ENGL 4100—Document Design

Instructor: Dr. Shelley Thomas (email: sthomas@weber.edu)
Office: SS 336
Office Hours: Monday 11:00-12:00
Tuesday 12:00-1:00
Wednesday 4:00-5:00
Thursday 3:00-4:00 (Davis)

Required Textbooks and Materials (bring each class period)

- Williams, Robin. The PC is Not a Typewriter (1992).
- At least two formatted, 3.5-inch High Density (HD) computer disks or USB storage device.

Course Objectives

This class will teach you a rhetorical approach to document design. Using the rhetorical principles of arrangement, emphasis, clarity, conciseness, tone, and ethos, as explained in the textbook, we will discuss sample documents, analyze the layout of documents (both professional documents and ones you will create in class), and talk about what makes an effective layout and design. This class will be mostly activity-based, with some lecture and discussion. I will try to give you the principles and then let you work them out in your own projects. We will spend considerable time in the electronic classroom to give you time to work on your smaller and larger projects.

Every week, you should bring in a short document to class that we can discuss in terms of its design. Be creative; bring in letters, memos, flyers from work, announcements, newsletters, brochures you pick up at the vet’s office, anything that represents visual rhetoric. Start a folder at home and stick in any interesting document you run across, then bring that folder to class; we will analyze these examples in class.

Assignments and Grades

Your grade will be based on the quality of your work on the following course projects as well as on your daily work, class participation, and attendance. All course projects must be completed in order for you to pass the course.

Grade Range
A: 90%-100%    D: 60% - 69%
B: 80%-89%     F: Below 60%
C: 70%-79%

Assignments will be graded based on how well the work would be received at a professional job.
- A work has a sophisticated sense of audience, purpose, and context; contains few or no errors (1 per page or fewer); and makes use of the design software in a way that goes beyond predictable formats.
- B work is clearly above average; has a clear sense of audience, purpose, and context; contains some errors (1 to 3 per page); and demonstrates some willingness to experiment with design software.
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- **C work** has a sense of audience, purpose, and context; has an acceptable level of errors (no more than an average of 3 per page); and uses the appropriate formats and templates from the design software.

Work that has no sense of audience, too many errors, or uses inappropriate templates is unacceptable and the grade will reflect that. You are encouraged to meet with me before assignments are due to discuss any concerns you may have about an assignment.

**Grade Composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly group activities</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brochure</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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**Weekly Group Activities and Participation**

Group activities will always be collaborative. You’ll do exercises from the book or activities involving sample documents you have brought in. You may expect quizzes over the reading assignments.

**Brochure**

*Brochure (10%):* Due week 6. You will design or re-design a tri-fold brochure for a real or fictional client. You may choose to re-design one of the document’s you have brought in. The document must be for a real rhetorical situation so you can analyze the audience, purpose, and context and choose the best design.

*Process Report and Analysis of Brochure (5%):* Due week 6 You will give a description of how the brochure evolved and an analysis of the design decisions and how they suit the audience, purpose, and context.

**Final Project**

A series of related assignments in which you will design a set of documents (flyers, posters and brochures, or brochure and instructional manual, or newsletter and flyer) for a real client, with whom you will need to communicate at least twice. You will do the design aspects of the project in groups; pair up with people around week 6 and begin looking for clients—a family business, a local organization you are involved in, a campus activity or organization you would like to publicize. These interrelated assignments include the following:

*Proposal (10%-collaborative):* Due week 9. A formal request to work on the final document design project. Includes a work plan, task breakdown, time schedule, and estimated budget.

*Status Report (5%-individual):* Due week 11. An individual progress report summarizing the work you have completed, your current status, and your plans to complete the project on time.

*Draft of the Final Project (5%-collaborative):* Due week 14.

*Final Project (15%-collaborative):* Due week 16.

*Rhetorical and Process Analysis of Final Project (20%-individual):* Due week 16.

**Attendance Policy**

This class meets once a week and your presence and participation are crucial. You are allowed one (1) absence without penalty (this includes arriving late and leaving early). Over one (1) absence (or its equivalent) will reduce your final grade by 5% for each additional absence. Please note that you are responsible for material covered in class regardless of your presence or absence.
Late Projects

As in the workplace, most deadlines are based on other demands, requirements, and deadlines and, as such, are frequently inflexible. Our circumstances are not as extreme, but there are penalties for late projects:

- For each day you submit a major project late, your final grade on that project will be reduced by one letter for each day it is submitted late.
- Submit an email notice of your choice to turn in an assignment late (sthomas@weber.edu) and indicate when you will bring in a hard copy to my office. Your assignment will be considered late until you turn it in to me.

Carefully weigh the consequences of submitting your projects late. Again, as in the workplace, it is best to discuss problems in meeting schedules before the deadlines. I will not accept late papers after one week.

Electronic Devices

During your scheduled class (electronic or otherwise) and during scheduled conferences, pagers, cell phones, and any other electronic device that will distract you from class will be turned off (or to silent notification).

Electronic Classroom (Union Building 310)

If the schedule permits, we will have workshops and demonstrations in the Electronic Classroom. I will announce these days in advance and leave a note on the door of our regular classroom. Be sure to check your email before class to know where we will meet that day. I recommend investing in a “click drive” or “thumb drive”; these are USB storage devices that you may purchase at the bookstore. These “click drives” hold much more information than a floppy and they are harder to damage. Keep one with you to save or access your work. Disk problems, printing problems, computer-related crashes, etc. ARE NOT excuses for late work. Remember to safeguard your work: BACKUP, BACKUP, BACKUP! (This means save your work in several places and keep hard copies.)

Be prepared to work in the EC. If you are unaccustomed to working in group situations, bring in drafts to revise or handwritten copies to type. Lack of preparation for working in the EC will result in an absence (see above). Remember, the computers in the EC are for working. Any inappropriate computer activity will be dealt with according to University policy.

Grades

Scale for letter grades:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>58 (and below)</td>
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