

WRTG 3306: writing as information design ii

29297 // Thompson 105 // MWF 8-8:50am

course description.

from the Undergraduate Bulletin:

An advanced course in rhetorical approaches to writing for digital media. Students create multimodal digital texts and leave the course with portfolio items. The course takes students through the writing process from proposal development through the recursive global and local drafting and revision stages to the final reflective piece. Required for the Writing major & minor, Professional Writing track. Elective in the Writing major & minor, General Writing track. Prerequisite: WRTG 3305.

Dr. Allison H. Hitt

office // Thompson 323
hours // MW 11am-2pm
 T 11:30am-1pm
 & by appt.
phone // 501-450-5607



ahitt@uca.edu

from me:

Building on document and visual design principles learned in Writing as Information Design I, this course takes a more technical approach to information design: from research and analysis to designing content to effectively meeting clients' and users' needs. Professional writing must be usable and accessible to be effective, and we will learn about the rhetorical and technological issues involved in designing information for users with specific and diverse needs.

course goals & objectives.

In WRTG 3306, individuals and teams will do the following:

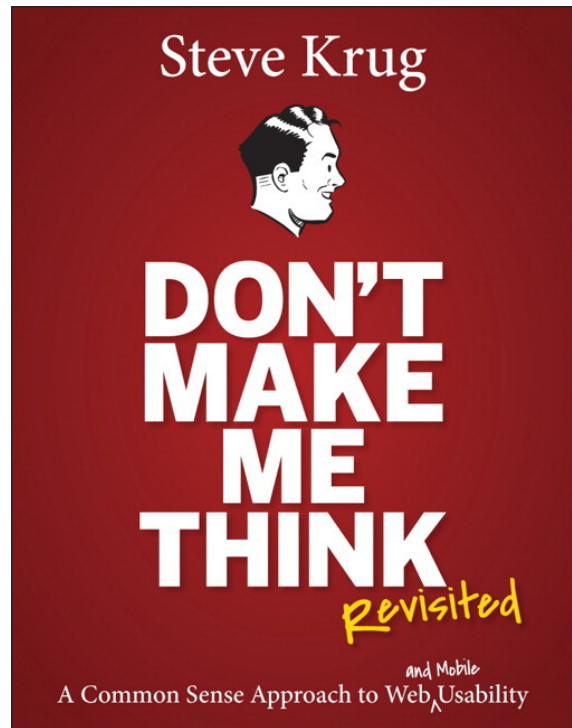
- gain awareness of usability and accessibility issues in information design
- analyze third party digital texts for usability and accessibility issues
- apply usability principles, e.g., website inspection terminology and testing
- apply accessibility principles, e.g., functionality and understandability
- design content that is usable and accessible to a diverse range of users
- work effectively and productively in teams

texts & materials.



A WEB FOR EVERYONE
Designing Accessible User Experiences
by Sarah Horton and Whitney Quesenbery
Foreword by Aaron Gustafson

Rosenfeld



required.

1. Horton, Sarah, and Whitney Quesenbery. *A Web for Everyone: Designing Accessible User Experiences*. Brooklyn: Rosenfeld Media, 2013. Print. ISBN-13: 978-1-933820-97-2
2. Krug, Steve. *Don't Make Me Think, Revisited: A Common Sense Approach to Web and Mobile Usability*. 4th ed. New Riders, 2014. Print. ISBN-13: 978-0-321-96551-6

additional.

I will make additional readings available as PDFs through Google Classroom, which you will need to access regularly throughout the semester to submit your work and to access unit calendars, assignment prompts, and course notes.



Download the classroom app!

All assignments and announcements can be accessed through the Stream. The syllabus, course calendar, and class notes can be accessed from the About page.

assignments.

project 1: persona (10%)

The first step in designing usable and accessible content is learning about your users. Developing personas requires you to research users' abilities, aptitudes, and attitudes and combine that information into a "fictional but realistic character" (Horton & Quesenbery 14). You will develop a persona for a UCA student with a disability. The goal is **not** to create a stereotyped character but to do some research and to think critically about different identities. **(due 1/22)**

project 2: accessibility & usability protocols (15%)

Before you develop your own content, we will spend time discussing accessibility and usability issues of pre-existing digital texts. Based on accessibility principles (and the WCAG: <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>) and the usability guidelines outlined by Krug, you will develop two deliverables: a usability testing protocol and accessibility assessment protocol that are suitable and adaptable for most digital texts/projects. **(due 2/19)**

project 3: group usability testing (40%)

Understanding how users use websites is critical to designing your own digital texts. For this assignment, you will work in teams to evaluate the website of a real client, the Department of Writing at UCA (<http://uca.edu/writing>). As a team, you will 1) construct a website inspection report to preliminarily evaluate the website and evaluate the website individually, 2) develop a usability test adapted to the purposes of this website and conduct testing, and 3) collect and synthesize your data for a recommendation report. **(due 3/18)**

project 4: UCA promotional video (25%)

For your final project, you will work individually or in small groups of 2-3 to partner with a campus entity (an organization or department) in order to produce an informational, instructional, or promotional video. Although you should bring your own ideas to this project, the final result will be based predominantly on the needs of your client. You will produce a brief client report, a captioned video, and an accessible transcript. **(due 4/27)**

student-led reading discussion (5%)

Once this semester, you will sign up for a date to present on that day's reading. You can structure it however you want, but you should come prepared with a brief overview of key concepts that you post to the note-taking Google doc, a

practical application (an example or activity), and 2-3 good questions to prompt discussion. This is informal. Don't sweat it, but do the reading.

collaborative note-taking (5%)

Everyone processes information differently based on our own understandings, interpretations, abilities, and beliefs/assumptions. Twice throughout the semester, you will sign up to take notes for the day and post them to the collaborative note-taking document on Classroom.

grading policy.

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|---|---------------|--|
| A | 90-100% | Your work is impressive. The final product has both excellent content and document design. Your work is thorough, coherent, and organized in a useful fashion. It demonstrates a superior understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale. |
| B | 80-89% | Your work is satisfactory. The final product meets the standards of writing and demonstrates a step forward in your learning process. It is sufficiently developed, organized, and supported, and you have demonstrated a solid understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale. |
| C | 70-79% | Your work is okay. The final product may have clear but undeveloped ideas. It likely contains some errors in logic, mechanics, or grammar. |
| D | 60-69% | Your work needs substantial revision. The final product may have incomplete information, lack clear organization and design, and have serious grammar or mechanical issues. |
| F | 59% and below | Your work is unacceptable. Your final product does not fit the assignment parameters, is underdeveloped, or is mechanically and grammatically incomprehensible. |

course policies.

Accessibility. I am committed to creating a learning environment that is inclusive to different learning and composing styles. Accessibility is a collaborative effort, and if we can do something to make the classroom more accessible, please let me know at any point throughout the semester.

Feedback. I will provide written feedback on each major assignment that you submit. Please read that feedback carefully prior to emailing me about your grade. **I will not respond to grade inquiries the day I return an assignment.** If you have questions about my feedback, please email me to set up a meeting or stop by my office hours.

Late Work. Assignments are due by the beginning of class, unless otherwise specified on our course schedule. If you're struggling to complete an assignment, please let me know. I'm always happy to chat about ideas or read drafts. Otherwise, major assignments will be reduced by one letter grade per business day. **NOTE:** If you have an emergency or require an extension, I'm happy to work with you as long as you notify me before the project is due.

Respect. You are expected to behave professionally in your contributions to discussions, feedback given to your peers, interactions with the instructor, and the work you do on class assignments. We will be working with content and issues that may be new, weird, or controversial. I ask that you suspend judgment, ask questions about your assumptions, and be reflective of your ideas. **Remember, you do not have to agree with someone to treat them, their ideas, and their work respectfully.**

Technology. Technology is an integral part of the writing process, and we will be exploring a range of design technologies to give you hands-on experience with the professional technologies and software used to design documents. We will use Google Classroom to submit all work and to access calendars, readings, assignment prompts, and course notes.

You will be expected to check your email regularly and to respond promptly (just as you will expect me to do). All emails to me regarding this class should include "3306" in the subject line and should be respectful and professional.

UCA policies.

Academic Integrity. The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the *Student Handbook*. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy. (<http://uca.edu/integrity/>)

Writing Department. Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional borrowing or stealing of another's words, thoughts, or ideas and passing them off as your own. If a student in a Writing Department course turns in a paper that includes an extended passage that has been a.) written for him or her by someone else for pay or as a favor, or b.) copied from a print or electronic source written by another author, even if some of the words have been changed, that student will immediately be dropped from the course, receiving a WF grade.

If a student in a Writing Department course turns in a paper that has borrowed from other sources and fails to give complete and unambiguous credit to every source (e.g. quotation marks, in-text citations, or the bibliography is missing or incomplete), that paper will receive a grade of 0 (zero).

The Writing Center has developed a useful handout for how to avoid plagiarism: <http://uca.edu/writingcenter/files/2012/06/TS-AvoidingPlagiarism.pdf>

Accommodations. The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Support Services, 450-3613. (<http://uca.edu/disability/eligibility-for-services/>)

Attendance. If a student in the Writing Department misses two weeks' worth of classes—i.e., six classes of a MWF course, four classes of a TTH or MW course, or two classes of a one night a week course—and/or a student in a MWF or TTH class misses a week's worth of classes consecutively without contacting the instructor, the instructor will drop the student from the course.

Building Emergency Plan. An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for Thompson Hall will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

In the event of an evacuation order, classes that meet in Thompson 105 will exit through the east door and reconvene at the Harding Centennial Plaza fountain to await further instructions from campus police. In the event of a shelter in place order, we will lock doors and stay away from windows. In the event of a tornado, we will shelter in first floor stairwells, restrooms, or kitchen.

Disruptive Behavior. Any student whose behavior regularly interferes with the instructor's ability to conduct class and foster student learning (or who severely impedes the conduct of class) may be dropped from the class. Students dropped for disruptive behavior will receive a grade of WF, and a record of this disciplinary action will remain on the student's university file.

Student Evaluations. Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on the Monday of the thirteenth week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on "Evals" in the top right.

Title IX Disclosure. If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to "student-on-student" or "employee-on-student"), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs, and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on the specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>.