Technical Writing

ENGL 305, Spring 2014, West Virginia University

description and requirements

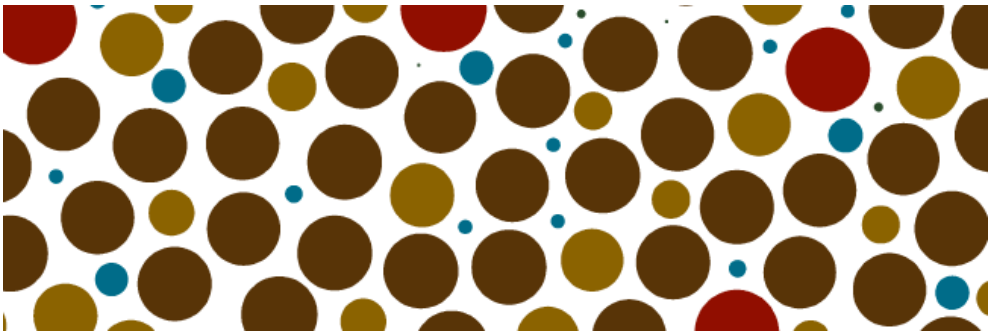

image credit: XKCD

course information

Course number/section: ENGL 305
Course name: Technical Writing
Term and year: Spring 2014
CRN: 11216
Location: G06 Colson Hall
Times: TT 2:30-3:45
Instructor: John Jones, Assistant Professor
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Twitter: johnmjones
Google Plus: John Jones
Office: 231 Colson Hall
Office hours: Tue 10-noon in 231 Colson Hall [make an appointment]
Virtual office hours: Tue 10-noon & Ffri noon-1 via Google Plus hangouts [make an appointment]

description

This course is designed to introduce students to strategies for translating between discipline-specific knowledge and audiences of interested outsiders. While this may include topics traditionally understood as technical—such as those in engineering, architecture, and computer science—technical writing encompasses any topic that must be explained to an involved, but not expert, audience.

This course explores the forms of technical writing that are common in the professions, including object and process descriptions, instructions, persuasive analysis, and science popularizations. Drawing on the expertise developed in their majors, students will explore technical writing through topics and issues important to the work they plan to do. Because a primary assumption of this course is that all writing emerges from and responds to a particular problem, audience, and purpose, the course focuses on helping students develop multiple writing strategies for diverse communication situations.

course objectives

By the end of the semester, students will:

- Master the practices and principles of technical communication—with particular emphasis on planning, audience analysis, persuasion, clear and effective writing style, organization, and information design—by being able to
  - Navigate WVU library and external databases for use in researched projects
  - Distinguish author-created media from third party media and understand the bounds of fair use
  - Analyze information graphics and data visualizations, including identifying data sources, analyzing the quality of that data, and verifying that graphical elements present data in an accurate and ethical manner
  - Cite research materials using APA Style
  - Identify a specific audience for professional communication and tailor that communication to that audience
  - Write clearly and effectively organized text with minimal formal errors in a tone appropriate for professional audiences
  - Master the techniques for creating data visualizations, creating an information graphic and large-scale data visualization
- Refine a writing process that will allow them to communicate well, meet deadlines, and work as part of a team
- Demonstrate the ability to speak persuasively in a professional setting by presenting a lightning talk that highlights the primary argument of the data visualization

In line with the goals of the WVU BA Program in English, these objectives will enable students who successfully complete the course to

- Interpret texts within diverse literary, cultural, and historical contexts;
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of the social and structural aspects of the English language; and
- Demonstrate a range of contextually effective writing strategies.

required texts

- Alred, Brusaw, & Oliu (2009). *Handbook of Technical Writing*. 9th Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's. ISBN: 0-312-47707-4
- Cairo (2012). *The Functional Art: An Introduction to Information Graphics and Visualization*. New Riders. ISBN: 978-0321834737
- Wong (2010). *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Information Graphics*. W. W. Norton & Co. ISBN: 978-0-393-07295-2

other requirements

- Regular access to a computer and the Internet (on-campus computer access is provided by the Office of Information Technology, the Center for Literary Computing, and the WVU Libraries)
- A MIX email account which is checked daily

- $20 to cover the cost of printing and mounting your data visualization
- A Twitter account
- A Google Drive account
- A means of keeping track of your course files, using
  - a *USB drive* you can bring with you to class (good) or
  - a *cloud backup service* like Dropbox that can archive folders (better) or
  - *both* (best)

additional recommendations

- Adobe Illustrator; this software is available on the classroom computers as well as in labs linked to above. WVU students can purchase the entire Adobe Creative Cloud suite, including Illustrator, Indesign, and Photoshop for ~$65 via the WVU Academic Software Center
- A Google Plus account for accessing my virtual office hours
- Tools for tracking your research, like Evernote for note-taking, Delicious for tracking Web sources, and Zotero or RefWorks for managing research and formatting citations
- services for uploading and sharing media, like Scribd for documents, Vimeo or YouTube for videos, and Flickr or Picassa for photos

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policies

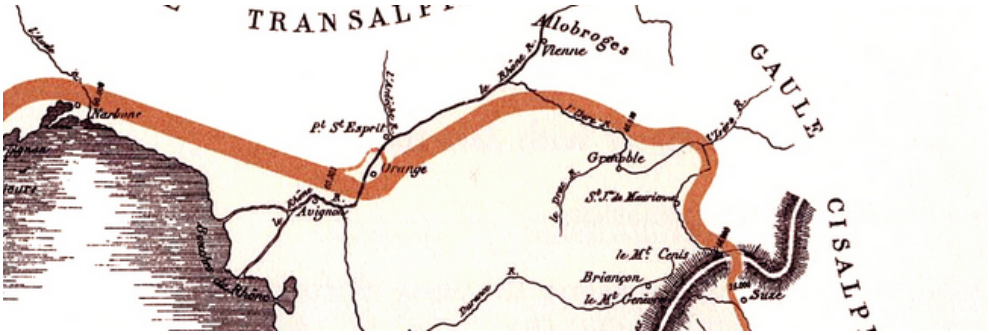

image credit: Charles Joseph Minard

professional conduct

This course is part of the Professional Writing and Editing (PWE) program at WVU. The PWE program is dedicated to preparing its students to complete a capstone internship experience and, ultimately, for careers as professional communicators. For this reason, many aspects of the course are designed to replicate professional work experiences, and all students are expected to conduct themselves like professionals in the course. As is the case with professionals, students are expected to attend and be on time to all class meetings; to come to all class meetings prepared; and, generally, to respond to course activities and assignments as they would to comprable work activities and assignments.

social justice policy

The English Department and the Professional Writing and Editing Program support WVU's commitment to social justice. In this course, you will work with your classmates to create a positive learning environment based on open communication and mutual respect.

inclusivity

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services (293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see http://diversity.wvu.edu.

work visibility

Due to the nature of the course, you will be sharing your work with your fellow classmates as part of workshops and peer review sessions. Additionally, you will share your work publicly on the Web (e.g., on this course site) and with the WVU community. By taking this course, you are indicating that you accept these requirements; **if**

you have any questions or concerns about this policy please contact me immediately.

office hours

If you have questions about the readings, assignments, or any other issues related to the course, come talk to me; I will be happy to answer them. The best times to meet with me will be during my office hours.

scheduled office hours

In-person. My in-person office hours will be held on Tuesdays from 10-noon; my office is in 231 Colson Hall.

Virtual. In addition to my in-person office hours, I will also hold regular virtual office hours using the chat or video features of Google Plus. Google refers to these chats as hangouts. My virtual office hours this semester will be on Tuesdays from 10-noon and Fridays from noon-1. If you are new to Google Plus, you can find more information on how to initiate a hangout here.

please make an appointment

I would like to know when you plan to meet with me, so please schedule an appointment if you are going to come see me or start a chat with me.

meeting outside of my scheduled office hours

If you would like to meet with me but are not free during any of my scheduled office hours, please contact me directly via email and I will be happy to arrange an alternative meeting time that fits both of our schedules.

cancellations

If for some reason it becomes necessary for me to cancel or reschedule my regular office hours or a meeting with an individual student, I will notify the class or the student as soon as possible. Similarly, if you need to cancel a scheduled meeting with me, you should contact me as soon as possible.

official communication

In addition to our class meetings, there will be two primary avenues of official communication for the course: WVU email and this website.

I will conduct most official communication with the class or individual students via email. I will send these messages to your MIX email addresses.

Updates to this course site—such as changes to the course schedule, or additional information about assignments—will be posted to the blog on this site. I may sometimes duplicate messages in other media—for example, I might post on Twitter that I have added a new blog post to the course site or that I have sent everyone an important email—but, **in order to make sure you don't miss important information, you should regularly check your MIX accounts, messages posted to the course hashtag on Twitter, and this site**.

My tendency in course communication initiated by students will to respond in the medium in which the question was sent. For example, if you ask a question on Twitter, I will tend to respond on Twitter (assuming the answer can fit in a tweet and is suitable for public view); if you ask a question in a comment on a document in Google Drive, I will respond in a comment on that document; if you send me an email, I will email you back.

I will do my best to respond to your messages within 24 hours during the work week (M-F); on the weekends, responses may take longer.

technology policies

working with new technologies

In this course, we will be experimenting with many different technologies for writing and reading, ranging from services like Twitter to software packages like Adobe Illustrator. In this course you may be introduced to a new way of communicating that you find indispensable. Alternatively, you may find yourself using technologies that you cannot imagine yourself using again outside of the course, and you may experience these technologies as being difficult or unrelated to your career goals.

That is ok.

You are not required to love the technologies we experiment with in the course or to embrace them without question. What *is* required of you is that you approach all of our assignments with an open mind and your best effort, as a future professional experimenting with different modes of communication.

The course will contain specific instructions on technology use and software. For example, we will cover basic methods of preparing information for visualizations and page layout in programs like Word and Illustrator. When we do, I expect that you will take notes so you will have a guide to follow when it comes time for you to use these technologies. Additionally, it is likely that you will find that your particular project will require you to use a technique or software feature not addressed in class, and this will require you to do additional research and adopt additional tools that you will learn on your own.

As experimenters, our method will be trial and error. In all cases, when faced with new tools and technologies you should expect to devote some time to experimenting with and learning these technologies, researching (or discovering) their possibilities and limitations, and, when possible, sharing what you have learned with your classmates when they need help.

troubleshooting technology problems

While I am always available to answer your questions and help you troubleshoot technology issues, if you need assistance with a particular technology you will find that, in most instances, if you have a question about how to accomplish a particular task—for example, creating a histogram in Excel—other people have had the same question and the answer is available on the Internet.

If examining the course readings and searching for help documents online does not solve your problem and you need to consult me, please remember that the more detail I have about your problem, the easier it is for me to

help you solve it. If you email me saying

> *I'm trying to create a histogram, but I'm stuck. Help!*

I won't have much to go on and this will lead to delays in you finding a solution to your problem. I better email request is

> *I was using Excel to create a histogram, but my I can't get my axis labels to line up correctly. Help!*

In many cases, it is most helpful if you not only describe your problem, but also share the files that you are having trouble with.

using technologies in class

During class you are welcome to use the computers in the lab for note-taking and activities that are relevant to the tasks at hand; you are also welcome to bring your own devices for these purposes. However, there may be some occasions when I will ask you to turn off computers and other devices for a period of time.

In general, most technology is welcome in class as long as it is used to aid student learning. Technology that doesn't serve this purpose—or that actively distracts you or your classmates from learning—is not welcome, and I reserve the right to restrict the use of these technologies in class.

attendance

In this class we will cover a large amount of information in our face-to-face meetings that will be essential to how you understand the course topics and eventually complete your assignments. We will also be learning a number of skills that you will be expected to develop incrementally over the course of the semester. For these reasons, it is important that you attend class, arrive on time, bring any assigned work and necessary materials, and participate in all in-class writing, workshopping, and discussion sessions.

There are no excused absences in the course. For this reason, you should reserve your absences for truly unavoidable emergencies. **Each student will be allowed four (4) absences without it affecting his or her grade. For each absence over four (4), the student's final grade for the course will be lowered by up to 5 points. This includes absences for illnesses and other emergencies.**

It is also important that you be in class on time and stay for the entire period. **If you arrive to class more than 5 minutes late or leave class more than 5 minutes before it is dismissed, you will be counted absent. Further, if you come to class unprepared on the day of a peer-review session, conference session, or workshop—that is, without a draft to discuss with your classmates or myself or in any other way unprepared to workshop your project—you will be counted absent.**

If you find that an unavoidable conflict prevents you from attending class or being on time, you should discuss this conflict with me prior to the absence (if possible). Otherwise, you should contact me about any absences as soon as possible.

late work

If you cannot attend class on the date an assignment is due, you should discuss a make-up date with me before the absence. If you do not contact me before the time an assignment is due, the assignment will be considered late.

In general, a problem with technology will not be considered an acceptable excuse for late or incomplete work. If your computer malfunctions, it is your responsibility to find an alternative one to work on. If your Internet goes out, you will need to find a different access point. And you should create multiple redundant backups of your work in case you accidentally erase, overwrite, or otherwise lose your files.

Major assignments turned in after they are due will be penalized by ten percentage points for each calendar day they are late. Homework, quizzes, and all other in-class assignments will not be accepted late. If you fail to attend class on the day you are scheduled to lead a class discussion or give a presentation, you should expect to receive no credit for that assignment.

submitting course work

Unless otherwise noted, all course assignments will be submitted electronically. I will inform you of the method and procedures for submitting an assignment before it is due. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due before the start of class on the day they are listed in the course schedule.

academic integrity

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the West Virginia University Student Conduct Code. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

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assignments

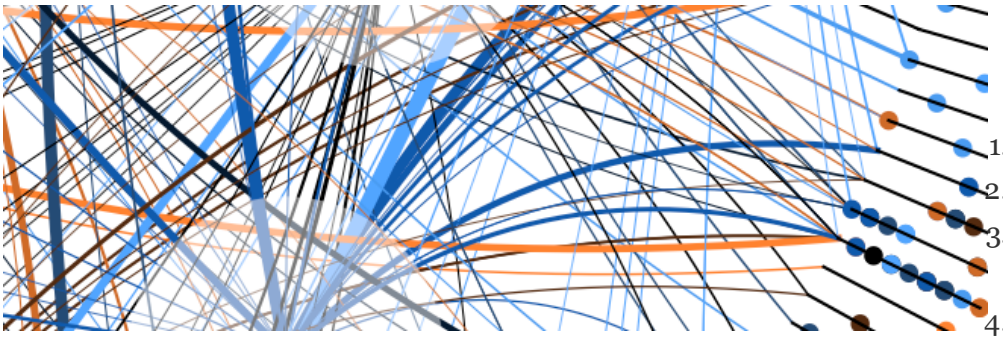

image credit: nodebox.net

1. participation (10%)
2. quizzes (10%)
3. instructions and documentation (20%)
4. mechanism and process description infographic (25%)
5. scientific or technical controversy data visualization (25%)
6. lightning talk (10%)

grade descriptions

These descriptions will give you an indication of the the expectations that will guide my evaluation of your individual projects:

- **A - Outstanding:** represents superlative participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with very high quality in all course work.
- **B - Excellent:** represents above-average participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with consistently high quality in course work.
- **C - Average:** represents good participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with generally good quality overall in course work.
- **D - Below average:** represents uneven participation in course activities; some gaps in assigned work completed, with inconsistent quality in course work.
- **F - Inadequate:** represents minimal participation in course activities; serious gaps in assigned work completed, or very low quality in course work.

plus/minus grades

I will use the following scale to determine plus/minus grades:

- A+: 97 and above
- A: 93-96
- A-: 90-92
- B+: 87-89
- B: 83-86
- B-: 80-82
- C+: 77-79

- C: 73-76
- C-: 70-72
- D+: 67-69
- D: 63-66
- D-: 60-62
- F: 0-59

participation (10%)

description

This course is designed to be a participatory learning experience, combining discussions and in-class workshop activities and assignments. As such, it is important that you fully participate in all in-class activities, specifically by committing yourself to the learning community consisting of your classmates and myself.

You will have multiple opportunities to earn participation credit. However, if it becomes necessary for you to demonstrate your participation in the course, it will be your responsibility to save relevant materials (like your notes) as evidence of this participation.

In general, if at the end of the semester you can demonstrate that you were able to substantially enhance or contribute to the course learning community and you fully participated in course activities, you will be able to earn full credit for participation. **While preparation times may vary depending on our weekly schedule, you should generally plan to spend 6 hours a week—or, 2 hours for every hour of class time—preparing for class meetings.**

what does class participation look like?

Participation can take different forms for different students. For example: you could post relevant links and comments on the course Twitter feed during or after class, you could take notes on class discussions, or you could help your classmates with technical or other tasks during workshops. Each of these activities allows the student to engage with the course, and, consequently, improves the course experience for everyone. However, some participation behaviors hold true for everyone.

First, you cannot participate if you do not attend class or if you regularly show up late or otherwise interfere with course activities. For these reasons, course attendance is a necessary prerequisite for participation. However, *attending class does not equal participation*, for it is possible to be in every class meeting without engaging with or contributing to the learning that occurs in class.

Second, it will be impossible for you to participate in course learning if you come to class unprepared. You can prepare in the following ways. Before each class meeting *you should complete all assigned readings and homework*. *You should bring all materials to each session*, including course texts, additional readings, your notes, homework, assignment files and research sources, discussion notes from previous meetings, and any other relevant materials.

Finally, while in class, *you should be engaged in all activities* by taking notes on our discussions and participating in those discussions either orally or via the Twitter backchannel, or, during peer-review sessions

or technology workshops, by conferencing with your classmates and myself or engaging with the workshop deliverables.

quizzes (10%)

You will receive a daily quiz grade for each class meeting. On any day on which readings are assigned you should be prepared to demonstrate your comprehension of those readings, not simply by discussing them in class, but also by being quizzed on the content of the readings and/or successfully completing any assigned proof-of-reading activities. On workshop days, this quiz grade will be based on your participation in and/or completion of workshop activities.

Quizzes will typically be given at the beginning of class. If you are absent or late and miss a quiz or proof-of-reading activity, your daily quiz grade will be zero. Missed quizzes cannot be made up.

instructions and documentation (20%)

description

Instructions are important documents in the real world. They are a way companies can connect to their customers. They structure the way individuals do their jobs. They help ensure everyone does the same thing for the same task. They can show people performing tasks how to do so safely and effectively.

Unfortunately, instructions are often the worst-written documents we encounter: they miss steps, fail to orient the reader to important tools or concepts, assume too much or explain too much, and generally confuse the reader who is already unfamiliar with the task.

Writing instructions is harder than it seems, but more important than we assume.

For this assignment, you will produce a set of written instructions for a task of your choosing. Your instructions will be designed for users who have not necessarily worked through the process that you are describing. Your instructions will include both text and visuals and should allow even novice users to move successfully through your selected step-by-step process.

You will submit the instructions digitally. Your final instructions should include a minimum of

- 1,000 words,
- 5 individual steps, and
- 10 accompanying images.

This project will be both an exercise in writing effective instructions as well as clear document design that makes effective use of headings, bullets, lists, body text, and image placement.

Some sample tasks include:

- cropping and resizing images in Photoshop
- signing up for courses

- designing a webpage in MIX
- how to test soil
- scanning with an HP scanner
- how to make beeswax candles
- building a campfire

Some tips on choosing a task:

- Choose a task members of the group are reasonably familiar with. If you all are novices, you might miss steps and mislead the reader unknowingly.
- Choose a task with specific steps that aren't based on technique. "How to sink a free throw" or "how to ballroom dance" are interesting topics, but a reader's success will depend on form, not function.
- Choose something appropriately complex. "How to fix a blister" involves too few steps for an effective project.
- Do not choose a recipe. **Any task involving cooking or mixing drinks is off limits for this assignment.**

evaluation

You will submit this project twice. The first submission will consist of a draft of the project intended for user-testing, and the final version will incorporate any changes that that testing indicates are necessary. Your instructions will be graded according to the following criteria:

- a clear and limiting title
- appropriate level of technicality for the audience
- logically ordered steps
- appropriate use of warnings, cautions, and notes, that are set off visually in the text using best practices of document design
- appropriate use of style and tone, including
  - active voice and imperative mood
  - parallel phrasing
  - positive phrasing (RIGHT—"Examine your disk for dust contamination." WRONG—"Verify that your disk is not contaminated with dust.")
  - transitions that mark time and sequence
- appropriate visual aids that are **all the original creation of the group**; no third-party visuals will be allowed

mechanism and process description infographic (25%)

description

The purpose of description is not simply to help your audience understand what something is or does (which is the province of definition), but to help them *see*—literally—how that thing *functions*. To this end, descriptions use visual detail to describe both the subject of the description and how it works.

For this assignment, you will work alone or in groups of 2-3 persons to choose a mechanism or process with which you are reasonably familiar and create an infographic that describes your subject using both images and text.

For your subject, you may choose something from your chosen major/profession, but you will not be limited to strictly academic or professional topics. You may choose something from a hobby or interest, for example.

Whatever you choose, you will need to find an audience for whom this description has relevance and purpose, so strive to be creative in your choice. Examples might include a hard drive, a song, the student loan system, the human heart, the metabolic process, or a television. If you are choosing a process, the process must be one that is not accomplished through direct human action (that would be instructions). In other words, you can describe how blood circulates; you cannot describe how to check a person's blood pressure.

Although it can contain quantitative elements, this information graphic will be largely qualitative in nature. It should follow best practices for both writing and design, and choices about visual design as well as the style and tone of the text should be both appropriate for the subject matter and pay attention to the needs of your potential audience.

Your description should answer the following questions about your subject:

- What is it?
- What does it do?
- What does it look like?
- What is it made of, or what are the parts that constitute its whole?
- How does it work?
- How has it been put together?
- Why should your reader be interested in it?

You will not necessarily answer these questions explicitly or in the order listed here, but each of them should be addressed in some form during the course of the description.

The final product should a single document that can be viewed on a single surface (that is, not multiple pages). While text is necessary for the assignment, your information graphic should use visuals and visual design instead of text whenever possible; overall the balance of text and graphical information should be nearly 50-50.

The project must be appropriately sourced. All information and graphical materials contained in the graphic must either be the original creation of the author, or the original author(s) and source of those materials must be fully cited using the APA citation method.

evaluation

Your graphic will be graded by how well it measures up to the following criteria:

- Effectively communicates a sense of the overall mechanism or process, including why it is significant for the audience
- Clear explanation of the function of each constituent part with details appropriate to the audience's interest

and level of knowledge
- Clear and appropriate organization, which will likely be one of the following types:
  - Spatial organization, when you want readers to visualize the mechanism or process as a static object (e.g., house interior, document, disk box)
  - Functional organization, when you want the reader to see a mechanism or a process in action (e.g., camera, smoke detector)
  - Chronological organization, when you want the reader to see a mechanism or a process according to how it was put together (e.g., tent, piece of furniture)
  - Some combination of the above
- Free of errors in design, syntax, or style

scientific or technical controversy data visualization (25%)

description

Issues in contemporary American society are increasingly scientific and technological in nature. One of the problems facing an open public conversation on many such issues is a lack of public understanding about the nature of these technical problems. This problem is exacerbated further by the difficulty that accompanies explaining complex issues in a way that can be understood by audiences of non-professionals.

For this assignment, you will work alone or in groups of 2-3 persons to thoroughly research a current controversy using the methods you would use to create a formal report, but you will explain this controversy using the form of a large-scale data visualization.

Where your information graphic assignment was largely qualitative in nature, this assignment will rely on quantitative data, which you will combine with text using the best practices of information design to create the narrative of your chosen problem.

Some possible controversies include, but are not limited to: cloning, genetically modified produce, bioterrorism, global warming, and stem cell research. However, rather than simply choosing a hot-button topic, you might be better served by choosing a topic related to your major or one that is of local or regional interest. In any case, the primary criteria for the topic choice will be that the issue in question is a controversy about which informed stakeholders disagree.

To prepare for this data visualization, you will:

- Research all sides and viewpoints of the controversy. Remember that, despite what we imply through debating techniques, every issue has more than two sides, and every viewpoint is embedded in a specific set of values, experiences, and goals. That is, these viewpoints arise from particular situations involving different occasions, audiences, presuppositions, and speakers. As you research, strive to keep an open mind by accounting for these situations.
- Synthesize your researched information to determine what your audience needs to know. This might include
  - a definition of terms,
  - a sense of what the actual point of disagreement is,

- a history of the controversy,
- an explanation of scientific or technical principles affecting the controversy,
- the range of viewpoints represented within the controversy and the impetus behind those viewpoints,
- the implications of or consequences arising from this controversy, and
- what events are on the horizon for this controversy.

- While there is no such thing as a completely objective presentation, avoid explicit bias in supporting one viewpoint over others and be aware of how your tone, style, and arrangement might create bias.

Your visualization will take the form of a 36″x48″ poster. You will print and mount the poster for public presentation and submit a digital copy of the final version of the poster to your course folder. (Information about printing the poster at the downtown WVU library can be found here.) Your posters will be displayed for the WVU community on the final day of class in Colson 130.

Your visualization should be rich with detail and explanation, allowing your audience to get a full understanding of the controversy. It must be appropriately cited, providing full citation information for all materials that were not created by the author or authors. Finally, it should follow the best practices of information design and written style and be largely free of errors in style and usage.

evaluation

This assignment will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Research
- Visual design
- Readability and effectiveness
- Citation

lightning talk (10%)

In conjunction with your data visualization poster, you will present a summary of the findings of your poster in the form of a 6 minute and 40 second pecha kucha presentation. The presentation will follow the pecha kucha format—20 slides displayed for 20 seconds each—and will summarize the details of your research on the scientific or technical controversy that was the subject of your data visualization.

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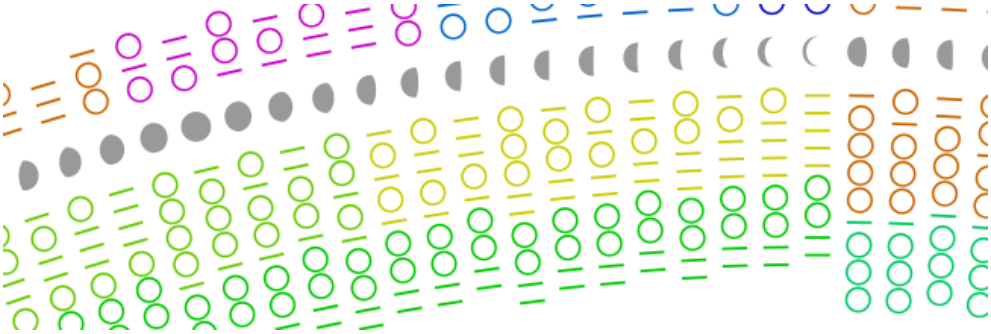
schedule



imgage credit: Juan Osborne

abbreviations

In the list of readings below, I will use the following abbreviations for the course texts.

- **HTW:** Alred, Brusaw, & Oliu (2009). *Handbook of Technical Writing*. 9th Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's.
- **TFA:** Cairo (2012). *The Functional Art: An Introduction to Information Graphics and Visualization*. New Riders.
- **WSJG:** Wong (2010). *The Wall Street Journal Guide to Information Graphics*. W. W. Norton & Co.

This is a potential schedule for the course. All items subject to change before the first day of classes.

date	topic/readings	assignments
jan 9	**topic:** Course Introduction **readings:** Course Description and Requirements, Policies, and Assignments	
jan 14	Last day to register, add new courses, make section changes, change pass/fail, and audit	
jan 14	**topic:** Introduction to instructions; introduction to visualization; ~~establish groups for~~ brainstorm topics for instructions assignment **readings:** - ~~HTW: Instructions, 258-263; and Description, 120-122~~ - ~~TFA: Introduction and Ch. 1~~	Find a set of instructions, either in your home or online. Evaluate those instructions using the Writers's Checklist on p. 263 of HTW and be prepared to share this with the class.
jan 16	**topic:** Introduction to library resources; writing as a process **readings:**	

	▪ **Updated (1/15):** ~~HTW: Five Steps to Successful Writing, xv-xxii; Organization, 361-362; Outlining, 362-365; Proofreading, 411-412; Revision, 488-489; and Collaborative Writing, 72-75~~ ▪ HTW: Instructions, 258-263; and Description, 120-122 ▪ TFA: Introduction, Chs. 1-2	
jan 20	Martin Luther King's Birthday Recess: university closed	
jan 21	**topic:** Invention and writing **readings:** ▪ HTW: Five Steps to Successful Writing, xv-xxii; Organization, 361-362; Outlining, 362-365; Proofreading, 411-412; Revision, 488-489; and Collaborative Writing, 72-75 ▪ TFA: Chs. 3-4	
jan 23	**topic:** Page layout in Word **readings:** NA	First submission of instructions due
jan 28	**topics:** Usability testing **readings:** ▪ HTW: Usability Testing, 543-545	In-class: Work with groups to design a usability testing plan
jan 30	**topics:** Workshopping revised instructions **readings:** ▪ HTW: Persuasion, 377-378, and read the Preparation sub-section and all the sub-points under it in the "Organization, Writing, and Revision" section in the inside front cover	Bring copy of instructions to class for workshop
feb 4	**topic:** Using Visuals **readings:** ▪ HTW: Layout and Design, 295-300; Headings, 242-244; Lists, 309; Visuals, 552-557; Drawings, 154-158; and Photographs, 377-380 ▪ TFA: Chs. 5-7	
feb 6	**topic:** Finding and using image resources; infographic brainstorming **readings:** NA	Second submission of instructions due

feb 11	**topic:** Explaining a process with infographics **readings:** ▪ HTW: Process Explanation, 401; Defining Terms, 116-117; Narration, 339-340; Global Graphics, 230-232; Graphs, 235-240; Maps, 319-320; and Tables, 519-521 ▪ TFA: Ch. 8	Find an example of an infographic that explains a process and bring it to class
feb 13	**topic:** Research; brainstorming and sketching drafts **readings:** ▪ HTW: Research, 459-467; Note-Taking, 347-348; Literature Reviews, 310-312; Quotations, 445-447; Paraphrasing, 372; Plagiarism, 383-384; Documenting Sources, 129-131; Bibliographies, 48-49; and Copyright, 101-102 ▪ *White Space is Not Your Enemy*: Ch. 2	In-class: sketch an outline of your infographic
feb 18	**topic:** Organization; graphing in Excel **readings:** ▪ HTW: Read the Methods of Development section in the "Organization, Writing, and Revision" section in the inside front cover and all the sub-points listed under it. ▪ WSJG: Introduction, and Ch. 1, The Basics	Bring infographic sketch and be prepared to begin designing your graphic
feb 20	**topic:** Design **readings:** ▪ WSJG: Ch. 2, Chart Smart ▪ *White Space is Not Your Enemy*: Chs. 4, 6	
feb 25	**topic:** Infographic workshop **readings:** NA	Bring infographic to class to workshop
feb 27	**topic:** Research and library databases **readings:** NA	First submission of infographic due
feb 28	Mid-semester	
mar 4	**topic:** Designing text **readings:** ▪ *White Space is Not Your Enemy*: Chs. 5, 7	

mar 6	**topic:** Using color and images **readings:** ▪ *White Space is Not Your Enemy*: Chs. 8-9	
mar 7	Last day to drop a class	
mar 10-14	Spring recess	
mar 18	**topic:** Infographic workshop **readings:** NA	Bring infographic to class to workshop
mar 20	**topic:** Data visualization brainstorming **readings:** NA	Second submission of infographic due
mar 25	**topic:** Introduction to Reports **readings:** ▪ HTW: Reports, 454-455; Formal Reports, 195-217; Exposition, 182; Executive Summaries, 181; Abstracts, 7-9; Introductions, 276-281; and Conclusions, 93-95	
mar 27	**topic:** Advanced data manipulation **readings:** ▪ WSJG: Chs. 3-4	
apr 1	**topic:** Data visualization planning meetings/workshopping **readings:** TBA	
apr 3	**topic:** Data visualization planning meetings/workshopping **readings:** TBA	
apr 8	**topic:** Data visualization workshop **readings:** NA	Bring copy of data visualization to class for workshop
apr 10	**topic:** Lightning talks and presentations **readings:** NA	First (digital) submission of data visualization due
apr 15	**topic:** Data visualization workshop **readings:** TBA	
apr 17	**topic:** How to write about what you learned in this class on your resume / course evaluations **readings:** TBA	
apr 18	Friday Before Easter Recess: university closed	

apr 22	**topic:** Lightning talk workshop **readings:** NA	
apr 24	**topic:** Lightning talks and poster presentation	Second submission of data visualization and lightning talk due