Assignment 4: Animated Data Graphic Case Study

**Overview:**

For the fourth major assignment you will need to create an animated infographic that will support pre-existing written material. Like the previous case, you will need to use After Effects to complete the assignment, and much of the grade will be determined based on your ability to explicate your design process. In addition to the graphics you create, you will submit 1) a pre-production write up 2) a post-production write-up.

**Goals:**

During this project you will learn:

* How to develop visual expressions of primarily textual information
* How to communicate serious messages with animated content
* How to build graphics that simultaneously inform and raise interest in a topic
* How to create visual materials when many materials have already been created

**The Case:**

Once again you work as the “Assistant Digital Content Coordinator,” but this time for the Indiana Department of Public Health. Your primary responsibility is to develop materials that help the public understand major health issues throughout the state. Usually this boils down to creating image-heavy documents that can be easily printed, such as brochures, pamphlets, or infographics. This map and infographic are representative examples:

<http://www.in.gov/isdh/26447.htm>

However, you have created the occasional video, such as one found here:

<http://www.in.gov/isdh/26154.htm>

One day your boss calls you into her office and assigns you to work some graphics that address the growing concern about the Zika virus throughout the state. She tells you that the department wants to give the public some way to understand whether they are threatened by the virus and what they should do about it. Though there are resources on the State Department’s website, many of these resources are visually boring, and few people are actually using them to find out about the virus. The CDC has some more interesting materials, including several infographic fact sheets, but your boss worries that some residents won’t search that far.

However, instead of a flyer or static infographic, she tells you she wants you to build a more dynamic graphic, one that is better fit to spread on social media sites like Facebook or Twitter. Ultimately the graphics need to present a narrative about the Zika virus that will:

1. Inform the public about what the virus is.
2. Indicate the current threat-level for Indiana residents.
3. Includes some mention of what residents should be doing to prevent or avoid Zika, if anything.
4. Lead viewers to more in-depth sources of information on the ISDH website.

**Deliverables:**

You must create 1 video with the following elements.

* An series of animations that educate the viewer about the Zika virus. This should include at least one visualized statistic.
* A logo sting that directs the viewer back to the CDC or ISDH website for more information.
* This video should be no more than 90 seconds long, and the shorter the video the better. 45 seconds to 1 minute is the target length.

You must also create 1 “Title Graphic” that users would see before clicking on the video.

* This should be a 720 x 1280 static image.

**Research:**

You may use any statistics, facts, or outside information to make this graphic, but your video should reflect the research and statements that are already provided by the CDC. Your video does not have to be directed toward *every* resident of Indiana. Narrowing your focus, you might focus on pregnant women, travelers, pregnant travelers, or non-pregnant non-travelers. Each of these groups will require different information.

You should not spend very much time on outside research for this project. Use as much of the existing materials on the CDC website and the ISDH website as you can. You can even lift the titles of the CDC’s infographics if you so choose. Most of your time working with the data should be spent deciding which facts are most appropriate for your chosen audience.

**Graphics:**

Take a significant amount of time to look at the relationship between text and image in the existing graphics published by the CDC:

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/fs-posters/index.html>

Some of these graphics are designed extremely well, others are graphically haphazard and goofy. Look at the images used to explain the virus. Look at the images used to explain what people should do. How can you reinforce and build on these graphical moves when you remediate these messages for a video format?

**Deliverables (3 Documents):**

*Preproduction Write-Up*

This document will describe your plan for creating the video, including a decision of a color palette, a decision of typographic style, and short descriptions of 3 “inspiration” videos that demonstrate the direction you’re headed. **I strongly recommend discussing at least one of the CDC infographics on Zika as your inspiration**.

*Postproduction Write-Up*

This document will explain and defend the design choices made in the creation of the different video elements. In this write up you will be required to support your decisions using readings from the first half of the course.

**Grading and Timeline:**

All papers and videos will be graded and returned within one week of their submission. All papers will be submitted via the Blackboard “Submittables” folder. While the due dates for the documents will vary, the **due date for the video package is Friday, March 25th.**

Grading for the documents will be based on answers to the following questions:

* Is there a critical evaluation the materials put out by the CDC/ISDH?
* Are there critical connections between the project and other videos/images found online?
* Does the writing connect design decisions to the specific contingencies of the topic?
* Does the writing connect design decisions to the required audience?
* Does the writing explain the strengths and weaknesses of the designs?

Grading for the video will be based on the following questions:

* Does the video maintain a serious tone about the topic while still making the information interesting and engaging?
* Do the gifs display the data in ways that are clear and ethical?
* Does the video include one statistic reinforced with a graphic?
* Does the video clearly establish an audience and purpose?
* Do the video elements transition on and off the sequence in effective ways?
* Is there a clear choice in typographic style?
* Is there a clear choice in the colors used throughout the gifs?

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| Preproduction Write-Up | 25 Points |
| Postproduction Write Up | 25 Points |
| Video and Title Image | 100 Points |
|  | **Total = 150 Points Possible** |

These 150 points represent 15% of your final grade for the course.