Professional Writing Theory

Fall 2004: Wednesdays, 6-9pm

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Course website:	http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~salvo/680T/

Required Materials

Required Texts

The Practice of Everyday Life. DeCerteau, Michel. University of California Press. 2002. 0520236998

Community Action and Organizational Change. Brenton Faber. Southern Illinois University Press. 0809324369

Transforming Technology: A Critical Theory Revisited. (2nd ed of *Critical Theory of Technology*) Feenberg. Oxford, 2002.

Writing Workplace Cultures. Jim Henry   Southern Illinois University Press 2000. 0809323206

User-Centered Technology. Robert Johnson. State University of New York Press Press, 1998. 0791439321

Central Works in Technical Communication Johnson-Eilola & Selber Oxford University Press, 2004. 0195157052

Rhetoric and the Arts of Design. Kaufer and Butler. Lawrence Erlbaum & Associates, 1996. 0805821465

Aramis, or the Love of Technology. Latour, Bruno. Harvard University Press. 1996. ASIN: 0674043227

Spurious Coin. Bernadette Longo. State University of New York Press Press, 2000. 0791445569

Just Gaming. Lyotard & Thebaud University of Minnesota Press, 1987. 0816612773

Rhetoric of Risk. Beverly Sauer. Lawrence Erlbaum & Associates 2002. 0805836861

Opening Spaces. Sullivan and Porter.   Ablex, 1997. 156750308X

Suggested Texts

Linked: How Everything Is Connected to Everything Else and What It Means Barabasi. Plume 2003. 0452284392

Social Systems. Luhman, Niklaus. Stanford University Press. 1995. 0804726256

The texts are available at Von's Bookstore. Additional readings will be available online.

Materials

Access to class website, email and online discussion
Purdue Career Account (**@purdue.edu** email)
Please be sure to make numerous backup copies of all your work on different media.

Course Description

ENGL 680T: Professional Writing Theory takes both parts of the title, "Professional Writing" and "Theory" seriously, reading and examining both recent research in professional writing (PW) and critical and other theory that informs this work. PW has been loosely defined as "writing in nonacademic environments," a definition that leaves much room for discussion and debate. Students will explore the relationship between rhetoric, composition and PW, as well as the connections and dislocations between technical and scientific communication and PW. The class will address questions such as: What research is being done in PW? How does PW research differ from rhetorical research? What role does technology (and the philosophy of technology) play in PW research? What challenges face PW in the information age, and how can PW researchers meet these challenges? As a negative definition, then, PW is "not-composition," a rhetorical study of communication in workplaces and communities that is produced with a purpose, a rhetorical exigency, a rhetorical situation, that requires symbolic action. We will study both the sites of professional writing and the artifacts of non-academic writing. Along the way, we will investigate the articulations and fractures between academic and non-academic writing. Students will complete a review of a recent book in professional writing, a longer seminar paper, and will meet with undergraduate students in 306, the introduction to the professional writing major.

Assignment Descriptions
Professional Writing Position Paper

The Council of Programs in Scientific and Technical Communication (CPTSC) will hold its conference at Purdue Oct 7-9. Consult [cptsc.org] and prepare a position paper (>500 words). Define a problem in PW research, propose a solution, describe ongoing research, or present an idea. Keep in mind: why should CPTSC, an organization of program administrators, be interested? Post your paper to online discussion before Sep 25. Read both class position papers and at least 6 CPTSC papers Sept 29-Oct 5. Class on Oct 6 will be CPTSC-styled sessions with students as discussion leaders and audience members, like the conference. Although attendance at CPTSC is not required, it is recommended. Guests will be joining class on October 6.

Assignment	Due Date	Value
Professional Writing Position Paper	Sep 29	10%
Review of Recent Text	Oct 20	10%
Undergraduate Mentoring Project	Nov 3	10%
Discourse of the Field (Bibliography)	Nov 10	10%
Pedagogical Project	Nov17, Dec10	25%
Seminar Paper	Dec 10	25%
Online participation	ongoing	10%

306 Mentoring Project

Coupled with the professional writing practicum (505), 680T prepares students to teach professional and technical writing. As part of preparation for teaching 420/421, you are required to speak with members of 306, "Introduction to Professional Writing," which introduces students to the major. Use the opportunity to understand what undergraduates expect from their coursework, how these students are prepared for the major, as well as an opportunity to think through curricular issues.   What are undergraduate professional writing students expecting from their coursework and how can you best prepare for teaching professional writing? Meet with students 3 or more times during the semester and post reflections on your meetings to 680T online discussion. Engage your classmates in discussion related to teaching majors versus teaching the service course. Compare your experiences with what others post. What have you learned about undergraduates? What have you learned about professional writing students? Submit a Progress Report (3-5 pages) on your undergraduate mentoring efforts by Nov 3. Your audience consists of new PW instructors: what should they know about undergraduates at Purdue?

Discourse of the Field

Collect references to the status of technical & professional writers in literature of the field. Collect as many references as you can find and create an annotated bibliography. Annotations should be no more than 2 or 3 sentences. Older references are particularly welcome alongside more recent work. Try to identify shifts, trends, and patterns. Post your annotated bibliography online before December 1. In addition to rhetoric and composition journals, look in *Technical Communication*, *Technical Communication Quarterly*, *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, *Business Communication Quarterly*, *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication, Journal of Technical Writing and Communication.*

Review of Recent Text*

Find a recent text published in professional / technical writing / communication, published after January 2002 and not used for class. Write a review (4-5 pages) that can be submitted for publication in *Technical Communication Quarterly.* See *TCQ* book review guidelines [http://www.unomaha.edu/~tbridgef/tcq/]. Tracy Bridgeford, the book review editor, will supply some titles for review. Book reviews should be submitted for publication to *TCQ* or related journals. Part of Oct 13 class will be set aside for work shopping review drafts. Reviews are due October 20. *Reviews can be written collaboratively.

Pedagogical Project*

Taking what you have learned from earlier assignments, prepare a unit or segment of 420 or 421 lasting at least 4 weeks. Develop paper, web-based, or other materials for PW instruction. Prepare classroom materials for in-class presentation on Nov 17. Be prepared to explain how your design fulfills the requirements for either 420 or 421 according to the PW program website. Clearly state the teaching unit's goals, describe the document(s) students will create, and provide guidance for new PW instructors. Submit edited materials Dec 10. *Pedagogy projects can be collaborative.

Seminar paper

Write a 8-12 page seminar paper that either (1) explores and develops an idea, issue or theory raised in readings and class discussion, or (2) contextualizes and develops the pedagogical grounding for the Pedagogical Project. Seminar papers should be extensions of earlier assignments: incorporate work completed for the position paper, discourse analysis, book review, and pedagogical project. This paper may be a traditional linear paper-based document or a digital, hypertextual argument suitable for submission to *Kairos*, *Enculturation*, or other online venues.
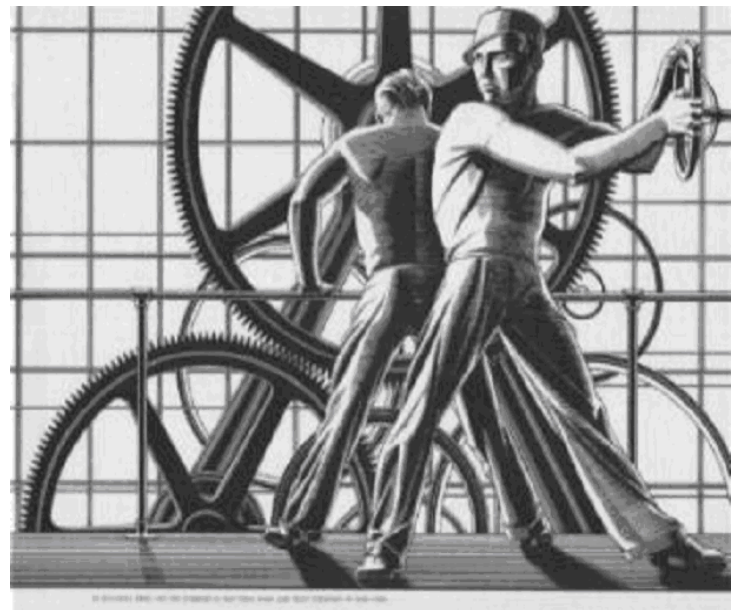
Week	Date	Class Topic & Reading Assignment	Deadline
1	Aug 25	**Introduction: Naming the Field, Choosing Terms, and Mapping Territory** Read **Alred** in class Read **Longo** *Spurious Coin*, Johnson-Eilola & Selber Part 1: "Histories"	
2	Sep 1	**History of Technical & Professional Writing: Multiple Pasts, Possible Futures** Read **Kaufer & Butler** *Rhetoric and the Arts of Design*, Johnson-Eilola & Selber Part 2: "Rhetorical Perspectives"	
3	Sep 8	**Rhetoric as Design: World Making** Read **DeCerteau** *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Johnson-Eilola & Selber Part 3: "Philosophies & Theories"	
4	Sep 15	**Critical Practice of a Working Life** Read **Johnson** *User-Centered Technology*, Johnson-Eilola & Selber Part 4: "Ethical and Power Issues"	
5	Sep 22	**Readers as Users: Awareness, Advocacy, Participation** Read **Sullivan and Porter** *Opening Spaces*, Johnson-Eilola & Selber Part 5: "Research Methods"	Position Paper Draft
6	Sep 29	**Research in Professional and Technical Communication** Read class and conference position papers. http://cptsc.org/	**Position Papers**
7	Oct 6	**Professional Connections: Preparing for CPTSC** Read Review Text and prepare review draft. Read Online Review links.	CPTSC Oct 7-9
8	Oct 13	**Users and Audience: Awareness, Advocacy, Participation** Read **Henry** *Writing Workplace Cultures,* Book Review Workshop Johnson-Eilola & Selber Part 6: "Workplace Studies"	Review Draft
9	Oct 20	**Researching Work: Rhetoric of the Mundane and Practical** Read **Feenberg**, *Transforming Technology* Johnson-Eilola & Selber Part 7: "Online Environments"	**Review**
10	Oct 27	**Working Online: Rearticulating Digital Technology** Read **Sauer**, *Rhetoric of Risk*	
11	Nov 3	**Avoiding Danger Rearticulating Expertise** Read **Lyotard & Thebaud**, *Just Gaming* Johnson-Eilola & Selber Part 8: "Pedagogical Directions"	**306 Mentoring Progress Report**
12	Nov 10	**Ethical Games: Protecting Language** Read Faber, *Community Action and Organizational Change* Read Grabill & Simmons, Staggers & Zoetewey (online)	**Annotated Bib**
13	Nov 17	**Teaching Professional Writing: Preparing Citizens for Work** Read Latour, *Aramis*	Pedagogy Project Drafts
*	Nov 24	Thanksgiving break. No class scheduled.	
14	Dec 1	**Technologies as Tangible Discourse: The Case of Aramis** Read Barabasi, *Linked* and Luhmann, *Social Systems*	
15	Dec 8	**Networks of Discourse: Rhetoric and/of Professional Writing**	Class Conference
+	Dec 10	**Last day to deliver assignments. Pedagogy Project and Seminar Paper due.**	**Pedagogy Project Seminar Paper**

Course Policies

Attendance

You are expected to be in class every Wednesday evening and to participate in email and online discussion throughout each week. Each missed class is significant: communicate with the instructor regarding any missed class time. After two absences, student grades will be significantly impacted. Please discuss multiple absences with the instructor.

Communication

Early in the semester, you will be asked to demonstrate your ability to:

- Access to your Career Account and use your @purdue.edu email address,
- Send and receive email messages to the class list, email and open attachments, and follow email decorum,
- Communicate using web-based discussion lists
- Check the course calendar before each class, and
- Back-up your work via your home directory, disks, and/or email attachments to yourself.

Online Discussion and Classroom Participation

Email and web-based discussion allows students to pursue topics and ideas outside of class time. Every student is required to participate in online discussion. Online and classroom participation will be evaluated as 20% of the final grade. I read many posts to electronic discussion lists. However, I try to limit my participation so students have an opportunity to develop their own understanding of the material. Please keep in mind that online discussion is an extension of classroom space: post material you feel is appropriate for classroom discussion. Generally, if you check email a few times each week and post questions and concerns as they occur to you during your preparation for class, you will maintain an appropriate level of participation. Do not hesitate to ask questions online: chances are that someone in class has the same question, and often someone in class has an answer. Sometimes the question you are asking is far more complicated than you had imagined. There is no single "right" way to have an online discussion. You must participate in the online discussion in order to receive a grade in this course.

Due Dates and Grading

Please submit assignments when they are due. Late work is not acceptable. While I am happy to discuss grading practices and policies and will do my best to explain why students receive certain evaluations, grades are rarely changed. Please visit me during my office hours, and use email to contact me between class meetings.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty is a serious crime. If you are suspected of academic dishonesty, you may be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students to receive disciplinary action. Forms of academic dishonesty include: Collusion - lending your work to another person to submit as his or her own; Fabrication - deliberately creating false information on a works cited page; and Plagiarism - the presentation of another person's work as your own, whether intentional or not. Please read and familiarize yourself with Purdue's student guide to academic integrity located at: [http://www.purdue.edu/odos/administration/integrity.htm].

The Writing Lab

The Writing Lab (located at 226 Heavilon Hall) offers a variety of writing resources for all students and teachers at Purdue, including half-hour tutorials, workshops, handouts and books, public use computers, a collection of tapes and software for writers of English as a Second Language (ESL), and an inexhaustible supply of animal crackers. Many of these resources can be accessed from their Online Writing Lab (OWL) (not the crackers) at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu]. For more information, call 494-3723. Graduate students should use the writing lab, and please encourage the undergraduates you teach to use the lab.

The Digital Learning Collaboratory (DLC)

The DLC (located in the lower level of Hicks Undergraduate Library) offers an active learning environment with a number of resources that you can access to help create multimedia projects. As a student, you can check out equipment, use the high-speed Macs and PCs, learn new software, or reserve space to work collaboratively on a class project. For more information, go to http://www.lib.purdue.edu, send e-mail to DLC@purdue.edu, or call 494-3751.

Adaptive Programs

The Adaptive Programs division of the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) can arrange for assistance, auxiliary aids, or related services if you think a temporary or permanent disability might prevent you from gaining access to departmental or university resources listed at the ODOS website. Contact: 494-1247 or http://www.purdue.edu/odos/

Non-Discrimination

The instructor will not knowingly infringe anyone's rights and will do his best to maintain access and safety for all students.