2209 F/G: Visual Information Packaging: Document Design
Fall 2017/Winter 2018

Section: #650
Time/Room: Online
Instructor: Patrick M. Kennedy

Email: kennedy.p@sympatico.ca
Office: Rm. 3270 Lawson Hall

Course Description and Objectives
The personal computer has revolutionized the production and dissemination of information making it possible for a single individual to perform all the functional roles (writer, editor, graphic artist, designer, printer, publisher) previously performed by skilled and experienced specialists. This course examines information production and document design as an amalgam of skills and tools intended to communicate information clearly and effectively whether the information is presented on the printed page or in a digital screen. We will examine the elements that constitute the packaging of effective visual communication, the goal being to develop good visual language skills to create information products that are meaningful and useful to the reader, accomplish their information and/or persuasive purpose(s), and appropriately consider the context in which the reader/user encounters the information.

communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing

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This course will equip you with resources to solve communication/information problems, develop your critical skills in evaluating communication products, and enable you to create documents that are textually and visually effective in communicating with the reader.

| Assignment #2 | Reformatted Idea File Analysis | 20% |

Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds cannot be granted by the instructor or Writing Studies, and Writing Studies requires students in these circumstances to follow the same procedure when seeking academic accommodation on non-medical (i.e. non-medical compassionate or other) grounds.

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth less than 10% of their final grade** must also apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Where in these circumstances the accommodation is being sought on **non-medical grounds**, students should consult in the first instance with their instructor, who may elect to make a decision on the request directly, or refer the student to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive medical documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an 'Attendance' policy in the course). **All** medical documentation **must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.

http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help."

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing
Please refer to the "Information for All Students in a Writing Course" for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that your instructor does not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean's office of your home faculty.

Schedule

and ends on Friday.

Unit /Week 1

Objectives:
The purpose of this lesson is to introduce you to some of the practices relative to Document Design/Visual Rhetoric that actually discourage readership. The point here is to recognize that the issues under discussion are important to good mediated communication and they are very -communicated society.

Read:

in the *Course Pack or "Resources" folder*

Designing Visual Language: Strategies for Professional Communicators

FORUM: Is Ogilvy hairsplitting or practical?

about the technical considerations associated with creating and designing a communication -splitting distinctions while others had not previously considered the implications of the topics and elements he identifies.

Unit/Week 4

Reducing Cognitive Costs

Objectives:
The objective is to recognize that to design a document is about something more than visual appeal: design must be useful, it must serve the purpose for which the document was created, and it must satisfy the needs of the reader.

> **Read:**
> Paul Stiff. "'A Footnote Kicks Him': How Books Make Readers Work" **Online**; Chapter 4:

FORUM: Books as tools

If books are "'tools to think with' . . . the first standardized and mass-produced interface for mental work" (Stiff 69 - DESIGN COMPROMISES: FEEDBACK FROM AUTHOURS), give an example of a specific book you use as a tool, and explain how it contributes to your "mental work." Does it have any system failures? How could they be improved?

Unit/Week 5

Five Laws of Perception

Objectives:

five laws of perception to the documents you design to achieve specific rhetorical goals. By creating documents that incorporate a consideration of the nature of human perception and respect its limitations you will be more successful in designing a document that achieves its goal(s).

> **Read:**
> Edward Booth-Clibborn and Daniel Boroni. "Psychology and the
> Graphic Message" in the course Pack; Chapter 6: "Non-Linear Components" from
> Kostelnick/Roberts.

FORUM:

The Needs of the User - Comment upon Ellen Lupton's statement in *Thinking with Type,* "The dominant subject of our age has become neither reader nor writer but user, a figure conceived as a bundle of needs and impairments—cognitive, physical, emotional. Like a patient or child, the user is a figure to be protected and cared for but also scrutinized and controlled, submitted to research and testing" (73 1st ed., 97 2nd ed.).

Unit/Week 6

Seeing and Perceiving

Objectives:

The objective is to learn how the fundamental psychological need for *equilibrium* (balance) is achieved in documents through the application of the *dominance principle* as expressed through the establishment of visual hierarchy in documents of all types.

Read:

Jack Fredrick Myers -   in the Course Pack.

Assignment #2: Reformatted Idea File Analysis due midnight Friday Week 6

FORUM:

Your Illusions - **Preventing Closure: Causing Tension** - Discuss the following statement from the reading: "If we can somehow obstruct or prevent closure of a split object normally seen as a whole entity, we can create tension at that point in the design or composition. It's a 'foot in the door' technique commonly used in films of suspense" (30). How have you experienced the "tension" described here? Can you imagine an instance in which you might or could apply the dynamics involvest4(he dy11(h due)14 eol)-4(v)11(es)9(t)-

Read:

Mary Mendell. "Educating the Designer's Eye" in *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, July (1997): pp. 208-212. ISSN 1198-9742. Available through UWO Libraries E-Journals.

FORUM:

Book cover designs that influence you - Comment on Mendell's statement "One wants to think about what works, and what does not, which covers attract attention and why." Discuss book cover designs that influence you to make a purchase? Do we make judgments about a book by its cover? Does a book with a plain cover, perhaps only a title in plain tex

other.

Read:
"Digital structure, digital design: issues in designing electronic publications" Michael Jensen, *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* (Available through UWO Libraries E-Journals); Chapter 7: "Data Displays"
in Kostelnick/Roberts.

FORUM:
      tive - In his introduction, Jensen says, "My hope in this article is to discuss digital design from a functionists' perspective" (14). Discuss what you think he means by "functionists' perspective."

Unit/Week 11

Advantages & Disadvantages of E-editing

Objectives:
The objective is to identify problems others are experiencing with on-screen editing and use their experiences and observations as a mirror to reflect upon our own practices and habits which we may be unaware of and which may be undermining the revision and editing tasks demanded of document designers. In addition, some training suggestions and learning strategies for new editors will be explored that will help students develop their editing skills.

Read:
Anne Dresskell. "Computer-Enhanced Copy Editing: A Survey Report" in Journal of Scholarly Publishing (Available through UWO Libraries E-Journals.); Chapter 8: "Pictures" in Kostelnick/ Roberts.

FORUM: