical Writing Project #5a - #5c Continued. Employment Agreements; Non-Competition Agreements; Non-Disclosure Agreements.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 11/8 (Week 12)

**Technical Writing Review V due.** Front Matter; Back Matter; Reports; Feasibility Reports; Lab/Test Reports; Status Reports; Final Project Reports.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 6 (Reports, Proposals, and White Papers)

Thursday, 11/10

**Technical Writing Journal Entry D due.** Proposals; Request for Proposal (RFPs); Open vs. Closed Proposals.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 11/15 (Week 13)

**Technical Quiz IV due.** Solicited vs. Unsolicited Proposals.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 6 (Reports, Proposals, and White Papers), Continued

Thursday, 11/17

**Technical Writing Journal Entry E due.** Formatting; White Papers.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 11/22

(Week 14)

**Fall Break – No Classes**

Thursday, 11/24

**Fall Break – No Classes**

Tuesday, 11/29

(Week 15)

**Technical Writing Project #6a - #6c due.** Final Project. Project with Presentations; Digital Elements Required; Presentation Materials due Before Class Begins. Document Instructions and Specifications; Definitions and Glossaries; Statement of Work.

**Reading assignments:**

*BTC* – Chapter 7 (Stand-alone and Supplemental Documents)

Thursday, 12/1

**Grade-saver Option due by 11:59 PM.** (Participating Students Only)

Technical Writing Project #6a - #6c Continued. Project with Presentations; Digital Elements Required. Policies and Procedures; Documentation Reminders; Manuals; Conclusion.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Tuesday, 12/6

(Week 16)

Technical Writing Project #6a - #6c Wrap-up. Project with Presentations; Digital Elements Required.

**Reading assignments:**

Blackboard – See Reading Assignments and Additional Resources

Thursday, 12/8

**Reading Day – No Class Scheduled**