PROSPECTUS UPPER-DIVISION
UNDERGRADUATE COURSE SYLLABUS

MULTIMODAL WRITING FOR NEW MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS

Hybrid (On-Site/Online) Course
Instructor: Dr. Susan Rauch
E-mail: susan.rauchttu@gmail.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is writing and design intensive. This course will immerse students in the theory and practice of multimodal and multimedia writing for new media environments. In the 21st century, many companies are shifting toward alternative digital new media to present visual and written communication. Digital new media introduces writers to new methods of writing, designing, and presenting electronic content in a new information economy. Regardless of rhetorical situation (context and audience), workplace professionals rely on technology to quickly access, use, manage, and exchange information via electronically written content. This course introduces students to digital new media and multimodal strategies used for effective interactive communication in professional writing environments. Students will assess the rhetorical situation of digital environments used in the workplace including structured versus non-linear writing, digital archiving, social media applications, and interconnectivity between human and digital interfaces. Students are also introduced to new theories in the applied practice of digital writing for electronic content and new media such as hypertext theory (Carter) and economics of attention (Lanham).

COURSE DESIGN

This class is workshop-based and production-oriented that includes individual and group work. The course also includes a community-engaged component where students will interact with their campus or local community to collect data and artifacts for their projects.

We will closely follow Arola, Sheppard, and Ball’s Writer/Designer: Guide to Making Multimodal Projects for choosing and designing projects specific to technical workplace writing. Students will choose a mode of communication e.g. website, wiki, interactive mobile technologies/applications, social media, webinar, etc. representative of technical writing and editing of electronic content designed for the workplace. Genres may include but are not limited to digital manuals, instructional content, informational content, educational guides for health literacy or promotion, etc. Student projects must incorporate visual, textual, and/or aural modes of communication e.g. data visualization (graphs, illustrations, etc.), videos, presentation tools, photos.

The course is broken into four sections: Foundations, which looks at the fundamentals of digital composition; Modes of Communication, which covers the theory and practice of multimodal composition for digital new media content; Applied Theory, Practice, and Technologies, which considers the planning and creation of written and visual content for online materials including the gathering, writing, editing, and publishing of online content. Students are also introduced to new theories in the applied practice of digital writing for electronic content and new media such as hypertext theory (Carter) and economics of attention (Lanham).

Students will be required to make active use of Twitter for interactive discussions. We will be using a designated course Twitter to curate digital storytelling and share information with one another. The class will build a network of followers who will consume our curated information and share information with us.

LEARNED OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, a successful student will have gained competence in the following areas:

1. Familiarity with and understanding of key research texts, theoretical concepts, and methodologies in digital and visual rhetoric, writing for new media content, and related areas.
2. Ability to engage in intelligent and meaningful scholarly discussions on the topics covered in the course.
3. Understanding of key principles and techniques related to the conduct of research in digital communication and interdisciplinary research more generally.
4. Improved ability to research a topic in digital writing and communication and applied learned concepts to digital writing environments.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of learned concepts in rhetoric, writing/editing, design, ethics, culture, and applied technology.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance:** Class attendance is required. Excessive unexplained absences will reduce your final course grade. If you know that you need to miss class, please let me know ahead of time if possible. **If you do not complete an assignment, it constitutes an automatic failure for the course regardless of standing grade.**

**Assignments:** You must complete all required assignments (listed above) to receive a passing grade in the course. Late papers are not accepted unless you make prior arrangements with me.

**Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:** Do not turn in someone else’s work as your own. All work must be done by you. Failing to adhere to these guidelines constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Failure to document sources and/or correctly integrate material into your written assignments is also considered plagiarism. Whenever you incorporate material from an outside source, whether electronic or print, you must document the source of this material and you must quote, paraphrase, or summarize the material correctly.

Any form of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in an automatic “0” for the assignment. At the instructor’s discretion, it may also result in an “F” for the final course grade and punishment by the university.

**Extenuating Circumstances:** If at any time during the semester, personal crises prevent you from performing to the best of your abilities in the course, please notify me as early as possible. Before making exceptions to any of the policies stated in this syllabus, I have the right to request appropriate documentation. This might include letters from physicians, counselors, and/or academic advisors.

**Disabilities:** Students with documented disabilities can expect instructors to make appropriate accommodations. Please contact me early in the semester if this applies to you.

**READINGS**


*The New Digital Storytelling: Creating Narratives with New Media* by Bryan Alexander

*Design for New Media: Interaction design for multimedia and the web* by Lori Barfield

*Writing and Editing for Digital Media, 2nd edition* by Brian Carroll.

**ADDITIONAL READINGS** (as assigned; available through links on the course site)

*Virtual Collaborative Writing in the Workplace: Computer-Mediated Communication Technologies and Processes* Ed. Beth L. Hewett (select readings)


*The Mobile Story* Ed. Jason Farman

*Storytelling in Medicine: How narrative can improve practice* by Colin Robertson and Gareth Clegg (select readings)

**TOOLS & TECHNOLOGIES**

You will need the following technology and tools to complete the work for this course:

Multimodal Writing and Editing for Digital Media in the Workplace
- A reliable computer, with sound card and graphics card
- Digital camera or cell phone camera with the ability to transfer images to your computer
- Microphone or headset
- Speakers or headphones
- Flash plug-in, latest version
- Adobe Acrobat Reader or Pro
- Microsoft Word
- Web Accounts with Twitter, Marvel Prototyping App, Google Forms, and SlideShare.
- Gmail account

PROJECTS AND EVALUATIVE CRITERIA
There are no exams in this course. Grading is based on a 1000-point scale.

100  Rhetorical Genre Analysis: Digital Text and Genres for Workplace Writing
50  Research Methods 1: Secondary and preliminary primary (e.g. surveys, interviews, social media)
100  Proposal: Pitching Multimodal Project e.g. mode of communication
100  Multimodal Project: Mockup and Storyboard in PPT
   - Wireframe Content Design and Organization
   - Draft written and visual content
   - Import into mode of communication or use Marvel App for digital prototype
100  Research Methods 2: UX testing
   - Usability/UX Test plan and Testing
   - Usability Test Report
100  Final Deliverable with Revisions of written and visual
100  Multimedia Presentation of Final Deliverable
200  Final Reflection
50  Twitter Discussion
100  Participation