English 406B: Electronic Documents & Publications
Spring 2005

Days/Time W 4:00-6:30
Place CBC C309
Course Web http://www.unlv.edu/faculty2/jablonski/406B

Instructor Dr. Jeff Jablonski
Office FDH 624
E-mail jablonsk@unlv.nevada.edu
Phone 895-0947
Office Hours MW 1:00-2:30 or by appointment

Course Introduction English 406B presents principles of Web-based document design, creation, layout, editing, and posting to the Internet and on corporate intranets.

This course emphasizes learning how to produce electronic documents from a rhetorical perspective, which means understanding how purpose, audience, and context affect the development of Web pages and other electronic documents. This is not a course in using HTML code or a specific HTML editor. Nor is it a class in creating flashy high-end multimedia graphics or becoming an e-commerce Webmaster (i.e., administering a for-profit business using web databases). Though these elements are important and will be reviewed in this class, these skills are reserved for other courses (e.g., the Division of Educational Outreach’s Internet Design and Technology Certificate Program, or there’s good Web graphic design courses in Fine Arts).

Since this is an English class, this course will focus on writing electronic documents, broadly defined to include such topics as visual design, user testing, and information architecture. Some of the skills Web writers, as opposed to Web graphic designers, must possess include:

• Planning, researching, and writing fresh, compelling, concise content from teasers to full-length feature articles
• Strong understanding of principles of information architecture and user-centered information design
• Brainstorm, evaluate, produce, test, launch, and promote new site ideas
• Experience with HTML and HTML editors
• Experience with content management systems
• Ability to work on web design team and interact with management, sales and marketing, and subject-area experts
Solid understanding of grammar, punctuation, and style rules

One advantage of knowing how to write effectively for the World Wide Web is that Web writing skills, broadly defined, translate very well into any form of writing, including print documents written in any profession.

English 406B is among the new core courses for the English Dept.'s Professional Writing Certificate Program (see http://www.unlv.edu/faculty2/jablonski/profwritcert.htm). This program, open to all majors, is designed to strengthen your workplace written communication skills or prepare you for a career as a professional writer. For managerial and other business and technical jobs, strong writing skills translate into increased career advancement and income.

A Professional Writing Certificate makes you more marketable and enhances your career options. You can also pursue a career as a professional writer, specializing in communicating information to diverse audiences.

**Course Goals**

Goals of English 406B include:

- Learn to design and compose professional quality online documents, including Web pages and Adobe PDF documents
- Learn and apply principles of rhetoric, visual design, usability, and information architecture in designing electronic documents
- Create professional quality personal and professional Web sites, including external client sites and personal e-portfolios

**Prerequisite**

- Completion of first-year composition requirement
- No prior Web design experience required
- Admission to the Professional Writing Certificate program is not a prerequisite

**Required Texts**


**NOTE: I did not order any copies of these texts at the bookstore.**

**Required Materials**

- A UNLV Student Computing Resources (SCR) user account, to access UNLV public and teaching computer labs and host Web sites you create in this class.
  - Go to: http://ccs.unlv.edu/scr/support/labs.asp

- An e-mail account, preferably a unlv.nevada.edu pioneer account
  - Go to: http://ccs.unlv.edu/scr/support/email.asp
  - You can also access your pioneer account from the “Directories” tab of the UNLV.EDU Web site (click on “Access Pioneer Webmail”)

---

English 406B, Electronic Documents • Spring 2004 • Page 2
Some disks to store files on. You can also store files on your Home directory of your SCR account. These files can be accessed from home using NetStorage https://complabs.nevada.edu/NetStorage/.

Recommended Materials

- **A home copy of Dreamweaver MX 2004.** The software is available on campus in the public computer lab located in CBC C234, but you may want to purchase your own copy of Dreamweaver, the latest version of Macromedia’s Web authoring software. This is what the pros use to create and manage Web pages. It is a powerful, flexible program that is relatively easy to use. One drawback is that it has tons of features (again, UNLV’s Educational Outreach offers great Dreamweaver courses). You can install a 30-day trial version of Dreamweaver MX 2004 from Macromedia’s site at http://www.macromedia.com/software/dreamweaver/

You can purchase educational discount versions of the software at Journeyed.com. Dreamweaver MX 2004 is available for $99.98. You can also purchase an educational version of Macromedia Studio MX, which includes Macromedia Flash MX, Dreamweaver MX, Fireworks MX, and FreeHand, for $199.98. Academic versions may not be used for commercial sites and are not upgradable to the retail versions.

Before purchasing or downloading Dreamweaver, make sure your computer meets the software’s specifications.


Assignments

- **Labs (5% x 6 = 30% of course grade)**
  There are six in-class “lab” activities designed to give you hands on experience with the tools and/or principles applicable to a particular project and the overall course objectives. Generally, you’ll get full credit for successfully completing all the tasks of a particular lab. You can make up a missed lab assignment for half credit.

  **Document Re-Purposing Assignment (10%)**
  Your second assignment is to “repurpose,” or convert, a print document into a Web-based document. Because online reading habits are different, writers of electronic documents must be aware of the difference between print and online documents. You’ll pick a print document of more than ~2,000 words, write a reflection on how it should be repurposed to the Web, and then create an online version of the document. The print document you choose could be something you’ve written or from someone else.

  **Webzine Project (10%)**
  People have different online reading habits than print reading habits. As part of the “English” emphasis of this Web writing course, you should learn how to write, in the words of Jonathan and Lisa Price, “sticky,” “attention-grabbing,” “interactive,” “relevant,” “persuasive,” “informative” content. To gain experience writing for online
audiences, for this assignment you’ll write a 1,000 word “Webzine” (i.e., online) article on a subject related to information technology, like those published in popular online zines like PCWorld, WebMonkey, and Wired magazine. You can pick the topic.

**Web Site Evaluation (10%)**
One of the goals in this class is to help you develop a better critical sense of what constitutes an effective Web site. Therefore, one of the assignments in this class is to choose a Web site, apply what you read about effective Web site design, and then write a detailed 1,500-2,000 word evaluation report of your chosen site. Your analysis will consider such criteria as audience/purpose, information architecture/navigation, visual design, usability, and quality/appropriateness of writing. Your review must be submitted in the form of a hypertext Web site.

**E-Portfolio (10%)**
For the final project, you’ll construct a Web-based “e-portfolio” that creates a professional identity for yourself and can be used to showcase your skills and abilities with interested readers (i.e., employers). While you have some leeway in what you can include in this site, you will be required to include a home/splash page, a Web resume, and several annotated samples of work that represents your relevant skills, including at least one PDF document you’ve written and links to Web pages you produced during this course. Anything on the site that could hurt your image with potential employers will hurt your grade (i.e., pictures of your spring break arrest would be unacceptable; pictures of your favorite cats would have to be carefully measured according to your audience and purpose).

**Mid-Term and Final Exam (2 x 10% = 20%)**
Yup, there are exams in this class. Each exam will consist of several short-answer questions and should take about one hour to complete. The exams are designed to assess your familiarity with and ability to apply assigned readings.

**Participation (10%)**
You’re expected to attend every class and participate actively during class. Absences, excused or unexcused, affect your participation grade accordingly: One absence = A; 2 = B; 3 = C; 4 = F for your participation grade. Five or more absences and you fail the course.

**Grading**
Grades will be determined on a percentage basis. Major assignments will be graded on the standard letter-grade scale with plusses and minuses. Your overall grade and project grades are based on the following percentages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 – 92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91 – 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89 – 88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>87 – 82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81 – 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79 – 78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>77 – 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>71 – 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69 – 68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>67 – 62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>61 – 60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grade to Points Conversion**
Use the following table to convert your letter grade on a particular assignment to the corresponding point value out of the total 100 points for the course. For example, on an assignment worth 5 points, an “A-” earns 4.5 points (90% x 5 = 4.5).
### Project Point Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Overall %</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Your Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lab #1</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab #2</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab #3</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab #4</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab #5</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab #6</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webzine Project</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-Purposing Project</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website Evaluation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Portfolio</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Attendance & Punctuality

University policy requires that you attend every class. If you do miss a class, for whatever reason, you are responsible for making up missed work. Missing more than 1 evening class without prior notification and appropriate documentation constitutes excessive absence. Your participation grade and final grade will be lowered according to missed-classes over this limit. Being excessively late for class counts as half an absence.

I expect you to notify me by phone or e-mail prior to a planned absence and as soon as possible after an unexpected emergency.

### Writing Lab Support

UNLV’s Writing Center (FDH 240) offers free tutoring for students who want or need extra writing help. You can make use of these services by dropping in at the Center or by making an appointment to see a writing tutor (895-3908). The Writing Center also offers online help at http://www.unlv.edu/Colleges/Liberal_Arts/English/Writing_Center/.

### Documented Disability

If you have a documented disability, you will need to go to Disability Services (DS) for coordination in your academic accommodations. DS is located within the Learning
Enhancement Services in Reynolds Student Services Center (Rm 137). The DS phone is 895-0866 (TDD 895-0652).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 Jan 19 | Course Introduction  
Activate SCR account  
Complete lab #1  
(Create Basic Site) | Get Materials                                      |
| 2 Jan 26 | Overview of Web site planning  
Complete lab #2  
(Information Architecture) | **Read:**  
- How Web Pages Work  
- Web Style Guide ch. 1, 2  
- Shiple's “Information Architecture Tutorial”  
  http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/design/site_building/tutorials/tutorial1.html | **Due:** Lab #1  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 3 Feb 2  | Overview of Web site design  
Complete lab #3  
(Designing with Graphics) | **Read:**  
- Web Style Guide ch. 3, 4, 7  
- Other design readings (TBA) | **Due:** Lab #2  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 4 Feb 9  | Overview of Web writing/style  
Complete lab #4  
(Shorten That Text)  
Set up Repurposing Project | **Read:**  
- Price & Price ch. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 | **Due:** Lab #3  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 5 Feb 16 | Complete lab #5  
(Cascading Styles)  
Repurposing Project workshop | **Read:**  
- Price & Price ch. 2, 3, 4  
- Web Style Guide ch. 5, 6  
- Steve Mulder's "Mulder's Stylesheets Tutorial"  
  http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/authoring/stylesheets/tutorials/tutorial1.html | **Due:** Lab #4  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Repurposing Project  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 6 Feb 23 | Set up Webzine Project  
Complete lab #6  
(Rollovers and Pop-Ups) | **Read:**  
- Price & Price ch. 1, 10, 11, 13, 15  
- Web Style Guide ch. 8  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Lab #5  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Repurposing Project  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 7 Mar 2  | Discuss usability | **Read:**  
- Usability readings (TBA)  
- Johnson “Rhetoric and the Complex of Use”  
  (handout)  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Lab #6  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 8 Mar 9  | Mid-term  
Webzine workshop | **Read:**  
- Website evaluation readings (TBA)  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Webzine Project  
  (e-mail site URL to Dr. J by 12 noon)  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 9 Mar 16 | Set up Web Site Review project | **Read:**  
- Website evaluation readings (TBA)  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Webzine Project  
  (e-mail site URL to Dr. J by 12 noon)  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 10 Mar 23 | Spring Recess | **Read:**  
- Website evaluation readings (TBA)  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Webzine Project  
  (e-mail site URL to Dr. J by 12 noon)  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 11 Mar 30 | Web site review workshop | **Read:**  
- Website evaluation readings (TBA)  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Webzine Project  
  (e-mail site URL to Dr. J by 12 noon)  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 12 Apr 6 | Web site review workshop | **Read:**  
- Website evaluation readings (TBA)  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Webzine Project  
  (e-mail site URL to Dr. J by 12 noon)  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 13 Apr 13 | Set up E-Portfolio | **Read:**  
- Website evaluation readings (TBA)  
  [Please provide due date]  
**Due:** Webzine Project  
  (e-mail site URL to Dr. J by 12 noon)  
  [Please provide due date] |
| 14 Apr 20 | E-Portfolio workshop | **Due:** Web site evaluation  
  (e-mail site URL to Dr. J by 12 noon)  
  [Please provide due date] |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apr 27</td>
<td>E-Portfolio workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>E-Portfolio workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 11 (6 pm)</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>