

ENGLISH 419:

MULTIMEDIA WRITING

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Writing with multiple media means doing more than choosing the right words for the page. It involves choices in genre, formatting, color, arrangement, typography, and other visual factors. One of the most divisive of these visual factors is motion. In what cases can motion strengthen an argument? In what cases is it unnecessary, distracting, or (pun intended) “flashy”? To this end, this class will explore genres that literally make arguments through motion, including animated gifs, animated infographics, video explainers, and other interactive graphics.

During the first half of the semester we will focus on general tenants of rhetoric and visual argument, exploring the intersections between visual, written, and aural communication. In the second half of the semester we will turn to specific projects in which students will use motion to enhance particular messages for particular audiences.

Students learn both theory and practice of multimodal writing through readings, blog posts, quizzes, software tutorials, design exercises, and a series of creative projects. **This course requires no prior knowledge of graphic design, animation, or any specialized software.**

INSTRUCTOR:

Daniel Liddle

OFFICE:

HEAV 303 E

HOURS:

Weds 12:30-2:30

EMAIL:

dliddle@purdue.edu

EMAIL POLICY:

There are two major factors that influence when and how I respond to your emails. First, I may take as much as 24 hours to respond to your emails; I do not live online. Second, if I don't respond in a week, bug me about it; Sometimes I need a reminder.

OFFICE HOURS POLICY:

I spend a lot of time in my office, but it's always a good idea to lock in an appointment verbally or through email the day before you stop by.

COURSE GOALS

CRITICAL

Evaluate the rhetorical effectiveness of specific media artifacts, examining both compositional elements and the artifact's distribution in popular culture.

Identify specific genre conventions of multimedia artifacts and **compare** instances of one genre convention as it appears in different multimedia artifacts

Understand the different rhetorical affordances and limitations of print-based texts, hypertexts, images, videos, and animated elements.

Interrogate the binary opposition of multimedia artifacts as needlessly “flashy,” “decorative,” “pretty,” “cosmetic,” in opposition to “plain,” “simple,” or “clear” print texts.

PRACTICAL

Manage a range of visual assets across individual projects and programs. Know when to create your own visual assets and when to draw from online sources.

Design a range of multimedia products using color, typography, shape, and motion to support the tone and credibility of the end-product.

Demonstrate competency with multimedia design programs including Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Premiere, and Adobe After Effects

Appraise the workload of a multimedia project in order to submit a final version on time. This should include planning time, production time, rendering time, and delivery time.

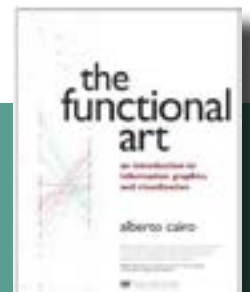
REQUIRED MATERIALS

A USB Storage Device of at least 16 GB that can be used to transport large project files to/from class.

A Writing Utensil and Notebook Paper that can be used for taking notes and sketching your ideas before you jump into the computer design programs.

Access to the Adobe Creative Cloud. This can be obtained for free through the on-campus computers at Purdue. If you want to work from home, the suite of programs can be purchased for 19.99 per month (along with a 30 day free trial).

TEXTBOOK INFORMATION: The textbook for this class is Alberto Cairo's *The Functional Art*. You may use an electronic copy or a physical one, but you must be able to refer to the text in class.



MAJOR PROJECTS

1 Rhetorical Analysis Essay

For the first assignment of the semester you will write an analytical essay about the rhetorical elements used in an infographic, animated video, or gif. Through this analysis you will articulate the ways that these elements connect to particular audiences.

2 Convention Comparison Essay

For the second assignment you will write an essay that locates a specific visual convention in motion graphics. You will then trace that convention across three texts and evaluate its effectiveness in each text.

3 Recipe-in-Motion Case Study

For this assignment you will create an instructional video that teaches a user how to complete a recipe. The video will consist mainly of top-down views of the food being made, with text markers of ingredients and instructions appearing on or near the developing items.

4 Short Explainer Case Study

For this assignment you will create an animated title and graphic that reflects a specific set of technical information that I will give you. The explainer must represent the information in an engaging, novel way while maintaining the credibility of the information.

5 Independent Project

For the last project of the class you will propose an individual project of your choice. The project can be creative or practical, but it must demonstrate the critical and technical skills acquired through the course of the semester.

Blog Posts

At the start of the semester you will set up a course blog. On each day a reading is due, you will post a brief summary of the reading, an example that illustrates the reading, and a question for the class. You may be asked to discuss your blog posts with the class.

GRADING

WEIGHTED COMPONENTS

Rhetorical Analysis Essay	5%
Convention Comparison Essay	20%
Recipe-In-Motion Case	15%
Video Explainer Case	15%
Independent Project	30%
Blog Posts, Exercises, and Quizzes	15%
Total	100%

GRADING SCALE

Percentage

100- 93.00	A	76.99-73.00	C
92.99-90.00	A-	72.99-70.00	C-
89.99-87.00	B+	69.99-67.00	D+
86.99-83.00	B	66.99-63.00	D
82.99-80.00	B-	62.99-60.00	D-
79.99-77.00	C+	BELOW 60%	F

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 an extension for the work will or will not be granted.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

As Purdue students, I expect you to adhere to the guidelines set forth by the Dean of Students in “Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students.” The guide defines academic dishonesty as follows: Academic dishonesty is defined as: “the commitment of acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest.” [University Senate Document 72-18, December 15, 1972]”

If I find you have committed academic dishonesty, you will receive an automatic failing grade (50%) on the current assignment. I will also ask to schedule a meeting to discuss the incident in question. I also reserve the right to report the incident to the Office of the Dean of Students.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is required at all scheduled electronic and face-to-face (F2F) meetings. When you work in project teams you also will be required to attend any scheduled out-of-class meetings with your team to complete course assignments. **Four absences will result in your final grade being lowered by one letter grade. More than four 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.

PHONE POLICY

By this point in your academic career you should know the difference between respectful and disrespectful phone use. I have no problem with checking your text messages in class, but I do mind if you are distracted by your phone or if it is distracting to others in the class. If your phone becomes a distraction, points may be deducted from the “blog posts and exercises” category of your grade.