ENGLISH 419: Multimedia Writing

FALL 2023 | MWF 11:30-12:20 (face to face) | 19619, Section 001, 3 Credits | Office: Heavillon 227

Instructor: Kaden C. Milliren

Office Hours: Via Zoom Tuesdays 1-2 (link in BS) https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/93049266621?pwd=VExFUlI1WmhxL2tDWDhMWStYRGdKdz09

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course helps students practice and understand the principles of multimedia design and implementation, with emphasis on writing in multimedia contexts. Students closely examine various multimedia products, doing oral and/or written analyses of a number of such pieces. Course readings focus on how different media communicate meaning, shape our reactions, and interact with one another. Students propose, plan, and develop a number of individual and/or group multimedia projects, including those for the Web, using a variety of technologies that support and enhance the presentation of content in multimedia forms.

COURSE OUTCOMES

- Use theories and approaches from digital writing, visual rhetoric, and multimedia writing to think critically, analyze, and solve problems individually and in teams
- Communicate complex information effectively via a variety of digital and print media, genres, technologies, and presentations to a range of audiences and stakeholders
- Innovate genre conventions and expectations across a variety of media to both expert and non-expert audiences with changing organizational and community needs
- Apply primary and secondary research methods and strategies to produce multimedia documents and other digital artifacts
- Design multimedia documents and digital artifacts that take into account both the informational and human needs of users, paying special attention to accessibility, cultural diversity, and global sensitivity
- Interpret, contextualize, explain, and visualize data sets in specific rhetorical contexts or problems

REQUIRED MATERIALS

There are no required materials for ENGL 419. Readings and additional materials will be posted to BrightSpace as necessary.

COURSE COMPONENTS

Each project will have multiple components that contribute to the larger, final project. You must complete all of the projects in a timely manner in order to pass the course. Just like in the working world, you are expected to submit your work on time. I will count off one letter grade for each class day your work is late.

Project 1 (Instructional How-to) —150 points

The instructional How-to will teach you about using professional writing theories and approaches for composing within digital spaces. You will learn how to balance images with text, approaches to professional design, concise and clear writing, composing for multiple and unknown audiences, and how to provide alt-text descriptions of images. This is an introduction to composing texts in digital spaces, a major component of multimedia writing today.

Project 2 (White Paper/Background Report) —250 points

One of the ways that professionals might be asked to share researched information with various audiences is through a white paper or backgrounder. A white paper is an informative research report that provides background information related to a focused topic. The white paper project asks you to identify a problem (social or political) or a need (product or service) in a related to campus life/culture, and then go on a fact-finding mission to establish the veracity of the problem or need. You will present your findings in a white paper utilizing textual and visual mediums to communicate your research.

Project 3 (Mini Documentary Group Project) —350 points

Multimedia writing means writing using a variety of mediums. Throughout the course you will have already used text, images, infographics, data visualizations, memes, and perhaps more. For the final group project, you will be composing through video, though you will also be expected to produce a visual calendar of your project timeline, a formal proposal, a breakdown of your research methods, and a script for your documentary. Collaboration is a major part of writing and working today, so I think it is important to have a project that puts you into a group of your peers to work together toward a common goal. The documentary group project will task you with taking the themes from project 2, localizing them to a campus or community context, and exploring the subject locally through both primary and secondary research methods.

Informal writing and Participation —100 points

Discussion Board — 150 points

Grade Scale
In this class grades reflect the sum of your achievement throughout the semester. You will accumulate points as described in the assignments portion above, with each assignment graded according to a rubric. At the end of the semester, final grades will be calculated by adding the total points earned and translating those numbers (out of 1000) into the following letters (there will be no partial points or rounding).

Point Total	Letter Grade
940-1000	A
900-939	A-
870-899	B+
840-869	B
800-839	B-
770-799	C+
740-769	C
700-739	C-
670-699	D+

640-669	D
600-639	D-
Below 600	F

Major Project Due Dates:

Project 1:

Optional Rough Draft by 11:59 PM EDT Friday September 8

Peer Response by end of class Wednesday September 13

Final Draft by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday September 17

Project 2:

Peer Response by end of class Wednesday October 19

Final Draft by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday October 29

Project 3:

Team Charter by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday November 5

Update #1 by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday November 12

Update #2 by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday November 19

Update #3 by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday November 26

Update #4 by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday November 3

Update #5 by 11:59 pm EDT Sunday December 10

Peer response by end of class Monday December 4

Class viewing of documentaries Friday December 8

Final Draft by 11:59 pm EDT Tuesday December 12

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Late Work

Deadlines are an unavoidable part of being a professional, and this course is no exception. Course requirements must be completed and posted or submitted on or before the specified due date and delivery time deadline. As noted above, I will count off one letter grade for each class day your work is late.

Office Hours

Office Hours which will allow you to discuss questions related to the work of the class with me. They will be held in person on Wednesdays from 12-1 at HEAV 327D and by appointment on Zoom.

Diversity & Inclusion

In our discussions, structured and unstructured, we will explore a variety of challenging issues, which can help us enhance our understanding of different experiences and perspectives. This can be challenging, but in overcoming these challenges, we find the greatest rewards. While we will design guidelines as a group, everyone should remember the following points:

- We are all in the process of learning about others and their experiences. Please speak with me, anonymously if needed, if something has made you uncomfortable.
- Intention and impact are not always aligned, and we should respect the impact something may have on someone even if it was not the speaker's intention.
- We all come to the class with a variety of experiences and a range of expertise, we should respect these in others while critically examining them in ourselves.
- Links to the various cultural centers on campus are provided in Brightspace.

Accessibility and Accommodation

Purdue University strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247.

Nondiscrimination Policy

All class participants are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and sensitive manner towards others and the course material. Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. Go to Purdue's nondiscrimination policy for more information.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information is submitted the greater the opportunity for the university to investigate the concern. More details are available on our course Brightspace table of contents, under University Policies.

ADDITIONALLY, any discussion of academic integrity and plagiarism today is incomplete without mention of generative AI tools and applications such as ChatGPT, Bard AI, and Claude, amongst a growing number of others. For better or worse, these extant tools have become ubiquitous, adaptable, and easily-accessible; using them to help with class projects – in this class as well as others – may be tempting, and understandably so. As with any new technology, it is important to consider the ethical

implications of its use, currently a hot subject of thought and debate among writing studies scholars and teachers. However, generative AI is far from the first technology to cause such a stir.

Ancient western philosophers such as Socrates (ostensibly) felt skeptical of writing itself as a technology, believing that its emergence and development would diminish knowledge transfer and adversely impact human memory. Later, leading thinkers became skeptical of the invention of the printing press, the radio, television, and the internet. So, while there was much excitement regarding the development of each of these technologies, that excitement has often been met with reluctance and resistance. Generative AI seems to be little different in this regard, so where do we draw the line?

As of right now, that line may be blurry; the technology, after all, is nascent and still developing. And what separates generative AI from the other technologies mentioned, is its ability to provide users with original content via prompt engineering. So, can you use generative AI in this class? The answer is not necessarily so clear, but I do see one potentially promising use for it: brainstorming.

Often, students (and writers of all kinds) struggle with idea invention/generation. "Conversing" with generative AI may help you to identify, clarify, and develop a research topic, and may even guide you toward certain resources. This is acceptable, however this is probably as far as generative AI should be involved with any projects in this class, and it is still important to carefully vet any information/resources that AI might reference or lead you to. Further, it is **NOT PERMISSIBLE** to use such technologies to write the main subject material of a project, and any use (as described above) **MUST BE CITED** according to standard citation practices. Additionally, a disclosure (as a footnote, endnote, or otherwise appropriate location) that details the specific use of generative AI at any stage of a project **IS REQUIRED**. Brief, cited quotes from generative AI may be included if relevant to the project. These details will become clearer as we continue to discuss these technologies throughout the semester. If you have any questions or are uncertain how to proceed with the possible use of any such technology on a project, prioritize coming to me for advice so that we can avoid any accidental academic dishonesty, which will be treated the same as any other academic transgression, possibly resulting in a zero for the project.

Purdue Honor Pledge

As a Boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together - we are Purdue.

Attendance

This semester, Purdue is resuming normal operations as much as possible. As part of this, the university expects that students will attend classes for which they are registered, and **attendance can once again be made part of a course's grade.** This class will involve informal writing activities during class, which will constitute part of your grade, **so attendance is required to be successful in this course**. Even so, students should stay home and contact the Protect Purdue Health Center (496-INFO) if they feel ill, have any symptoms associated with COVID-19, or suspect they have been exposed to the virus. In the case of an absence (COVID-related or otherwise), you bear the responsibility of informing me in a timely fashion, and when possible, and I will do my best to accommodate you either by excusing you from work, or if possible, allowing you to make it up.

When conflicts or absences can be anticipated, such as for many University-sponsored activities and religious observances, the student should inform the instructor of the situation as far in advance as possible. Under academic regulations, excused absences may be granted for cases of grief/bereavement, military service, jury duty, religious observances, parenting leave, and many University-sponsored events. For details, see the Academic Regulations & Student Conduct section of the University Catalog website.

For unanticipated or emergency absences when advance notification to the instructor is not possible, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible by email or phone. When the student is unable to make direct contact with the instructor and is unable to leave word with the instructor's department because of circumstances beyond the student's control, and in cases falling under excused

absence regulations, the student or the student's representative should contact or go to the Office of the Dean of Students website to complete appropriate forms for instructor notification.

A final note about making up missed in-class work: remember that accommodations for making up in-class work are at my discretion. Students who do not contact me about absences in a timely manner or miss an excessive number of class sessions will not be accommodated.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Writing Lab

Many students believe the Writing Lab exists only for writers who need "extra" (or "remedial") help; however, having another set of eyes can help all writers strengthen their ideas and focus. Even the most accomplished writers need feedback. The tutors in the Writing Lab can work with students at any stage of the writing process, from planning and drafting to editing and polishing strategies. Writing Lab consultants work with undergraduate and graduate students from every department on any piece of writing from class assignments to job search documents. For more information, please visit the Writing Lab's Website or call (765)494-3723.

Basic Needs Security

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. There is no appointment needed and Student Support Services is available to serve students 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Considering the significant disruptions caused by the current global crisis as it related to COVID-19, students may submit requests for emergency assistance from the Critical Needs Fund.

If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed:
try WellTrack. Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

If you need support and information about options and resources:
Please contact or see the Office of the Dean of Students. Call 765-494-1747. Hours of operation are M-F, 8 am- 5 pm.

If you find yourself struggling to find a healthy balance between academics, social life, stress, etc.:
Sign up for free one-on-one virtual or in-person sessions with a Purdue Wellness Coach at RecWell. Student coaches can help you navigate through barriers and challenges toward your goals throughout the semester. Sign up is completely free and can be done on BoilerConnect. If you have any questions, please contact Purdue Wellness at evans240@purdue.edu.

If you're struggling and need mental health services:
Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 765-494-6995 during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office on the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.