

2209 F/G: Visual Information Packaging: Document Design

Fall 2017/Winter 2018

Section: #650

Time/Room: Online

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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.

More generally, the course aims to contribute to your development of an “... ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences.” (Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents’ statement on ‘University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations’ 24 October 2005).

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%
Assignment #3 – Digital Document Project Essay	20%
Assignment #4 –	

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
All medical documentation must be submitted to the Academic
Counselling offi

**“Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:
<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

Briefly, remember that your instructor does not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly

Schedule

Remember: A Week in Distance Studies courses begins on Monday and ends on Friday.

Unit /Week 1

Introduction: It's about the reader / user / customer

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 relevant in today's over-communicated society.

Read:

“Wanted: A renaissance in print advertising” by David Ogilvy
in the **Course Pack or “Resources” folder**

Chapter 1: “Rhetorical Background” Kostelnick /Roberts. *Designing Visual Language: Strategies for Professional Communicators*

FORUM: Is Ogilvy hairsplitting or practical?

This Document Design course is often a student's first encounter with a focused discussion about the technical considerations associated with creating and designing a communication product. Many students report a certain annoyance with Ogilvy's hair-splitting distinctions while others had not previously considered the implications of the topics and elements he identifies.

Objectives:

The objective of the lesson is to engage you in “an active intention to improve” (Mendell) as a document designer/problem solver by becoming aware of the resources both internal and external that can contribute to your success.

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 text, discourage your interest in the book? If so, why do you think this is the case?

Unit/Week 9**Grids as Cognitive Tools for Problem Solving****Objectives:**

The objective is to develop knowledge about how grids are used to resolve problems in the visual

The objective is to identify those qualities and characteristics of paper document design that also function seamlessly with digital document design and those that do not. Comparing and contrasting the rhetorical requirements of the two mediums will identify specific strengths and weaknesses of each as well as some of the adjustments that are required to documents when transitioning content from one medium to the 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”

The objective of this unit is to recognize what has grown to become a popular and significant method of presenting information—the infographic— and explore how knowledge is being compressed, repackaged, and assembled in a variety of forms to make certain kinds of information more accessible, more easily understood, and more meaningful for readers/users of all kinds.

Read:

TED Talk YouTube Video - The beauty of data visualization: David McCandless on TED.com
Posted August 23, 2010 (The transcript is in “Lecture Notes”)