English 335
090
Digital Rhetoric and Writing
Department of English, SFASU

Professor: Dr. Megan Condis
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Office: LAN #210
Office Hours: Monday 12 - 2, Wednesday 1-3, Friday 1-2
Also available by appointment in person or via Skype
Meeting Times and Location: Ferguson 476 T/Th 12:30 – 1:45 am

Description

ENG 335 concerns the "study of and practice in writing electronic genres with consideration of audience, media and technology. The course will focus on issues specific to language, visual rhetoric, composition and publication in digital environments." Prerequisite: nine semester hours of English.

Additional Information

In English 335 you will learn how to design and compose multimodal digital texts such as websites, social media posts, and even video games. This is partly about learning how to use computer technology but it is equally about learning how audiences read differently online than they do in print. It also entails learning about a process called Usability Testing or checking to make sure that your reader can intuitively understand how to find the content that they want.

Required Text and Materials


Additional readings handed out in class and/or uploaded to D2L

A reliable way to store and transfer files (preferably a USB/Flash drive).

Regular access to and ability to use D2L and cloud backup of important files and projects

Strongly recommended

The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th edition

or
The style guide of your choice

Note regarding textbooks

Please note that it may be much more cost effective for you to order the textbooks used on amazon.com or another textbook service. However, it is up to the student to make sure that they have the textbooks in their possession by the time we need them for class.

Course Requirements

All writing assignments prepared outside of class must be typed. The format will vary for each writing assignment, depending on its purpose and audience. Ideally, the topics for your major assignments will relate to your major field and/or future professional interests. All assignments will be graded for proper format, soundness of content, attention to rhetorical context, resourcefulness, grammar, and mechanics.

All assignments must be completed in the order in which they are given, and you must complete all the major assignments and the final exam in order to pass this course.

Late work will receive a 5% penalty per day up to 7 days after which the assignment will receive a zero.

If you foresee that you will have difficulty meeting a due date, let me know in advance and we can work out an accommodation. Otherwise, the penalty outlined above will apply.

All assignments will be turned in via D2L by 5 pm on their scheduled due date. We will go over how to do this in class. Technical difficulties with D2L will not be an acceptable excuse for late work. If you have questions about how to turn in an assignment, you need to let me know in advance so we can work on it together.

Most major assignments except the final exam will include intermediate drafts and other materials.

In-Class Participation

I will take attendance in class everyday in some fashion, be it a simple tally of who is present, a quiz or a writing activity, or the like. I may draw attention to this or I may not.

Students may miss up to five classes with no penalty and no excuse necessary. After that, I will deduct two percentage points off of the student’s final grade up to a maximum of 10%.

Students who are unprepared for the in-class activity (for example, those who did not bring a rough draft in with them when we are doing peer review) will be counted as absent for that day. Students who do not participate in the day’s activities or who ignore the guidelines for those activities will be marked absent.

Grading Policy

Grades will be computed in the following fashion:

Individual Website Design: 20%
10 Blog Posts: 20%
Usability Report on SFA Website: 20%
Storify Archive: 20%
Twine Game Project: 20%
A Note Regarding Grades

In college, the grading scale used by your instructors to assess your work is likely very different from the one by your high school. In college, “A” work is truly exceptional, both in the sense that it is extremely high in quality and in the sense that it bears the unique stamp of the individual who created it. “B” work exceeds expectations, but is more expected or less insightful than “A” work. “C” work meets expectations for the assignment and goes no further. “D” and “F” work both have serious issues that need fixing if the student hopes to move forward in the course. Keep this in mind as you work on your assignments for the semester.

Grading Scale

A (excellent performance): 90-100.
B (above average performance): 80-89.
C (average performance): 70-79.
F (failure): 0-59.

Plagiarism/Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity: Adhering to academic integrity standards at all times by producing your own work and successfully attributing others’ ideas to them is a necessary aspect of university communication.

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assignment; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper or presentation without giving the author due credit.

Any appeals on academic integrity cases must be made within thirty days after the first class day of the next long semester. Students should appeal to the instructor first then to the chair if the situation is not resolved. Further appeals can be made to the dean and provost if necessary.

Please read the complete policies at: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp and http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-appeals-by-students.pdf.

My policy is simple: plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in a zero for that assignment, or a failing grade for the course depending on the severity of the violation.

We will be discussing the proper way to cite your sources during this class, but in the meantime, if you have any questions about this definition or about a particular case in any of your courses, it is up to you to approach me (or any of your other instructors) for help.

Classroom Conduct

In order for our classroom sessions to be productive, we need to create an environment in which none of us are afraid to put ourselves out there in front of each other. Rudeness will not be tolerated. We may discuss “hot button” issues, but we need to be respectful of the opinions, feelings, and life experiences of others. Hateful language or behavior such as racism, sexism, homophobia, etc is not acceptable.
Students who engage in this behavior will be asked to leave the classroom and may be subject to further disciplinary action.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Special Accommodations**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify your instructors and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided.

Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations, and no accommodations can be made except through the ODS. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

**Resources**

The AARC offer free writing tutoring, which is available on a walk-in and appointment basis. They also offer online writing tutoring services and workshops about writing-related topics. For more information, go to http://library.sfasu.edu/aarc/, visit them on the first floor of the Steen Library, or call them at 936-468-4108.

**Course Calendar**

**Week 1**

T – Go over syllabus

Th – Read and Discuss “Yes, Computers Can Think,” “How Coding Works,” and “What is User Interface?”

**Week 2**

T – Read *Build Your Own Website* Chapters 1 and 2

Th – Read *Build Your Own Website* Chapter 3

Go over website and blogging assignments

Brainstorm on a topic for a blog about the relationship between technology and culture as it applies to a specific audience or demographic

**Week 3**

T – Read *Build Your Own Website* Chapters 4, 5, and 6
Begin constructing website in WordPress

Th – Read Design Principles: Proximity and Alignment

Week 4

T – Read Design Principles: Repetition and Contrast

Th – Read Design Principles: Type

Week 5

T – Read Don’t Make Me Think Introduction, Chapter 1, and Chapter 2

Introduction to Usability

Th – Read Don’t Make Me Think Chapter 5

Editing for the Web

F – Final Design of Webpage due by at 5pm

Week 6

T – Read Don’t Make Me Think Chapters 8 and 9

Develop Usability Worksheets for an SFA Department’s Website

Th – Read Don’t Make Me Think Chapters 10 and 11

Go over format of Usability Reports

Begin conducting Usability Tests

Week 7

T – Read “The Oatmeal Vs. Funnyjunk,” “How One Twitter User Got Famous by Allegedly Stealing Comedian’s Tweets,” and “Noble Blogger Guidelines: How to Cite a Picture”

Discuss Plagiarism and the Web

Th – Read Microstyle Introduction

Introduction to Twitter

Week 8

T – Read Microstyle Meaning Sections 1-5

Th – Read Microstyle Meaning Sections 6-9
F – First 5 Blog Posts due at 5 pm

Week 9

NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

Week 10

T – In-Class Activity: Live Tweeting an Event

W – Usability Report due in D2L at 5 pm

Th – NO CLASS EASTER BREAK

Week 11

T – Read *Microstyle* Sound

Th – Read *Microstyle* Structure and Explore *Know Your Meme*

Week 12

T – Read *Microstyle* Social Context and “A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement”

Introduction to Storify

Go over Storify project

Th – Work on Storify Project

Week 13

T – Read “What is Twine? (For Developers)” and “Choose Your Own Adventure Maker: Twine and the Art of Personal Games”

Play 12hrs and Player2

Go over Twine Game project

Th – Read excerpt “Persuasive Games”

Brainstorm game ideas and begin to storyboard

F – Game proposal due in D2L at 5pm

Week 14

T – Continue to storyboard

Th – Begin programming
**Week 15**

T – Continue programming

Th – Begin constructing instruction manual and usability survey

**Week 16**

T – Continue working on Twine game, instruction manual, and usability survey

Th – Course wrap up

**Final Exam**

Thursday, May 2\textsuperscript{nd} 10:30 – 2:30

Play-testing of Twine games and gathering of usability data

Final version of Twine game and instruction manual due Friday, May 3\textsuperscript{rd} in D2L at midnight

**No late work can be accepted for this assignment, as this is the very VERY end of finals week!**