English 5369.W01: Topics and Genres in Rhetoric and Composition
Methods of User-Centered Design
Summer I, 2020

Contact Information:
Instructor: Dr. Frances Johnson
Email: frances.johnson@tamucc.edu
Office: No on-campus office
Phone: 361.825.2876
Course Platform: Course is delivered by TAMUCC Blackboard with embedded external links

Office Hours:
Virtual Office Hours
- Click URL:
  - https://tamuccwebex.com/meet/fjohnson
  - How to join a Personal Room Meeting
- MT: 10 am – 12 pm
- W: 5-7 pm

Email:
- I email everyone to his or her Islander.tamucc.edu email account, from Blackboard. You can forward your Islander email to any account you wish. YOU are responsible for checking email. Missing an email is not an excuse.
  - To email me, your name, section number, and reason for email in the subject line
    - Customary practice is 24 hours for an email answer, but I generally answer within 2-3 hours between 8am-8pm, M-T.
    - Fridays, weekends, and after 8 pm will take longer

Introduction:
Welcome to the online version on ENGL 5304 Methods of User-Centered Design. This course has the same expectations as a face-to-face course, with the same amount of “work.” Please do not think that because the course is online, that it will be any less rigorous than a face-to-face course. In fact, the course may seem more intense as you are responsible for engaging with the material without the prodding the occurs when you come to a physical class. However, if you keep up with the course work, or perhaps work ahead, the course will seem less daunting.

Teaching Style
Additionally, I use the Socratic Teaching Method,(not #1), Student Centered Learning, (where I am not telling you what to do, but guiding you in your quest), Learning to Learn, (so you can learn and practice the skills) to be, Lifelong Learners, (because in the 21st century, you will be continuously challenged to adapt, change, and learn). So, this means I will not give you a direct
answer, most times. I will guide you to where the information was posted; for example, asking “Did you read….”. Then I will ask you to get back to me with what you did not understand. Often, I will ask you to copy and paste a sentence that you are having trouble with. This is a variation of the Socratic dialogue. Look at it this way. I have provided a written description of an assignment or project. And you respond to me with, “I don’t understand.” Now, I will begin with the basics. I will ask if you have read all the places that I have provided with information on the topic, with an additional, “Email me with specific questions you may have, because I do not understand, “I don’t understand.” What I mean by this is I need to know exactly what you do not understand, so I can help you. To do this, we must engage in a discussion. This is why I do not just try and answer, “I don’t understand” directly.

Course Description:
Study of theory and methods of user-centered design. Practice in fundamental techniques of usability and participatory research. Students will learn how to plan, conduct, and report on usability tests and will be able to describe the value case for user-centered design and development.

Prerequisites:
Admission into the ENGL Master’s program

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon completion of this course, students demonstrate the ability to
- Apply key concepts of user-centered design through usability testing,
- Design and execute a usability test,
- Compose a usability report based on test results,
- Generate user-centered design recommendations based on usability report.

Technical requirements for course
Course delivery
The course is delivered via TAMUCC Blackboard system with embedded external links.

Computer requirements
It is up to each student to visit the TAMUCC IT Department’s Blackboard Technical Requirement’s webpage [https://iol.tamucc.edu/techreq.html](https://iol.tamucc.edu/techreq.html) to determine the computer requirements for using Blackboard. As an FYI, the browser that works best with Blackboard is Chrome, so even if you are using a Mac, it would be a good idea to install Chrome on your computer.

Delivery of instructor feedback
Instructor response to online requests usually occurs within a 24-hour period; 48 hours on weekends. I am generally online and respond within hours. But I do have a life. If you email at 3 am, not going to get a response until morning. Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday response times may be longer.

Student login expectations
Students will be required to login a minimum of once per day throughout the regular school week for updates presented in the Blackboard Announcements. Because I use Blackboard announcements, students are expected to check for new announcements.
Specific login instructions
Blackboard Login https://bb9.tamucc.edu/webapps/login/

Faculty availability to support students
Instructor maintains a consistent web presence and is available to meet via WebEx or another media outside of office hours with an appointment.

Types of required interactions
Discussion Forum (Activities)
- Review the discussion threads thoroughly before entering the discussion
- Try to maintain threads by using the “Reply” button rather than starting a new topic
- Do not make insulting or inflammatory statements to other members of the discussion group
- Be patient and read the comments of other members thoroughly before adding your remarks
- Be positive and constructive in group discussions
- Respond in a thoughtful and timely manner

Classroom Chat Forum (Extra Credit)
- This is the area where we can discuss questions, problems, or anything that you might talk with your classmates in a brick n mortar setting. Just like you cannot go back and chat with people after a class is gone, chats cannot be given credit after 11:59 pm on Friday. You can earn 10 points per week.
- Introduce yourself to your classmates,
- Post any questions that you have, especially ones that you believe might be helpful to others,
- Use this space to set up study groups,
- Use this space to keep us informed as to what is going on in your life

Evaluation and Grading:
Students will be evaluated on in and out of class assignments, two projects, and class participation. A breakdown is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points Each</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussions, readings, activities</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
<td>T/F Each Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usability Test Planning</td>
<td>250.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>Sunday, June 14 @ 11:59 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usability Report</td>
<td>350.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
<td>Friday, July 3 @ 11:59 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Full explanations and submission links for each assignment are available in the “Graded Assignments” section of Blackboard.

Attendance in Online Courses:
Although we do not have formal class meetings, things have to be done on time, as they are found in the class schedule, just as face-to-face classes have deadlines and follow a schedule. This is NOT a correspondence course, or a "Work at Your Own Pace" course. An online course gives you the freedom to work at your own convenience—you can do your work at 2 o'clock in the morning or over your lunch hour—but, like any other course, it has real deadlines, with real due dates.
You will need to log into this class and complete work 4-5 times per week. Blackboard, our course management software, monitors how many times you log in per week, how long you were on, and what you are doing. If you have questions or if you need a course concept clarified, contact your Dr. Johnson.

Giving review and providing feedback is a major component of this course. This is true for two reasons: first, review and feedback are a regular part of the work that anyone working in the field of technical communication does. Review and feedback are also major components of any writing course. Your work has to be posted on time (so people can read and respond to your work), and reading and responding to the writing of others is part of the regular business of what we do.

Class discussion in an online course is posting in discussion forums. Your work needs to appear in these forums regularly, depending on the assignment. You might be asked to post a short piece of content, you might be asked to respond to a classmate’s work, or you might be asked to comment on a reading, video, or other piece of information about digital content design and management.

Late Assignments:
Late work will be accepted until the date listed in the semester as the Final Day to submit all late work. This date is posted in the Banner on Blackboard. Late work is determined by the time-stamp on Blackboard. All late work loses 50% of the evaluation.

Text and Materials:
There are no textbooks to purchase for this course. We will be using online information from experts in the field of user-centered design/usability testing

Information Sources:
• Journal of Usability Studies, 13(4)
• Nielsen Norman Group
• Usability.gov
• UX and Content Strategy Library: Resources on User Experience Design and Content Strategy
• Usability Body of Knowledge
• Rhetoric and Composition/Usability Testing
• Professional and Technical Writing/Design/Usability
• Videos—A number of the “Course Texts” will be YouTube videos on various aspects of information and data literacy, digital culture, and content production. These are part of the “readings” and should be examined in your weekly reading response.

• WebEx account/set up
  o WebEx is an online conferencing system provided by TAMUCC
    ▪ https://iol.tamucc.edu/webex.html
    ▪ WebEx is the media used for office hours
• All work must be submitted so that it can be opened and viewed on multiple platforms. Pdf works the best.
  o Get Microsoft Office 365 free
    ▪ Office is required for this course.
• Working knowledge of Blackboard
This course is contained within Blackboard. You must know how to use this university sponsored Learning Management System. If you have difficulties, please contact

- **For technical assistance contact the IT Service Desk:**
  - Phone: 361-825-2692 (local); 866-353-2491 (toll free)
  - Email: ithelp@tamucc.edu
  - Support specialists are available for in-person support in Mary and Jeff Bell Library 112 and Ask Us Desk, and Corpus Christi Hall (CCH) 201 Open Lab.
  - Get more information about
    - computer accounts,
    - Duo Two-step authentication,
    - passwords help.

- **Technology tutorials and guidance** are available on the following websites:
  - IT website
  - Island Online
  - Blackboard Video tutorials and text guides.
  - Get Microsoft Office 365 free

**Course Conduct:**
Students will practice respect and responsibility as a part of this learning community. Here are some things you can do to exhibit an attitude of respect and responsibility:

- Post assignments on time. Early is even better. **Late work will earn a 50% reduction in grade. You will have until the Sunday of the week in most cases as a ‘grace period.’**
- **Major Assignments can be resubmitted. Contact instructor for details.**
- Reach out through email or Blackboard (Classroom Chat posts) to support each other. If you have good info/tips on what is working for you/resource ideas, please share with the group so we can help each other out.
- Respect other classmates by watching what you say.
- Check the assignments every week. Do not wait until the last minute.
- Do not get behind. If you get behind in an online course, it is harder to get back on track than it is in a traditional course.
- Keep up with your assignments and your grades. It is not the teacher's responsibility to tell you what you have or haven't turned in. Your grades will be available in Blackboard so all you have to do is regularly check to make sure you have grades posted for all work. I have a section at the top of “My Grades,” where you will find points you have earned to date / total points to date available.

**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism**

**Definition:** In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. Plagiarism is a violation of academic expectations, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students 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,
• Downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
• Using resource materials without correct documentation,
• Using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation.
• Turning in a researched project without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules and APA documentation rules is available at Purdue University’s OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/, and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in 1) evaluation of zero for the assignment with option to resubmit work, 2) evaluation of zero for the assignment with no option to resubmit work, 3) petition to university to be removed from course with a grade of F.

Required Statements:

● 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.

● Dropping the Course: 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 or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. 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. **June 19, 2020** is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

● Academic Advising: Please check with your Academic Advisor with any questions on your degree plan. 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.
Grade Appeal Process: As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. 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 University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

Statement of Academic Continuity: In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

Schedule:
The readings and assignment schedules are listed below. All work is due at 11:59 pm the day it is listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates Summer I 2020</th>
<th>Major Projects</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>June 1-5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Readings, discussions, activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>June 8-12</td>
<td>UX Test Planning</td>
<td>Readings, discussions, activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>June 15-19</td>
<td>Executing UX Test</td>
<td>Readings, discussions, activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>June 22-26</td>
<td></td>
<td>Readings, discussions, activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>June 20-July 3</td>
<td>Usability Report</td>
<td>Readings, discussions, activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>