

English 396--Multimedia Writing

Fall 2001

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Syllabus

TWI

PW Program

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Section 0101
LAEB B274
T/Th 10:30-11:45

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Overview

This course will help students understand the principles and practices of multimedia design and implementation, with emphasis on the function and practice of writing in multimedia contexts. Students will closely examine various multimedia products, doing oral and written analyses of a number of such pieces. Course readings will focus on how different media communicate meaning, shape our reactions, and interact with one another. Students will also create a number of individual multimedia projects for the Web, using Web authoring software, as well as propose, plan, and develop a group project relevant to their work in their major areas. They will also interview people engaged in multimedia writing.

Required Texts

Lynch, Patrick J., and Sarah Horton. *Web Style Guide : Basic Design Principles for Creating Web Sites*. Second Edition. Yale UP, 2002.

Note: This book won't be published until October 1, 2001, so we will use the Web-based (earlier) version in the interim:

<http://info.med.yale.edu/caim/manual/>

Course Goals

- Understand the techniques, technologies, culture, and problems of multimedia writing in the digital age.
- Use, adapt, and evaluate various writing technologies put to use for specific rhetorical purposes in multimedia contexts.
- Learn to evaluate and apply effective principles of document design in print and digitally.
- Develop multiple and flexible online work strategies to manage a Web-based portfolio.
- Learn and apply strategies for collaborating successfully and equitably with peers on various activities and major projects using a variety of communication technologies.
- Develop strategies for planning, researching, and developing documents which effectively respond to specific professional situations, problems, or research issues in a the student's major area.

Course Projects & Activities

1. Web-Based Portfolio

Using the *Web Style Guide* (2nd edition) and various other Web-based models, you will develop a professional, Web-based portfolio that will consist of a Web resume and samples of your professional or coursework (including Projects 2 and 3 below). This project will involve conducting individual research into the professional world of your chosen area of study (including job ads and other employment-related documents), your development of a complete hypertext resume, and the design of a Web site and navigational system that best represents your work and appeals to prospective employers, professionals, other students in your major area of study, and general readers. Successful Web portfolios will be showcased at the Professional Writing Program's forthcoming Student Portfolio site and may also be presented at the Program's Teaching and Technology Showcase at the end of

the semester. (40% of course grade.)

2. Client-Based Multimedia Project

In this collaborative project, you will work with a real client to develop multimedia documents for Web-based, CD-ROM, or PowerPoint delivera (or all three, depending upon client needs. Once a client has been arranged, You will conduct client research and analysis of existing documents, propose a plan for integrating multimedia writing, design the media, and present the project to the client in a formal project portfolio. Your work will be showcased on your own Web-based portfolio as an example of your collaborative work. (Collaborative; 30% of course grade.)

3. Individual Creative or Professional Project

Working individually, students will develop existing or new content for a creative or professional multimedia project that can be showcased in each person's Web-based portfolio. Examples include interactive hypertext fiction or poetry with multimedia components, essays or research projects incorporating substantial multimedia components, newsletters or other publications, multimedia PowerPoint demonstrations on a selected topic, a digital film, or photographic essay. Early in the semester, you will be asked to write a formal proposal and begin your work on this project after receiving my feedback. (Individual; 30% of course grade.)

Grading

Web-Based Portfolio	40%
Client-Based Multimedia Project	30%
Individual Project	30%
Total	100%

You should also plan on participating in in-class projects and learning modules throughout the semester. Failure to complete these projects on-time and consistently may significantly impact your final grade.

All major assignments will be graded on the standard letter-grade scale: A=100-90 B=89-80 C=79-70 D=69-60 F=59 or below.

Technology Requirements

In order to participate fully in the course, you should already be able to use the technology platform and applications listed below.

- MS Windows
- Microsoft Office (Word and PowerPoint)
- Netscape Communicator and Internet Explorer
- Email program (including attachments)

Technology Responsibilities

Because the exchange of information and materials in this class will be almost entirely electronic, familiarity with certain technologies is crucial for participation and success in the course. If you need any assistance now or at any point during the semester, please do not hesitate to ask. Very early in the semester, you will be asked to demonstrate that you have can meet these responsibilities:

- Have access to your Career Account.
- Set up your @purdue.edu email address and regularly check your email.
- Become proficient sending and receiving email attachments, resolving file compatibility issues, and following email decorum.

- Check the course calendar before the beginning of each class.

Since so much of the coursework will depend upon your ability to use multimedia authoring software, we will spend time (usually on Thursdays) learning a wide variety of technology modules. As the semester progresses, you will become more proficient with unfamiliar computer technologies and applications, such as html editors (Frontpage, Dreamweaver, Composer) and web-page design, desktop publishing applications, and graphics editors.

Maintain back-up copies of all assignments via your home directory, disks, and/or email attachments to yourself.

Course Technologies

In addition to using the communication technologies listed below, students will have access to the WPA/TWI production office (Heavilon 204-E), which houses a Gateway PC that runs desktop publishing software, Dreamweaver, Photoshop, and Omnipage OCR software. The key to that office will be available for check-out from Julie Canaan in Heavilon 302 (the Professional Writing office) during normal business hours (8-4). The office and computer can only be used to complete work directly related to course assignments.

Students will also have access to two additional multimedia development labs:

- Heavilon 402 (Multimedia Instructional Preparation Lab): This lab is currently undergoing substantial upgrades in equipment and software and will be ready for use around October 1. At present, the lab houses an iMAC, and 3 PowerMacs, each with a variety of multimedia authoring software and scanning capabilities.
- LAEB 3292: This lab, run by the School of Education, is open to students taking English 396M as part of the P3T3 Project (Purdue Program for Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology). It contains 14 MAC cubes capable of editing digital video, and another 10 machines with sophisticated multimedia authoring software. Digital video equipment will also be available for check-out. Tech-lab assistants will assist students with projects as needed.

Additional Assistance: The [Division of Instructional Services](#) maintains a large set of SmartForce CD learning tutorials that students can use to learn a wide variety of multimedia authoring software. Each CD teaches numerous and related software technologies and are available for \$5 each. [View the list of available CDs](#) or take a tour at the [SmartForce Web site](#).



Collaborative Work

Collaborative work is a required component of the course. You and your project team members are responsible for updating one another and me about your progress with Project 2. In addition, you also are responsible for negotiating together all aspects of your work, including planning, drafting, revising, file managing, and scheduling of assignments. When I assign a collaborative project, I will provide you with explicit guidelines for successful collaboration. I will also ask individual group members to complete [Collaborative Evaluation Forms](#). The principles of collaboration I encourage students to follow are contained in the brochure, [Group Work and Collaborative Writing](#) <<http://www-honors.ucdavis.edu/vohs/index.html>>.

Attendance

Attendance is required at all scheduled electronic and face-to-face

(F2F) meetings. Since you will be working in project teams and conducting peer review and user-testing of each other's work throughout much of the semester, so regular attendance is a must. Three absences may result in your final grade being lowered by as much as a letter grade. More than three absences can result in a failing grade for the course. Excused absences may be granted for religious holidays or university-sponsored events, provided you make a written request to me no less than two weeks in advance and that you complete any required work before the due date. Being excessively or regularly late for class or team meetings, both electronic and F2F, can also be counted as an absence.

Late Work

The majority of missed class assignments cannot be "made up." If a serious and unavoidable problem arises, however, you should contact me in writing prior to the deadline to determine whether or not an extension for the work will or will not be granted.



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