INFORMATION DESIGN · SPRING 2018

Instructor: Jonathan Bass
Office / Hours: Loree 010 / Wed. 2.00 – 3.00 PM and by appointment

Required Texts


You can purchase these texts from the Rutgers Bookstore or from your preferred online book vendor.

Required Equipment

Students must have dependable access to a digital camera (phone-based cameras are fine).

Course Requirements

Below is an overview of major assignments (“work requirements”) for the semester. It is a rough forecast based on previous semesters and is subject to substitution. Also, I’ve left out a few small assignments, and included more projects than we’ll probably get to. Much of the work will be started in class and completed as homework, or started as homework and revised in class. Some of it will be purely homework.

Projects
Between four to six design projects. Each project will respond to a scenario or brief, a particular context, client, and audience. Some projects may be collaborative. Projects will require research and planning, drafting and testing, and will result in one or more final documents.

Writing Assignments
Expect to produce several short analyses of assigned reading, one or more sample
documents, your own work, or another student’s work.

**Presentations**
Each student will make at least one short presentation to the class on one of the assigned readings for a given week. Some presentations will be solo, some paired, depending on the selected reading. All presentations will need to be accompanied by visual material that goes beyond material from the reading.

**Participation**
We do a LOT of work in class. Class participation entails active involvement in discussion and collaborative activities.

**Exercises**
Between projects and writing are a number of preparatory exercises focusing on particular skills and design concepts and problems.

**Grading**
Grading is based on your work and participation in the class. Longer projects receive letter grades and written or in-person feedback (the latter usually in the form of a critique, review, or discussion in class). Shorter assignments receive full credit (√), half credit (~√), or no credit (~), based on the degree to which they satisfy the specified requirements.

Larger projects and any writing related to those projects together account for approximately 60% of the final grade; shorter projects, an occasional quiz, short writing, and exercises for about 30% of the grade; participation for about 10% of the grade.

**Policies**

*Attendance.* We meet for fourteen three-hour sessions over the semester, and attendance at all sessions, and for the full duration of each class, is expected. Attending fewer classes will affect your performance and may affect your final grade.

Students missing more than two classes risk failing.
**Lateness.** Students are expected to arrive by the scheduled start of the class. A pattern of regular lateness will reduce your final grade. Missing more than a small portion of a class will count as a full absence (see “Attendance” above).

**Missing work.** All major assignments must be submitted to pass the course.

**Late work.** Homework is due at the start of class unless otherwise noted. Printed work must be printed before the start of class. (Using the printer to print homework during class time is not permitted.)

Drafts for stages of each project typically are credited but not graded. Failing to submit more than two drafts on time will lower your final grade by one letter grade. Each additional late draft with lower your final grade by an additional half a letter grade.

**Text books.** The required texts are necessary for adequate participation in the course. Regular, reliable, and timely access to the reading is expected. Failure to complete the reading translates into a diminished performance.

**Submitting written work by email.** Most work will be submitted via Sakai and/or on paper (usually both). Unless specifically requested to submit work via email, do **NOT** do this.

**Class participation.** We do a lot of work in class. Class participation entails attendance and active involvement in discussion, critique, and other activities. It requires that a student do the assigned reading and other preparatory work. Again: Missing more than two classes strongly affects this part of the grade and consequently reduces the overall semester grade by one full letter grade.

**Texting, etc.** During class students should not communicate electronically (i.e., via email, IM, text message, social network interface, forum, list-serv, etc.) with any persons outside of the class. Cell phones cannot be visible during class (e.g., in your hand, on the desk). Store them where they cannot be seen.

**Formatting.** All electronic documents must be published online and maintained for at least one month following the end of the course. The Final Project must be submitted both online and, if requested by the instructor, on a portable storage device. Any written homework, unless otherwise specified, must be typed and printed.

**Online work (submitting).** Most of the work for web authoring will be web pages. You will store this work in your space on the Eden server at Rutgers. You will submit this work to the instructor by providing a link to the assigned page or folder in a reply to the appropriate assignment thread on the Class Forum. Online work is checked via the
Forum – at the time it is due or shortly thereafter. Do not assume that work submitted via the Forum after the due time (i.e., late work) will be seen by the instructor.

Note also that work accessible only on your laptop or flash drive doesn’t count as submitted or finished, even if the work has been shown to the instructor (e.g., in class or during office hours). If the instructor can’t view your work when it’s due and in the right place, the work counts, depending on the circumstances, either as late or as not submitted.

Online work (maintaining). Once online, work needs to remain accessible and up to date, in the correct folder, through the end of the semester and for at least one month after the end of the semester.

Sample work. The instructor will often share examples of students’ work in class. Names may be deleted where possible (not for web pages). If you object to your work being shown in this way, let the instructor know in advance (in person or by email).

Online Schedule. Students are responsible for regularly checking the schedule on the course website for important changes. The schedule is updated weekly and should be checked prior to each week’s class.

Email (i). The instructor responds to email Monday to Friday. The instructor’s email is for asking questions about course work or sharing thoughts related to the course topic. Please do not use email to share your reasons for missing class or work or to ask for the instructor’s permission to do so. If you need to discuss attendance or the lateness or absence of written work, it’s best to do so during office hours or, when convenient, during the time shortly before or after class.

Email (ii). Please use your Rutgers email when contacting the instructor. Rutgers faculty are no longer allowed to send Rutgers communication to non-Rutgers email addresses.

Email (iii). Announcements as well as feedback on your work will be sent to your Rutgers email address via Sakai. So be sure to check this email regularly during the semester.

Plagiarism. Students must review and abide by the University’s code on plagiarism. Plagiarism covers uncredited use of another’s work, including written material, images, and page designs. Given that this is a design course: design work should always be of the students own creation. Images not of the student’s own creation must be credited in the project itself or in accompanying documentation. Similarly, all information sources
for a project must be listed with sufficient bibliographical information in the project itself or in accompanying documentation.

For some projects, students will be supplied with a base text for them to modify, edit, design, etc. For other projects, students may be asked to select base texts of their own. In all other cases, the writing in a document should be either (1) documented quotation and paraphrase, where this makes sense, or (2) the student’s own writing. Cutting and pasting text (e.g., from a Wikipedia article), unless permission is given by the instructor, will count either as plagiarism (where credit is not given) or as incomplete work (where credit is given).

Departmental Review. All grades are subject to departmental review.