Course Theme: Environment and Social Responsibility

Required Texts and Materials

Letting Go of the Words, Second Edition: Writing Web Content that Works (Interactive Technologies)—Janice Giddy Redish

Major Course Requirements and Distribution of Grades

10%—Professionalism—Active Participation: Interaction in Forums (Weekly)
20%—Reading/Analysis—Assigned readings will be used to apply concepts (Weekly)
10%—White Paper—Research audience and need for website design/redesign (Week 4)
20%—Project Plan—Report on steps for completing usability project (Week 6)
20%—Recommendation Report—including design/redesign information (Due Week 8)
20%—Final Usability Project—Due Week 13

Course Description and Objectives

This fully online course develops students' techniques and skills to find and analyze information and write effectively and clearly for digital and hypertextual environments and for a range of online readers and information needs. Students will learn to apply fundamental page design principles to online documents as well as how to organize and manage content to attract readers and help them navigate a professional, aesthetically pleasing digital presence. Projects will include creating, editing, and curating your own web content, including email messages and newsletters, web pages, social media, blogs, glogs, and more. For all majors, this course satisfies the university computer literacy requirement.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to

- Apply current best practices and principles of communicating for an online readership.
- Identify a need or problem in online communication by describing factors involved
- Explain a viable solution to a need or problem in a department, the larger university, or community
- Create a document in a digital, hypertextual format for an online readership that reflects an effective interweaving of audience and purpose
What in the World is an Online Course? A Fully Distance Education Course

At Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, the term “online course” refers to a fully distance education course (85% or more of course content) offered via the Internet; while the term “hybrid course” refers to a course with more than 50% but less than 85% of course content offered via the Internet: [https://iol.tamucc.edu/def_of_courses.html](https://iol.tamucc.edu/def_of_courses.html)

Fully Distance Education Course - A course that may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15 percent of the instructional time. Examples of face-to-face sessions include orientation, laboratory, exam review, or an in-person test.

For at least 85% of the time, we will be meeting on-line through the Blackboard Portal to work on assignments, participate in discussions, and interact with each other. The only differences are the venue and your responsibilities. In order to be successful in this course, you must be self-disciplined and possess a strong sense of self-initiative, independent thinking, and intrapersonal communication skills.

There are some requirements for the online class that are different than a traditional class. These include:

- You must login to our course each day, M-Thursday (no class on Friday, Saturday and Sunday). Go to Announcements on BB each day and complete the daily activity assigned. Failure to login and complete the assignment results in an absence. Late work will be ten percent off for each day of a late submission. If you must be late, be sure to complete the assignment so that your overall grade will not suffer dramatically.
- Unless otherwise noted, assignments must be submitted through the Blackboard Portal for this course.

Grading Standards: Writing Assessment for “Final” Submitted Drafts

**The A essay (90-100%)** has a strong central idea (thesis) that is related to the assignment; has a clear, logical organization with well developed major points that are supported with concrete and specific evidence; uses effective transitions between ideas; communicates ideas clearly and fully; demonstrates thoughtful revision; and is in need of very little revision or editing of citation, mechanical, grammatical, and/or spelling errors. **The B essay (80-90%)** has a strong central idea that is related to the assignment; has a clear logical organization with developed major points, but the supporting evidence may not be especially vivid or thoughtful; demonstrates revision; and has few citation, mechanical, grammatical, and/or spelling errors that do not distract from the overall message of the essay.
The C essay (70-80%) has a central idea that is presented in such a way that the reader understands the writer’s purpose; has an organization that reveals a plan, but the evidence tends to be general rather than specific or concrete; and has citation, mechanical, grammatical, and/or spelling errors that distract from the overall message of the essay. The D essay (60-70%) lacks a central idea; lacks clear organization; is not clearly related to the assignment; fails to develop main points, or develops them in illogical ways; lacks a demonstration of revisions; and has numerous citation, mechanical, grammatical, and/or spelling errors that distract from the overall message of the essay. The F essay (50-60%) shows no effort in following the assignment instructions; lacks a central idea; lacks organization; fails to develop main points; has excessive citation, mechanical, grammatical, and/or spelling errors that distract from the overall message of the essay.

My Course Policies

Professionalism: (10%)
Your professional conduct is an urgent part of what will help you and our community of learners in this course successful. In other words, you are one of the parts that make the whole. Your professional contribution to our community of learners requires your attendance, daily preparation, participation, and interaction. Participation in physical and virtual class discussions is an important part of this course. This course sees professionalism as the ways you prepared, contributed to/engaged in the processes of reading, writing, organizational work, collaborative work, online discussions and inquiry, peer-draft reviewing, drafting, revising, and critical thinking.

Blackboard Policy
You are responsible for checking our course on Blackboard every day. Check Announcements, for daily assignments. Also, we will use Email on BB, to email one another.

E-Communication Policy
- The best way to contact me is through my email address: robin.carstensen@tamucc.edu.
- I will respond to professional emails that include your subject and class section in the Subject Heading and address me by my professional title, and offer your signature.
- I will respond to email between 9 a.m. - 9 p.m, M-F.
- Though I do respond to e-mails from students who have very specific questions, I never respond to tweets, instant-messages, badly misspelled, and vague, unprofessionally addressed e-mails or text-messages, such as “hey, slept thru alarm. what’d i miss?”
- If you need an appointment with me outside of my office hours, please ask me after class or email me.
Absence Policy: It is impossible to earn an A after two absences (days of non-activities when assignments are due) in an online course, and very unlikely to earn a B after three absences. So, try to save your absences for unexpected illnesses and crises. Typically, an “A” student exemplifies outstanding community professionalism and self-initiative.

Late work Policy: In the case that a document is turned in or posted late with no prior arrangement with me, that document’s grade will be lowered ten percentage points for each class meeting that the student fails to turn it in. If the student has made arrangements with me prior to class, due to job, sports team travel or family crisis, late work may be accepted with no grade penalty.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Policies

Academic Advising

It is imperative that all students visit regularly with an academic adviser. Each college within the university has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time, professional advisers to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. To find out how to contact the right adviser, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/advising.php. Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center. For more information, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac.

For undergraduate English majors: The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

The University will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of intellectual or academic dishonesty. Violations of academic honesty will be processed under the Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases 13.02.99.C3.01 (see http://ses.tamucc.edu/grievances.html and the Student Code of Conduct http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/assets/2013-2014StudentHandbook.pdf). All cases of academic misconduct are recorded in the student’s file. Consequences are determined by the faculty member and/or the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel. It is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Students sometimes commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes

- using the work of another as your own,
- down loading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as
Be aware that there are many ways to plagiarize. English 1301 and 1302 courses and the Writing Center at CASA will review rules of academic citation. Information academic citation is available at the Purdue University’s OWL: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/) and/or from our local Writing Center at CASA.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Please be aware that you are allowed 6 drops in your entire undergraduate career, so these decisions must be made carefully. **April 10th** is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Grade Appeal Process**

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that his or her final grade reflects academic evaluation which is arbitrary, prejudiced, or inappropriate in view of the standards and procedures outlined in the class syllabus, may appeal the grade given for the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see the University Rule 13.02.99.C2.01, in the University Handbook for Rules and Procedures: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/Rules_Procedures/](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/Rules_Procedures/)

The first step is a meeting with the instructor.

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**Student Resources**

**Students with Disability and Veterans**

Notice to Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an
accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance.

**The Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA):** The Writing Center of CASA provides free writing instruction to any student interested in improving his/her writing abilities. Tutors will assist you with all aspects of writing. The Writing Center’s purpose is not to correct or proofread your drafts but to help you learn strategies that good writers use during the processes of writing. You may visit the Center for assistance with a writing project for any of your classes. It is located in the Glasscock Building (825-5933).

**University Counseling Center**

We all encounter stress, problems, and difficult decisions in our daily lives. Sometimes, these problems may seem overwhelming or it might be difficult to talk about certain issues with your friends or family. The University Counseling Center is available for all students enrolled at TAMUCC. Students seek counseling for a multitude of reasons and the University Counseling Center offers individual therapy, group counseling, psychiatric services, psychological testing, consultation, outreach services, alcohol and drug education and prevention programs, and personal skills training. If you are in need of counseling services or just someone to talk to, please call or visit the University Counseling center at (361) 825-2703 in the Driftwood Building. Visit: [http://counseling.tamucc.edu](http://counseling.tamucc.edu) for more information.

**Reminder to English Majors:** As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different discourse genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help you prepare for this assignment, you should keep a copy of all essays, research papers, literary analyses, creative and report writing, etc., so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.