UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING • COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Developing Competent and Democratic Professionals

COURSE SYLLABUS

ITEC 5320 – Message Design

Spring 2014 • 3 Credit Hours

Instructor Information

Instructor: Tonia A. Dousay, Ph.D.

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I am available to chat online during office hours or at other times by appointment to discuss course-related matters. While I make every attempt to be online during office hours, I may have an unannounced conflict or simply forget to open the application. So, please schedule chats in advance when possible or send an email at your requested chat time. I prefer being contacted via email, and attempt to respond to all messages within 24 hours. Please allow this amount of time for my response. Phone calls will be returned within 48 hours.

Course Description

This course introduces the theoretical frameworks and skills necessary to evaluate and create visual representations of information. Topics of application include visual literacy, learning theories, instructional design, instructional technology, and information presentation.

Accessibility

A campus environment characterized by diversity, free inquiry, free expression has always been a top priority of the University of Wyoming. Civil discourse is an essential aspect of the search for and transmission of knowledge. Words and actions that promote and encourage self-worth, respect and dignity are consistent with the university's mission. Conversely, words or actions that reflect prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination are antithetical to the mission of the university and will not be tolerated. Specifically, racist and other discriminatory or harassing conduct based on gender, color, disability, sexual orientation, religious preference, national origin, ancestry or age impair and disrupt legitimate university functions. Every effort, within the context and protection of the First Amendment rights, will be expended to eliminate such conduct from the campus community. Teaching students to live productively in a multicultural/multiethnic society is a process that must take place within a constructive and harmonious environment. It is the obligation of the faculty, staff, students and the administration of the University of Wyoming to provide this environment.

It is the policy of the University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal and state law. If you have a physical, learning, sensory or psychological disability and require accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. You will need to register with, and provide documentation of your disability to University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO, room 330 Knight Hall.

Course Goal

The purpose of this course is to analyze the critical attitudes, design principles, tools, and feedback necessary to develop high-quality messages for learning and performance.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Explain the relationship between message design and communication theory.
2. Apply the psychology of learning to message design.
3. Describe, interpret, and compare images.
4. Create visual and multimedia compositions, applying theoretical frameworks and cultural norms.
5. Apply literature relevant to visual literacy through the critiquing of individual messages.

Course Prerequisites

You must have graduate standing with the University in order to take this course.

Required Texts

Golombisky, K., & Hagen, R. (2010). *White space is not your enemy: A beginner's guide to communicating visually through graphic, web and multimedia design*. Burlington, MA: Focal Press.

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Recommended Texts

These additional texts contain helpful information for anyone interested in message design. When available, electronic files are provided in WyoCourses.

Bleed, R. (2005). Visual literacy in higher education. Retrieved November 1, 2011, from http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI4001.pdf

Krause, J. (2004). *Design Basics Index*. Cincinnati, OH: How Design Books.

Lohr, L. L., & Gall, J. E. (2007). Representation Strategies. In J. M. Spector, M. D. Merrill, J. J. G. van Merriënboer, & M. P. Driscoll (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Educational Communications and Technology* (3rd ed., pp. 85-96). New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Wainer, H. (1997). *Visual revelations: Graphic tales of fate and deception from Napoleon Bonaparte to Ross Perot*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Course Orientation

The concept of message design promoted in this course focuses on how visual depictions transfer meaning through a combination of text, color, and layout. This course combines research and practice to approach the design and evaluation of visual messages to maximize understanding and reduce misunderstanding.

Message design draws from several disciplines - visual communication, instructional design, educational psychology, graphic design, human-computer interaction, and instructional media development. Thus, the

interdisciplinary nature of the course allows for a wide variety of applications and provides a foundation for further work in these fields.

You will learn the theoretical frameworks that inform "good design," how to evaluate design, and how to create visually based messages using a variety of applications. Required design activities have been structured to scaffold your progress throughout the course and build upon one another to encourage congruency and alignment among design principles.

This class is a "hands-on" course that requires self-directed learning and your active participation. It is about *making and doing* rather than passively listening and observing. For this reason, you need to make sure you complete the assigned reading and learning units on schedule, and allow yourself ample time to think about and create the course projects.

To assist you with transforming from novice to expert designer, you will create and maintain a design portfolio that documents your drafts and final projects. This process will allow you to constructively evaluate each other's work and develop the skills necessary to incorporate feedback into design modifications.

Content delivery for this course is limited to online systems. Like any distance delivery, it has the advantage of being convenient, but the potential disadvantage of student isolation and communication or technological problems. I try to effectively communicate course expectations, but do not guarantee it. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns. Communication works best if you first try posting in this site and then try email. If I haven't responded to those methods within a reasonable amount of time (2-3 days), call me. When a message is sent, follow these guidelines:

1. Use the email system provided within the web site and make sure your email address is up-to-date.
2. Include at the end of the message a signature line with your complete name and accessible phone number.

Please recognize that this course is not my only responsibility. I am not available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. I will check this course throughout the week, but will not check it or my email on weekends. If you write a message during those days, do not expect a reply until Monday, particularly if assignments are due.

Expectations

1. This course has been designed for 15 weeks and is event oriented. You will be able to access new instructional materials on Monday of each week. Access to earlier modules continues throughout the course. Specific objectives and events are noted within each week. Course work is expected to occur within WyoCourses.
2. Regular interaction is required in this course. Check the web site at the beginning of each week for announcements, readings, and assignments. Read and complete all assignments by the specified due date. Make discussion posts in an iterative and timely manner. Read, research, and react to other postings throughout the week.

Late Submission Policy

The late submission policy is intended to help those who have issues beyond their control submit a quality assignment with minimal interruption to the class. All assignments are due by 11:59PM on the date specified in the course schedule. Keep in mind that in the workplace, grace periods are rarely allowed. Submitting assignments late can cause gaps in learning new material; and can delay the grading process in this course. However, I am willing to provide opportunities to make-up work for course exercises. If you anticipate a legitimate absence or encounter an unavoidable situation, contact me **before** the assignment is due to discuss alternative arrangements. Make-up work for course participation and the final project will not be accepted.

Additionally, any make-up work accepted will incur a 10% grade reduction per day unless prior arrangements are made.

Course Schedule

Instructional weeks open Monday mornings and close Sunday nights. Once opened, each unit will remain available throughout the remainder of the course for review purposes. In planning your work, I encourage you to remember the following:

- Typically, a three-credit hour course entails 45 hours of seat time and 90 hours of outside work. This equals approximately 9 hours per week, although individuals may spend more or less time.
- Conversations run constantly through an instructional event. If you want to participate fully, you need to "be there" throughout the discussion, not a few times at the beginning or end of the week.
- This outline provides a basic topical index, assignments, and readings from the course textbook. Additional presentations, resources, and supplemental material will vary by week and are available in WyoCourses.

Date	Topic	Due
Week 1	**Course Overview**	
	• Read Chapter 1	Readiness Activity
Week 2	**The Creative Process**	
	• Read Chapter 2	
Week 3	**Foundations of Communication**	
	• Read Chapter 3	
Week 4	**Constructive Feedback**	
	• Read Chapter 4	Personal Logo
Week 5	**Visual Communication Skills**	
	• Read Chapter 5	Critique 1
Week 6	**Psychology of Learning**	
	• Read Chapter 6	
Week 7	**Theories of Visual Learning**	
	• Read Chapter 7	
Week 8	**Design Principles**	
	• Read Chapter 8	Theory Presentation
Week 9	**Information Design**	
	• Read Chapter 9	Critique 2
Week 10	**Spring Break**	
	• No coursework	
Week 11	**Image Fidelity and Accompanying Cues**	
	• Read Chapter 10	Instructional Visual
Week 12	**Visual Metaphors & Graphical Deception**	
	• Read Chapter 12	Critique 3
Week 13	**Presenting Data with Visuals**	
	• Read Chapters 13-14	
Week 14	**Project Workshop**	
	• Schedule individual appointments	
Week 15	**Portfolio Presentations**	
	• Read Chapter 15	Design Portfolio
Week 16	**Final Project Presentations**	
	•	Final Project

Assignments

This section lists and explains assignments due and points possible. See the "Late Submission Policy" section if you are unable to submit an assignment on time. All assignments should be linked to your Portfolio, and should be posted by 11:59PM on the date it is due.

Code	Title	Due	Points
DP	Design Portfolio		15
FP	Final Project		20
IV	Instructional Visual		10
PC	Portfolio Critiques		10
PL	Personal Logo		10
RA	Readiness Activity		5
TP	Theory Presentation		15
Participation	Participation includes, but is not limited to, consistent engagement in discussions that is indicative of reflection and study, providing timely, thoughtful, and supportive feedback to group members, submitting assignments on time, and positively contributing to the learning community.	N/A	15
	TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE		100

Design Portfolio (15 points)

The purpose of the *Design Portfolio* assignment is for you to apply theories and principles of effective information design to a specific theme. You will prepare an electronic portfolio (website) that demonstrates a mastery of information design by presenting all other assignments in the class within the portfolio. After each assignment has been graded and critiqued by a peer, you have the opportunity to revise the artifact for inclusion in your portfolio. Each entry should include the original artifact, revised artifact, and applicable feedback that contributed to the revision.

Rubric

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Introduction		Front page of the website clearly identifies the author and purpose (1 pt)		Front page of the website contains incomplete introduction or no introduction (0 pts)
Navigation and layout	There is an established content hierarchy, information is visible without the need to scroll, navigation is near the top of the screen, and your personal logo appears in the upper left hand corner as a home page link (5 pts)	Content hierarchy is clear and navigation is near the top of the screen, but scrolling is required and/or some other image is used in the upper left hand corner as a home page link (4 pts)	Content hierarchy is clear, but navigation appears somewhere other than the top of the screen, scrolling is required, and/or some other image is used in the upper left hand corner as a home page link (2 pts)	Content hierarchy is unclear, navigation appears somewhere other than the top of the screen, scrolling is required, and/or no image is used in the upper left hand corner as a home page link (0 pts)

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Content		Original artifact, revised artifact, and feedback for the assignment are present for all entries. (2 pts)	One entry is missing the original artifact, revised artifact, or feedback. (1 pts)	Multiple entries are missing the original artifact, revised artifact, and/or feedback. (0 pts)
Copyright		Necessary attribution and/or copyright permission is provided for relevant media (2 pts)	Necessary attribution and/or copyright permission is provided for some, but not all relevant media (1 pt)	Evidence of sufficient permissions is not provided (0 pts)
Design principles	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, maximizes use of line and whitespace, and incorporates all recommended design principles for web delivery (5 pts)	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, contains some elements line and whitespace, and incorporates some recommended design principles for web delivery (3 pts)	Design does not use a clear color theory pattern, but does not maximize use of line and whitespace and/or only uses some recommended design principles for web delivery (1 pt)	No color theory pattern is applied, and line and whitespace are ignored in the layout or design principles for web delivery were not followed (0 pts)

Final Project (20 points)

The purpose of the *Final Project* assignment is for you to apply theories and principles of effective information design for a client. You will have the opportunity to work with a pre-arranged client who has a need for instructional media. The artifacts you create for this assignment have the potential to be used in classrooms, on websites, or distributed to the public. *If you have a particular client and/or project in mind, please make prior arrangements for approval.*

Rubric

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Client specs		Final project adheres to all specifications provided by the client, including media preference and deadlines (5 pts)	Final project follows most of the specifications provided by the client, including media preference and deadlines (3 pts)	Final project did not consider client's preference for media and/or missed deadlines set by the client (0 pts)
Media specs	All media follow recommended layout guidelines, presentation considerations, quality standards (5 pts)	Most media follow recommended layout guidelines, presentation considerations, quality standards (3 pts)	Multiple media fail to consider layout, presentation, or quality (1 pt)	Media guidelines related to layout, presentation, and quality were completely ignored (0 pts)

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Content grammar and mechanics		The final artifacts contain few if any spelling or grammar errors and follow a consistent mechanical layout (3 pts)	The final artifacts contain multiple spelling or grammar errors or are inconsistent in mechanical layout (2 pts)	There is no consistent mechanical layout and there are multiple spelling and grammatical errors (0 pts)
Copyright		Necessary attribution and/or copyright permission is provided for relevant media (2 pts)	Necessary attribution and/or copyright permission is provided for some, but not all relevant media (1 pt)	Evidence of sufficient permissions is not provided (0 pts)
Design principles	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, maximizes use of line and whitespace, and incorporates all recommended design principles for specified media (5 pts)	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, contains some elements line and whitespace, and incorporates some recommended design principles for specified media (3 pts)	Design does not use a clear color theory pattern, but does not maximize use of line and whitespace and/or only uses some recommended design principles for specified media (1 pt)	No color theory pattern is applied, and line and whitespace are ignored in the layout or design principles for the specified media were not followed (0 pts)

Instructional Visual (10 points)

The purpose of the *Instructional Visual* assignment is for you to combine the creativity process with theory of design into a novel application that can be used for instruction. You will create an infographic for a self-identified context that applies relevant message design theories and principles. Your design must include an explanation that identifies the context, critically analyzes your design decisions, and justifies your decisions in reference to your context.

Rubric

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Analysis and justification	Analysis is clearly organized, includes all required elements, and provides specific references to theory or best practices (3 pts)	Analysis is clearly organized and includes all required elements, but does not provide specific references to theory or best practices (2 pts)	Analysis is disorganized or missing one of the required elements (1 pt)	Analysis is disorganized and missing multiple required elements or not provided at all (0 pts)
Content grammar and mechanics		The final artifact contains few if any spelling or grammar errors and follows a consistent mechanical layout (2 pts)	The final artifact contains multiple spelling or grammar errors or is inconsistent in mechanical layout (1 pts)	There is no consistent mechanical layout and there are multiple spelling and grammatical errors (0 pts)

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Copyright		Necessary attribution and/or copyright permission is provided for relevant media (2 pts)	Necessary attribution and/or copyright permission is provided for some, but not all relevant media (1 pt)	Evidence of sufficient permissions is not provided (0 pts)
Design principles	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, maximizes use of line and whitespace, and incorporates all recommended design principles for an infographic (3 pts)	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, contains some elements line and whitespace, and incorporates some recommended design principles for an infographic (2 pts)	Design does not use a clear color theory pattern, but does not maximize use of line and whitespace and/or only uses some recommended design principles for an infographic (1 pt)	No color theory pattern is applied, and line and whitespace are ignored in the layout or design principles for an infographic were not followed (0 pts)

Portfolio Critiques (10 points)

The purpose of the *Portfolio Critiques* assignment is for you apply best practices related to critically evaluating media, organizing feedback into constructive criticism, and contributing positively to the creation of messages. You will critique the work of two peers for the *Instructional Visual*, *Personal Logo*, and *Theory Presentation*. Likewise, two peers will critique your work for these assignments. You will then incorporate this feedback into your revised artifacts that are part of the *Design Portfolio*. Critique due dates are indicated in the course schedule and should be submitted both to the instructor and to the peer whose work is the subject of the critique.

Rubric

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Constructive		Critique is constructive in nature, providing specific guidelines for ways to improve upon the design (2 pts)	Critique is positive overall, but does not offer specific advice regarding how to improve or alter the design (1 pt)	Feedback is negative, derogatory, or inflammatory in nature (0 pts)
Content grammar and mechanics		The critique contains few if any spelling or grammar errors and follows a consistent mechanical layout, using bulleted lists or complete sentences (2 pts)	The critique contains multiple spelling or grammar errors or is inconsistent using bulleted lists or complete sentences (1 pt)	There are multiple spelling and grammatical errors and sentences are incomplete or bulleted statements make no sense (0 pts)
Deadline		All critiques are submitted on or before the specified deadlines (2 pts)	At least three critiques are submitted before or on the specified deadline (1 pt)	More than three critiques are submitted after the deadline (0 pts)

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Completed critiques		All six critiques are completed (2 pts)	At least four critiques are completed (1 pt)	Fewer than four critiques are completed (0 pts)

Personal Logo (10 points)

The purpose of the *Personal Logo* assignment is to introduce the creativity process and basic design principles to you and allow for the personal application of these concepts. Deconstructing logos helps you to evaluate designs critically, identifying overt, hidden, intentional, and unintentional messages. Therefore, all of these components are valuable when designing your own personal logo. Your design must include an explanation that identifies your intended message(s), critically analyzes your design decisions, and justifies your decisions in reference to your message(s).

Rubric

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Analysis and justification	Analysis is clearly organized, includes all required elements, and provides specific references to theory or best practices (4 pts)	Analysis is clearly organized and includes all required elements, but does not provide specific references to theory or best practices (3 pts)	Analysis is disorganized or missing one of the required elements (1 pt)	Analysis is disorganized and missing multiple required elements or not provided at all (0 pts)
Copyright and trademark		Design of the logo does not immediately reference known logos or trademarked designs (2 pts)	The logo design looks visually similar to a known logo or trademarked design, but is distinctly different (1 pt)	The logo design strongly resembles a known logo or trademarked design and could be mistaken for such at first glance (0 pts)
Design principles	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, maximizes use of line and whitespace, and incorporates all recommended design principles for images (4 pts)	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, contains some elements line and whitespace, and incorporates some recommended design principles for images (3 pts)	Design does not use a clear color theory pattern, but does not maximize use of line and whitespace and/or only uses some recommended design principles for images (1 pt)	No color theory pattern is applied, and line and whitespace are ignored in the layout or design principles for images were not followed (0 pts)

Theory Presentation (10 points)

The purpose of the *Theory Presentation* assignment is for you to apply basic design principles in a visual presentation, making use of a variety of media. You may use the tool(s) of your choice to prepare a 15-minute summary of one of the several theories discussed in class. Your presentation must include both audio and visual components.

Rubric

Criteria	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Content	The presentation includes a brief overview of the theory, major milestones or developments, and at least 3 significant researchers and their relevant works (5 pts)	A brief overview and all major milestones are discussed, but only one or two significant researchers and their relevant works are included (3 pts)	The overview fails to include major milestones or recognize relevant research related to the theory (2 pt)	The overview is incomplete, omitting major developments and research or contains incorrect details (0 pts)
Grammar and mechanics		The presentation contains few if any spelling or grammar errors and follows a consistent mechanical layout (2 pts)	The presentation contains multiple spelling or grammar errors or is inconsistent in mechanical layout (1 pt)	There is no consistent mechanical layout and there are multiple spelling and grammatical errors (0 pts)
Copyright		Necessary attribution and/or copyright permission is provided for relevant media (2 pts)	Necessary attribution and/or copyright permission is provided for some, but not all relevant media (1 pt)	Evidence of sufficient permissions is not provided (0 pts)
Design principles	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, maximizes use of line and whitespace, and incorporates all recommended design principles for a presentation (4 pts)	Design uses a clear color theory pattern, contains some elements line and whitespace, and incorporates some recommended design principles for a presentation (2 pts)	Design does not use a clear color theory pattern, but does not maximize use of line and whitespace and/or only uses some recommended design principles for a presentation (1 pt)	No color theory pattern is applied, and line and whitespace are ignored in the layout or design principles for a presentation were not followed (0 pts)
Audio quality		Audio is relevant to the information relayed on screen, does not read to the audience, and is free of extraneous or background noises (2 pts)	Audio is mostly relevant to the information relayed on screen, reads content directly to the audience, or contains some extraneous or background noises (1 pt)	Audio quality is very poor, containing excessive background noise (0 pts)

Grading Scale

The grading scale for this course is as follows. Final scores will **not** be rounded up.

Grade	Points
A	≥ 90
B	80.0 – 89.9
C	70.0 – 79.9
D	60.0 – 69.9
F	≤ 59.9

Please note that the syllabus is a working document to help guide us through the course content in a meaningful way. The instructor reserves the right to modify this document at any time.

Academic Honesty

The University of Wyoming is built upon a strong foundation of integrity, respect and trust. All members of the university community have a responsibility to be honest and the right to expect honesty from others. Any form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable to our community and will not be tolerated (University of Wyoming, 2008, p. 3). Students should report suspected violations of standards of academic honesty to the instructor, department head, or dean.

Representing the work of others as your own constitutes academic dishonesty and is strictly forbidden in this course. The official University definition of academic dishonesty is: An act is academically dishonest when it is an act attempted or performed which misrepresents one's involvement in an academic task in any way, or permits another student to misrepresent the latter's involvement in an academic task by assisting in the misrepresentation. All sources (whether printed or verbal) used in assignments and projects, including those located on the WEB, need to be correctly cited. If you use 5 or more words from a source just as they are used in the source, you need to put those words in quotation marks and cite the source. It is better to not use quotes, but rather paraphrase and cite the source. If necessary, we will use electronic means to detect plagiarism. Students involved in any form of academic dishonesty can as a minimum, receive an automatic "F" in this course.

THE INSTRUCTOR MAY MAKE CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS AS THE COURSE PROCEEDS. IF NECESSARY, THESE CHANGES WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS. SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES MADE TO THE SYLLABUS SHALL BE COMMUNICATED IN WRITING TO THE STUDENTS.