English 460: Writing and New Media

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Writing and New Media introduces students to the theory and practice of new media and asks how such technologies have changed the realities of writing creatively, academically, and professionally. We will explore questions like the history, definition, and characteristics of new media; the nature of hypertext and its implications for the writing process; the integration of text with sound and graphics; and the implications of digital media for civil society and civic engagement.

Course Materials

Stolley, K. (2011). How to design and write web pages today. Santa Barbara, CA:
        Greenwood. ISBN-13: 978-0313380389

A (free) Codecademy account (www.codecademy.com)

A reliable method of digital storage that doesn't require an Internet connection (i.e. flash drive)

Course Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students will:

• Understand and apply principles of rhetoric and document design to a variety
        of communication situations, including written, oral, and visual ones.

• Apply critical thinking, reading, listening, and writing skills to specific
        communication tasks or problems.

• Demonstrate a consideration for purpose, audience, and context in
        communicating and create documents that are 'user-friendly' in content,
        structure, and design.

• Demonstrate an ethical sensitivity to language, including its inflammatory and
        persuasive aspects.

• Make use of credible, reliable, and relevant source material (both primary and
        secondary) in a manner that is appropriate for specific communication

situations.

• Write documents in a variety of electronic environments.

• Manage large projects effectively by allowing adequate time to write, complete research, revise, and receive feedback.

• Produce a variety of documents that are grammatically and technically correct.

Policies

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the theft of intellectual material, including (but not limited to):

- Turning in your work for more than one class without advance written consent of the instructor of each class
- Paraphrasing poorly
- Citing incorrectly
- Copying the work of others

Plagiarism is more thoroughly defined in the Student Handbook (see handbook for further explanation).

Plagiarism will result in at least one of the following (and may engender further consequences depending on the instance):

- Failure of assignment
- Failure of class
- Expulsion of student from university

I report instances of plagiarism to the dean regardless of intent or severity.

Late Work

I do not accept late work. Individual exceptions may be made to this policy if you consult with the instructor at least 48 hours prior to the assignment's due date. Missing class is not an excuse for turning in an assignment late. Computer problems are also not an acceptable excuse—plan ahead. Keep multiple copies of your work in different places. Use common sense.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. You are allowed three absences for this course. Absences exceeding that amount result in failure of the course. I ONLY excuse absences related to SMSU extracurricular events (e.g., club activities, sporting activities, attending conferences, etc.) and military training. For your absence to be excused, you need to provide written documentation in advance. I do take

into consideration factors such as the weather and family emergencies. Regardless of the reason for your absence, you are responsible for learning the material you missed. In class writing and quizzes cannot be made up.

Disability

If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please inform me as soon as possible so we can discuss methods of accommodation.

Contacting the instructor

The best way to contact me is through email: **amanda.bemer@smsu.edu**. I usually check my email several times a day and try to respond in a timely manner; however, if you do not receive an answer within 24 hours, I may not have received your email. Also, be sure to specify in your email if you require a response. Feel free to contact me again. I will communicate with you through email as well. You are responsible for checking your email and providing me with a current email address. Please add me to your address book so that you can receive my messages safely.

Expectations

Students are expected to come to each class session fully prepared to discuss the assigned readings. All assignments are due at the beginning of the class hour on the day listed unless otherwise indicated. If you believe you should be exempt from this policy at any time, please submit your reason in writing to the instructor**.** Computer failure, accidentally erased files, and printer problems are not legitimate excuses. Be sure to digitally back up all of your work in at least *two* locations to prevent lost files in the event of computer or flash drive failure.

Discrimination

Harassment on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or sexual orientation is prohibited. See page 43 of your Student Handbook for further information. The instructor reserves the right to ask students in violation of the discrimination policy to leave. Repeated offenses may result in (at the minimum) failure of the course.

Major Course Assignments

In addition to the course assignments below, there will be smaller assignments for credit. Participation will also factor into your grade.

Twitter 5%

You will make a Twitter account (or use one you already have) to interact with classmates and discuss class topics, in addition to other requirements that will be reviewed in class.

TechnoLiteracies "Essay" 5%
You will create a visual representation of your technological literacies.

Social Media Analysis Paper 20%
You will choose a social media object (we'll discuss this further in class) and write a paper-length rhetorical analysis of it. We'll discuss criteria for analysis in class as well as possible topics.

Website Redesign Project 20%
You'll find a website that needs design improvements and write a proposal on how you would improve it, which will include a mockup of how the improved website would look and a justification memo explaining why your changes have improved the site.

New Media Application Presentation with Fact Sheet 5%
You'll present a report about a new media application, such as Flash, podcasting, etc. The point of this presentation is to learn more about a specific new media application that we won't cover in-depth in class. This assignment involves both a presentation and a hard-copy one-page fact sheet you'll distribute to the class.

Web Design Project 35%
You'll create a web site for a client of your choosing. This project includes (at least) a proposal, memo of understanding for the client, schedule, usability testing, progress report memos, reflection letter for the instructor, and actual web site.

Other assignments and participation 15%

Grading
I grade individual assignments using the following letter system:

Letter	%		Letter	%
A	95%		C	75%
A-	90%		C-	70%
B+	88%		D+	68%
B	85%		D	65%
B-	80%		D-	60%
C+	78%		F	59% or lower

End-of-semester overall grades use the following system:

%	Letter
93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+

84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
0-59	F