

DOCUMENT DESIGN & VISUAL RHETORIC

ENG 430 | section 001

MWF 12–12:50pm | Robert Bell 284



Dr. Allison Hitt
she/her/hers



ahhitt@bsu.edu

Zoom office hours: Mondays 2–4pm, Thursdays
12–2pm, & by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

BSU course catalog: Explores visual rhetoric, particularly focused on theories and best practices for the production of document designs. Familiarizes students with processes and techniques for producing and refining professional document designs. Prereq: ENG 104 or 114.

from Dr. Allison:

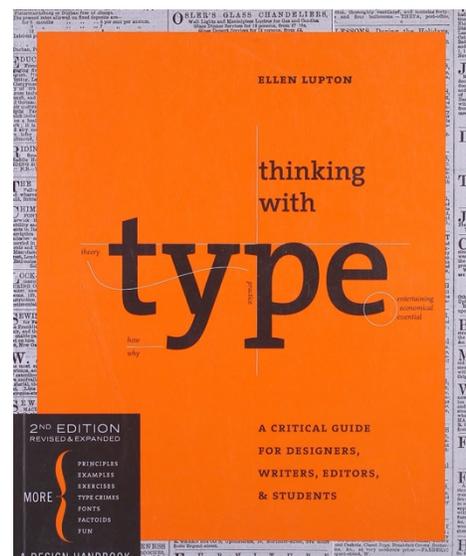
We often talk in writing courses about composing the **content** for print and digital texts, but another important part of the composing process is **design**. Designing information involves considering the structure (organizing & chunking information) and the elements (color, typeface, images & captions) that help readers understand and make meaning with texts. *Document design helps readers use the texts that we compose*. In ENG 430, we will discuss theories of accessible and usable document design and visual rhetoric and spend time analyzing the visual choices of professional texts. You will use professional design software to compose documents for different contexts and audiences in order to better understand the rhetorical, technical, and ethical dimensions of designing (as well as composing) texts.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Lupton, Ellen. *Thinking with Type: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, and Students*, 2nd ed. Princeton Architectural Press, 2010. 978-1568989693.

Adobe Creative Cloud for Students, \$50/year:
<https://sitecorecms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/technologystore/students/softwareforstudents>

woman with face mask icon: becris at flaticon.com
hand holding smart phone icon: freepik at flaticon.com



Questions about the syllabus? Email me: ahhitt@bsu.edu

LEARNING OUTCOMES

In ENG 430, students will learn to do the following:

- Evaluate and critique theories of document design and visual rhetoric
- Identify and employ strategies to read and analyze the images and visual documents they encounter in everyday life and in professional environments
- Practice the steps involved in the design of documents, including brainstorming, researching, sketching and prototyping, constructive critiquing, and revising
- Use design principles (contrast, repetition, alignment, proximity), color, typography, white space, and other visual design elements to clarify content and appeal to audiences
- Create documents using a range of design technology: Microsoft Word, Adobe software, and free design platforms
- Reflect on the quality and rhetorical effectiveness of the documents they design

ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Project 1 Syllabus Redesign (50 pts)**

For the first project, you will redesign a course syllabus. Your redesign will be informed by readings about design theories and principles, and it will introduce you to page design using Microsoft Word. Deliverables: syllabus, 1-page reflection

2. **Project 2 Event Flyer (50 pts)**

For the second project, you will design an event flyer. Your design will be informed by readings about visual rhetoric and grids, and it will introduce you to page design using Adobe InDesign. Deliverables: flyer, 1-page reflection

3. **Project 3 Résumé (150 pts)**

For the third project, you will locate a job or internship posting and create two résumés for that position: one using Microsoft Word and one using InDesign. This module will introduce you to tailoring the content and design of professional documents to specific situations, as well as the basics of typography. Deliverables: two résumés, 1-page reflection

4. **Project 4 Social Issue Zine (250 pts)**

For the final project, you will create a multi-page zine in two formats on a social issue of your choice. Although both versions will address the same issue, you will create a physical version and a digital version. The physical version will be composed with paper, photocopied or collaged elements, and hand lettering. The digital version will be composed with InDesign. This module will be informed by readings about embodied design and typography as rhetorical, expressive, and laden with meaning. Deliverables: Print zine, digital zine, 1-page reflection

5. Reading Discussions (100 pts)

Reading discussions will occur primarily online through the Canvas discussion board. Five times throughout the semester, you will write a 250-word response to the discussion prompts and engage with 2–3 other posts with a comment, question, or relevant example.

6. Visual Curation (50 pts)

All designers need inspiration—an infographic that visualizes data in a persuasive way, a free font to download or template to use, a soothing color palette, a flyer. Five times throughout the semester, you will add well-designed documents to our course Tumblr: docdesign.tumblr.com/. All posts must include a caption that describes the image and briefly contextualizes it within theories of document design or visual rhetoric.

EXTRA CREDIT: Take class notes (5 pts/day) for up to 25 points. Post reading notes to the discussion board (5 pts/reading) for up to 25 points. Post resources about mental health to the discussion board (5 pts/post) for up to 15 points. **30 points max**

EVALUATION CRITERIA

For each project, you will be assessed on your rhetorical choices: audience awareness, genre conventions, organization, accessible style, effective delivery, and persuasive rhetorical strategies. Each assignment will be accompanied by its own specific instructions and evaluation criteria.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
93-100%	90-92%	87-89%	83-86%	80-82%	77-79%	73-76%	70-72%	67-69%	63-66%	60-62%	59% & below
605-650	585-604	566-584	540-565	520-539	501-519	475-500	455-474	436-454	410-435	390-409	408 & below



I will provide written feedback on each major assignment that you submit. Please read that feedback carefully prior to emailing me about your grade.

COURSE POLICIES

Accessibility

I am committed to creating a classroom environment that is respectful of and inclusive to different learning and writing processes—whether that is in person or through Canvas. All the multimodal materials I share will be made accessible: videos will be captioned, audio will have transcripts, and images will be described. If we can work together to make the class more accessible, let me know.

Canvas Accessibility

Canvas provides a user experience that is easy, simple, and intuitive. Special attention has been paid to making Canvas screen-readable. The Rich Content Editor encourages users to create accessible content pages, e.g., text formatting is accomplished using styles. Canvas is designed to allow limited customization of colors and schemes to be accessible for all users. Find more information by visiting the Canvas Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT): <https://www.instructure.com/canvas/accessibility>

Zoom Accessibility

Zoom has a number of user-tested accessibility features, such as closed captioning, automatic transcripts, keyboard accessibility, and screen reader support. You can email access@zoom.us for additional support, open a support ticket at support.zoom.us, and read more about Zoom's accessibility features by visiting their accessibility page: <https://zoom.us/accessibility/faq>

Accommodations

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Attendance

I will take attendance this semester for contact tracing purposes only, i.e., to make sure that we stay adequately safe if someone in class gets sick. Because you will only come to class 1–2 times per week, I hope you will be able to attend. Now more than ever, use good judgment about coming to class if you are sick. Set boundaries with yourself about your physical and mental health. If you can, let me know about your absence prior to class; otherwise, follow up with me through email.

Basic Needs Security

Anyone who lacks access to sufficient food to eat or a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support: <http://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/dean-of-students>. If you are comfortable in doing so, let me know and I will direct you to appropriate resources. For example, Cardinal Kitchen is the campus food pantry, which is available for use to all undergraduate and graduate students.

COVID-19 Safety

Everyone on campus is required to wear a face mask while inside campus buildings. If you forget to bring a mask, you can grab one from the Cardinal Copy mask stand (RB 160). If you choose not to wear a mask during class (or refuse to wear a mask in a way that complies with CDC guidance), you will be asked to leave. We will also practice social distancing in the classroom, and there will *not* be a point this semester where we

are all in the classroom at the same time (details about what day of class you will attend are available on Canvas). These safety guidelines are nonnegotiable: I care about my students' health, my health, and my family's health.

Diversity & Inclusion

Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as expressed in our Beneficence Pledge and through university resources that you can access through The Multicultural Center's website:

<https://www.bsu.edu/campuslife/multicultural-center/resources>

Late Work

Assignments are due by the time specified on Canvas. However, we are in the middle of a *pandemic*, and there's a good chance that at some point (or at many points) throughout the semester, you will need some extra help. You can request a one-week extension for any assignment (excluding the final project) by emailing me. If you get sick this semester, we will work together to come up with a catch-up plan.

Respect

With COVID, social unrest, and a volatile political climate, we are all on edge right now. It's difficult not to bring those feelings into the classroom, but I ask you to be respectful and remain open to ideas and perspectives that challenge your own. I expect you to be respectful when participating in class discussions, interacting with me in class and through email, and working with your peers. *You do not have to agree with someone to treat them, their ideas, and their work respectfully.*

Technology

Technology is integral to the writing process, and we will be using different technologies this semester to complete work and communicate. You will need to check Canvas regularly to access weekly modules, assignments, additional readings, discussion boards, and class notes. You will also work with InDesign and Photoshop to gain familiarity with professional design software.

In-Class Technology Usage

On the days we meet on campus, you are welcome to bring a laptop, tablet, or smartphone to class for taking notes and completing in-class writing exercises if you prefer. I expect you to be responsible with your technology use. You are welcome to wear headphones during individual work but not during lectures or group work. If you need to take a phone call, please step outside to take the call. If I ask you repeatedly to stop doing something on your phone or your technology use becomes distracting to others, you will be asked to put it away.

Canvas and Online Communications

You will use Canvas to submit work, access calendars and each week's module, download assignment prompts and readings, and contribute to the class notes. I expect you to check your BSU email daily and to respond within 24 hours during the work week, just as you will expect me to do. All email messages to me regarding this class should include the course number in the subject line and should be respectful and professional. If your message is *urgent*, please note that in the subject line.

Title IX

Consistent with the University's Notice of Nondiscrimination and in accordance with the U.S. Department of Education's implementing regulations for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), Ball State University prohibits sexual harassment that occurs within its education programs and activities. This prohibition extends to all applicants for admission or employment and to *all students (any status) and all employees (any status)*. An individual who is found to have committed sexual harassment in violation of this policy is subject to the full range of University discipline, up to and including termination of employment or expulsion. The University will provide persons who have experienced sexual harassment with ongoing remedies as reasonably necessary to restore or preserve access to the University's education program and activities.

Inquiries concerning the specific application of Title IX at Ball State should be directed to Ms. Katie Slabaugh, Associate Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator in the Frank A. Bracken Administration Building, room 238, 765-285-1545, kslabaugh@bsu.edu.

Writing Center

All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center at Ball State (Robert Bell 295) to get additional feedback on your writing. To schedule a free appointment to discuss your writing, go to www.bsu.edu/writingcenter. Appointments are available seven days a week; however, plan ahead because appointments book quickly. *For health and safety: all writing center appointments will be online for Spring 2021.*

COURSE CALENDAR

This class is organized by what you need to complete *each week* rather than what you need to complete for the following class period. Every Monday, I will post a module with the work that you need to complete that week (indicated in the left column in the table below), and assignments are due by the end of the day on Sunday (11:59pm EST), unless otherwise specified (indicated in the right column).

With the many unknowns of this semester, it's possible that our schedule will change. You will receive an updated calendar if that's the case.

WEEK 1 – INTRO TO DOCUMENT DESIGN	
Introduction to ENG 430 and document design Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF: “What Is Document Design” • PDF: “Principles of Design” 	Due by the end of the day Sunday, 1/24: discussion board post
For this week only, the Monday cohort will meet in RB 284 on Wed, 1/20 and the Wednesday cohort will meet on Fri, 1/22.	
WEEK 2 – INTRO TO VISUAL RHETORIC	
Visual rhetorical theory Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF: “Theories of Design” • PDF: “Understanding Visual Rhetoric” 	Due Sunday, 1/31: discussion board post
Friday lab day (1/29): visual rhetoric exercises	
WEEK 3 – DESIGN PRINCIPLES	
Introduction to Project 1 and core design principles Read PDF: <i>Non-Designer’s Design Book</i> excerpt	Due Sunday, 2/7: discussion board post

Friday lab day (2/5): applying principles of contrast, repetition, alignment, proximity	
WEEK 4 – PAGE DESIGN	
<p>Introduction to Styles in MS Word, Google Docs, InDesign</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF: “Pages” • Ch. 2 excerpt, “Hierarchy” (pp. 132–45) 	Due Sunday, 2/14: Project 1 (redesigned syllabus)
Friday lab day (2/12): working on project 1; troubleshooting Styles	
WEEK 5 – INDESIGN	
<p>Introduction to Project 2 (event flyer)</p> <p>InDesign 101: using grids, creating and formatting text boxes, placing images</p> <p>Read Ch. 3, “Grid” (pp. 148–207)</p>	Due Sunday, 2/21: Project 2 (event flyer)
Friday lab day (2/19): working on project 2; troubleshooting InDesign	
WEEK 6 – TYPOGRAPHY 101	
<p>No Class on Monday or Wednesday for Study Day(s) – Eat. Sleep. Rest.</p> <p>Typography 101: the basics</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 1 “Letter” excerpt (pp. 10–59) • Ch. 2 “Type” excerpt (pp. 84–131) 	Due Sunday, 2/28: discussion board post
Friday lab day (2/26): typography exercises; downloading and installing fonts	

WEEK 7 – TYPOGRAPHY 102	
<p>Introduction to Project 3 (résumé remix)</p> <p>Combining type choices for rhetorical effect</p> <p>Read PDF: “Type Contrasts”</p>	<p>Due Sunday, 3/7: résumé for feedback (MS Word)</p>
<p>Friday lab day (3/5): drafting and/or workshopping résumés</p>	
WEEK 8 – DESIGN ETHOS	
<p>Representing yourself professionally through content and design</p> <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF: “Résumés” • “Times New Roman, Dubbed the ‘Sweatpants’ of Fonts, is a Bad Choice for Résumés: Typography Experts”: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/times-new-roman-resume-best-worst-fonts_n_7167390 	
<p>Friday lab day (3/12): working on Project 3; troubleshooting InDesign</p>	
WEEK 9 – RÉSUMÉ DESIGN	
<p>Redesigning résumés</p> <p>In-class feedback on drafts</p>	<p>Due Sunday, 3/21: Project 3</p>
<p>Friday lab day (3/19): working on Project 3</p>	
WEEK 10 – TYPE & CULTURE	
<p>Introduction to Project 4</p> <p>Cultural, social, and political dimensions of design</p>	<p>Due Sunday, 3/28: discussion board post</p>

<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF: “Type Reveals Culture: A Defense of ‘Bad’ Type” • PDF: “Give Us Back Our Serifs”: The Cultural Rhetoric of Rage Against the [New] Google Logo” 	
<p>Friday lab day (3/26): multimodal craft workshop</p> <p>I will provide paper, unused glue sticks, scissors, markers, rubber gloves, and sanitizing wipes. Feel free to bring any craft materials you want!</p>	
<p>WEEK 11 – TYPE & EXPRESSION</p>	
<p>The emotional appeal of DIY documents, comics, and hand-lettered zines: https://www.quarantine-zine.com/</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDF: “The Development of Typeface Personas and the Consequences of Perceived Identities” • PDF: “Nostalgia for Handwriting: The Rhetoric of Comics Lettering” • Read Ch. 1 excerpt (pp. 60–67) 	<p>Due Friday, 4/2: discussion board post</p>
<p>Friday lab day (4/2): working on print zines</p>	
<p>WEEK 12 – PHOTOSHOP</p>	
<p>Creating, editing, and adding visual imagery to your digital zine</p> <p>Photoshop basics: resizing, cropping, and editing images</p>	<p>Due in class: .jpeg of edited photo</p> <p>Due Wednesday, 4/7: print zine (scanned)</p>
<p>Friday lab day (4/9): Photoshop troubleshooting</p>	
<p>WEEK 13 – SKETCHING</p>	
<p>No class on Monday or Wednesday for Study Day(s) – Eat. Sleep. Rest.</p>	<p>Due Sunday, 4/18: two digital zine sketches</p>

Sketching ideas for a multi-page design; translating designs from print to digital Review Ch. 3 “Grid,” <i>Thinking with Type</i>	
Friday lab day (4/16): working on Project 4; feedback on ideas	
WEEK 14 - DRAFTING	
Drafting; in-class feedback	
Friday lab day (4/23): working on Project 4	
WEEK 15 - DRAFTING	
Drafting; in-class feedback Course evaluations	
Friday lab day (4/30): working on Project 4	
WEEK 16 - FINALS WEEK	
The final examination period for this class is Wednesday, May 5 from 12–2pm, so you need to submit Project 4 to Canvas by 2pm.	