
WRIT 3220:

FOUNDATIONS IN TECH AND PROFESSIONAL WRITING

Contact Information:

My office is located in Newton (1119D). The best way to get a hold of me is by e-mail, or to stop by during office hours. Office hours are tentatively scheduled for Tuesday and Thursday between 10 and 12. Some of these may be virtual office hours, held on-line, and some of these office hours may be designated as group work times. I strongly recommend that you make an appointment if you don't want to wait through various other scheduled student appointments/work times.

Course objectives (learning outcomes)

This course is designed to give you an introduction to the field of Technical and Professional Communication. We'll start with some theoretical frameworks in globalization, linking these texts to articles in the field that rely on our understanding of a global economy. We'll move from this focus to an emphasis on document design, on the multiple considerations necessary to create effective documents. Finally, we'll consider a variety of research considerations in workplace venues. The following are the formal learning outcomes:

understanding theoretical frameworks for research (dipping into readings of globalization, post-colonial studies, cultural studies, gender studies, etc)

introductory level awareness of design considerations (human factors (including visual rhetoric) and strategies for conducting usability research)

introductory level familiarity with workplace research

ability to think critically regarding ethical considerations facing technical and professional writers

ability to find a relevant connection to the field of technical and professional writing

working familiarity with the variety of issues facing the field of technical writing (i.e, defining the field, awareness of the variety of job directions/challenges, awareness of the changing demands on technical writers due to technological and market shifts--from changing demands in terms of project management to content management concerns)

ability to write and evaluate summaries/critiques of articles/books.

Texts and Other Budgetary Concerns:

We'll work from the following texts:

Shadows of War by Carolyn Nordstrom

The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy by Pietra Rivoli

Central Works in Technical Communication by Johndan Johnson-Eilola

The Design of Everyday Things by Donald Norman

Thinking with Type by Ellen Lupton

On-line Texts and pdf files-- I'll give you links to on-line resources. You'll be required to read extensively on-line and from the printed books. If you want other kinds of resources, please don't hesitate to ask; I can sometimes lend you helpful texts, or point you in the direction of texts that may help with your projects.

Grading

Summaries: Travels; Shadows of War; Summary of Mapping/Visual Readings: 50 points

Critiques: Travels; Shadows of War; Design: 150

Quizzes: Travels; Shadows; Design; Usability on-line resources; CW readings Workplace and **Research Methods:** 300

Exams: Theory section (2/15); comprehensive Final (finals week): 200

Design Analysis: 100

Project: 100

Participation in class, and in on-line venues (class blogs): 100

1000 - 900 A; 899 - 800 B; 799 - 700 C; 699 - 600 D

Policies

late work: I have a new late policy this semester! You can turn in one assignment late if you have extenuating circumstances that you can document. Otherwise, every project is due at the beginning of class. (It should be printed out ahead of time; if I'm done taking roll and you haven't handed in your project, it's late.) I'll take off 5% if you turn it in after class, but on the same day. Every DAY afterwards is 10% reduction in your grade. This is a class with lots of deadlines, and you are responsible for keeping up with them.

exams/quizzes: You must be in class on the days exams and quizzes are given. I won't make up quizzes or exams for any reason.

attendance: You must come to class. If you don't, you'll be penalized twice, maybe thrice. First, you probably will have difficulty understanding the assignments/completing tasks which will result in lower grades. Second, you can't earn the points that are assigned

to in-class work. Finally, I will deduct points from your final grade if you miss more than 3 class periods. At the end of the semester, when I tally final grades, I will subtract 50 points off your final grade for every class you missed over the three allowed. Don't miss class, and come to class ready to work. If your body is in a chair, but your mind is on vacation (i.e., sleeping or otherwise trying to recover), you will be counted absent. If you don't bring the assignments to class, you will be counted absent (you need to have hard copies of assignments before class starts. If you're interrupting us by using the printer, I'll mark you as absent). In addition, you should be in class on-time. Two lates equals one absence (late = no later than 15 minutes; after 15 minutes you're considered absent).

IM/cell phones, etc: When class starts, I expect your attention. You need to sign out of instant messaging programs, turn off your phones (turning them to vibrating options is not enough), and resist any temptations to turn to games on the internet. If you distract me or others during class with your promiscuous use of the computers/your cell phones, I'll mark you as absent for that day.

disabilities:

Georgia Southern complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability that could affect your performance in this class or that requires an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact the Student Disability

Schedule (subject to change):

Date	
Week One	
Tues 1/9	Introduction to course; defining the field; setting up writing venues; locating areas of interest --
Thurs 1/11	<p>Read FOR CLASS: Steven Katz's "The Ethic of Expediency" 195 - 210 in <i>CW</i> Rivoli's <i>Travels of a T-Shirt</i> 1-57 Savage and Sullivan--little excerpts pdf file Resources: http://www.bentley.edu/classbook/academic_resources.cfm Subscribe to the class listserv: (cribbed almost verbatim from Janice Walker (thanks Janice!))</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Send an email to techtheory-subscribe@yahoogroups.com Leave the subject line blank; in the message body, type: subscribe techtheory Yourfirstname Yourlastname <p>Do not type anything else in the email message.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Within a few minutes (usually), you will receive an email asking you to confirm your subscription. To confirm, simply reply to the message (do not type anything in your reply; just click or choose reply, and then send). 3. You should receive a second email message welcoming you to the list. You can then post messages to the class at techtheory@yahoogroups.com This is a listserv that functions as much as you need...no requirements, but it may help to write out questions here, or think outloud here or figure out what you think together, so that you can better understand the material. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include your name in your email! If you know how, you might consider creating a signature file to automatically include your name in all of your email messages. • You may also respond to other messages or forward information of interest to the student population, but please refrain from flaming, spamming, or other inappropriate behavior. For more information about "netiquette" (the etiquette of the Internet), see http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html
Week Two	
Tues 1/16	<p>Read FOR CLASS: Rivoli's <i>Travels of a T-Shirt</i> 59 - 172 Johndan Johnson-Eilola "Relocating the Value of Work" 175 - 194 in <i>CW</i>. BRING TO CLASS: Summary of <i>Travels</i> thus far and also an application of the material to your field of interest or a comparable exploration of your favorite kind of clothing item.</p>
Thurs 1/18	<p>Read FOR CLASS: Rivoli's <i>Travels of a T-Shirt</i> 173 - 218 Quiz over book in class</p>
Week Three	

Tues 1/23	Read FOR CLASS: Nordstrom's <i>Shadows of War</i> 1 - 138 BRING TO CLASS: Critique of <i>Travels</i> (750 - 1000 words)
Thurs 1/25	Read FOR CLASS: Nordstrom's <i>SoW</i> 139 - 187 BRING TO CLASS: summary of <i>Shadows of War</i> (thus far)
Week Four	
Tues 1/30	Read FOR CLASS: Nordstrom's <i>SoW</i> 187 - 250 Quiz over book in class
Thurs 2/1	Read FOR CLASS: <i>Else/Where</i> pdf BRING TO CLASS: Critique of <i>Shadows</i>
Week Five	
Tues 2/6	Read FOR CLASS: Bolter, Brasseur PDF; Barton and Barton in <i>CW</i> 232 - 254 BRING TO CLASS: examples of mappings of information
Thurs 2/8	Read FOR CLASS: Friedberg, Baudrillard, Marvin PDF files. BRING TO CLASS: Summary of mapping/visual readings
Week Six	
Tues 2/13	Conversations about test
Thurs 2/15	TEST in class; Start reading <i>Design of Everyday Things</i>
Week Seven	
Tues 2/20	Read FOR CLASS: <i>Design of Everyday Things</i> 1 - 104
Thurs 2/22	Read FOR CLASS: <i>Design of Everyday Things</i> 105 - 218 Quiz
Week Eight	
Tues 2/27	READ FOR CLASS: Usability Studies: Read through the following On-Line resources (make sure to follow links): Overviews of Usability Testing: http://www.usability.gov/methods/ http://www.infodesign.com.au/usabilityresources/evaluation/usabilitytesting.asp (make sure to read all the links on the left hand side as well) Usability toolkit: http://www.stcsig.org/usability/resources/toolkit/toolkit.html BRING TO CLASS: Critique of <i>Design of Everyday Things</i> Quiz
Thurs 3/1	READ FOR CLASS: Sanchez/Wiley PDF Topic for in-class discussion: human factors and usability research methods.
Week Nine	
Tues 3/6	
Thurs 3/8	

Week Ten	
Tues 3/20	READ FOR CLASS: <i>Thinking with Type</i> : 12 - 100 In-class Working on Design Analysis
Thurs 3/22	READ FOR CLASS: <i>Thinking with Type</i> : 100 - 173 In-class Working on Design Analysis
Week Eleven	
Tues 3/27	READ FOR CLASS: On-line Environments 397 - 448 in <i>CW</i> Draft of Design Analysis DUE
Thurs 3/29	READ FOR CLASS Thralls and Byler in <i>CW</i> 124-145
Week Twelve	
Mon 4/3	READ FOR CLASS: <i>CW Workplace Studies Section</i> : 317 - 396 BRING TO CLASS: Design analysis Quiz over readings
Thurs 4/5	READ FOR CLASS: <i>CW</i> Research Methods Section (255 - 316) Quiz over readings
Week Thirteen	
Tues 4/10	Exploring possible job directions in class (readings to come) Working on Project
Thurs 4/12	Exploring possible job directions in class (readings to come)
Week Fourteen	
Tues 4/17	Exploring possible job directions in class (readings to come)
Thurs 4/19	Exploring possible job directions in class (readings to come) Draft of Project DUE
Week Fifteen	
Tues 4/24	Presentations
Thurs 4/26	Presentations
Week Sixteen	
Finals	Comprehensive Final