

English 4182/5182-090

Information Design & Digital Publishing

Fall 2017

Dr. Aaron A. Toscano (atoscano)

Office: Fretwell 280F

Office hours: Mon. & Tues. 3:00 – 5:00 pm (and by appt.)

Classroom: Fretwell 219

Time: Monday (M) 6:30 – 9:15 pm

<http://clas-pages.uncc.edu/aaron-toscano/>

Course Description and Purpose

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the principles, vocabulary, and theories of computer-aided document design. You will be expected to use the computer to solve a variety of writing problems, including planning, drafting, editing, and publishing. All students will plan, design, and complete print and electronic documents that will be evaluated in a course portfolio. The course meets in a computer classroom with various Adobe and Microsoft software applications students will use for assignments. This course, however, is not a course on InDesign, Photoshop, Dreamweaver, and Excel. Not only is it inappropriate to consider giving students credit for a 4000/5000-level course based on software instruction, a once-a-week 3-hour class is an ineffective situation for software instruction. Any software/technology skills students come away with are secondary to the goal of exploring the theoretical, cultural, and rhetorical frameworks implicit and explicit concerning information design.

Texts and Materials

Required: Meirelles, Isabel. *Design for Information: An Introduction to the Histories...* Rockport Publishers, 2013. 978-1592538065..

Williams, Robin. *Non-Designer's Design Book*. 4th Ed. Peachpit Press, 2015. 978-0133966152.
Willingness To Learn

Recommended: Books on the various software we might use
...Or the ability and motivation to find online tutorials for the various Adobe software we'll use

Expectations

I expect students to be prepared to participate in class—activities, workshops, discussions, etc. Therefore, students should finish all reading before the class meets and expect to be in class for the entire time. Unless otherwise stated, hand in all work to me. Again, unless otherwise stated, hand in all work to me. Do not e-mail me any attachments—I **will not accept attachments**. Please do not beg for an exception. You are solely responsible for backing up your work and getting hardcopies to me. The potential for computers crashing and Internet connections failing calls for backing up your work and avoiding procrastination. If last minute "issues" come up, you may upload your assignment to a webpage—this does not mean e-mailing an attachment—but you must also bring a hardcopy to me on the next class meeting. **Do not expect me to provide printing resources**. Also, the computer lab printer doesn't always work, so, if you plan to use it, get here early and plan for alternative means of printing. Do not print out material during class discussions. Alternative assignments and extensions are given at my discretion. If you are unwilling to fulfill these expectations, please reconsider your enrollment in this course.

This 3-credit course requires 3 hours of classroom or direct faculty instruction and 6 hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately 15 weeks. Out-of-class work may include but is not limited to: reading, researching, doing assignments, learning software, and studying for exams. The above outside-of-class work expectations are derived from Academic Affairs: <http://provost.uncc.edu/policies/academic-calendar> (see III. Definitions).

You should expect to work outside of class. The Library should have the Adobe Creative Cloud Suite, and you may want to set aside time outside of class to familiarize yourself with the software you wish to use. That being said, Microsoft Word has come a long way and might be all you need. We will have approximately one hour of instruction on Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, and Dreamweaver—total instruction, not per software package. You can probably get by using Microsoft Word, Publisher, or other software to complete the major assignments, but, again, this is not a software instruction course. If you're not comfortable learning software nearly completely on your own, I advise you to drop this course. **This goes without saying, but I expect you to think and show me that you're thinking deeply about the course material.**

Work Requirements

Students in this course are expected to be able to complete unified, coherent documents nearly free of mechanical, logical, or structural errors. The ability to read advanced college-level texts critically is also a requirement. Students will complete documents, maintain a website, take a midterm and final exam, and do presentations aimed at lay audiences. Most documents will be portfolio assessments and are listed below along with other assignments:

ENGL 4182 & 5182 Students

- *Document #1: Business Card & Letterhead (Due 9/18)
- *Document #2: Flyer or Advertisement (Due 10/16)
- *Document #3: Tutorial or Brochure (Due 11/06)
- Information Design Critique related to the course goals (Due 11/20)
- Web Site (ongoing)
- Portfolios (Due 12/04)
- Presentation on the rhetorical strategies/elements of your final portfolio documents (12/06)

ENGL 5182 Students (only)

In addition to the requirements above, students enrolled in ENGL 5182 must do the following:

- Leading Class Discussion (sometime between 9/18—11/20)
- Presentation on 5182 Projects (5-7 min) (Due 11/27)
5182 Projects: Bibliographic Essay (10-15 pages) or Rhetoric Project (hmm...) (Due 11/27)
 - Cultural Analyses of New Media
 - General Rhetorical Analysis
 - Copyright law and electronic media
 - Typography & History
 - Hypertext/Hypermedia Authoring
 - Contemporary Printing Methods
 - Page Description Languages
 - Multimodal Composition
 - Document Design (many possibilities)
 - Visual Rhetoric (many possibilities)
 - Other: _____ (see me)

***Portfolio documents.** Documents 1-3 must have a project assessment memo designed to provide me with information about the context for and the design of the document, as well as a rationale for and evaluation of the use of each application employed. I will assign specific criteria for evaluation and discussion with each project. Without this memo, the assignment is incomplete, so your grade will be lowered for each day the memo is late.

The Midterm and Final exams will cover our readings and class activities/discussions. The Final Exam is on **Monday, December 11, 2017 from 6:30-9:15 pm**. Please let me know ASAP if there are any other exam conflicts with your schedules.

All of these assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade in the course. Just because the assignments have percentage values below does not mean you will pass the course if your missing assignments do not drop you below 60%.

Grading Policy

Your final grade is supposed to reflect your entire work for the semester and will be based on the percentages below:

Grading Scale for Graded Assignments and Final Grade:				
A= 90 – 100	B= 80 – 89	C= 70 – 79	D= 60 – 69	F=Below 60

Assignments/Grade Distribution for ENGL 4182

Major Assignments (40%)	pts.	Participation (25%)	pts.	Exams (30%)	pts.	Presentation (5%)	pts.
Document #1*	100	Webpage (ongoing)	50	Midterm	100	Final Presentation	100
Document #2*	200	In-Class Participation	100	Final	100		
Document #3*	300	Canvas Posts	100				
Information Design Critique	100						
Total	700	Total	250	Total	200	Total	100

*Portfolio Assignments

Assignments/Grade Distribution for ENGL 5182

Major Assignments (35%)	pts.	Participation (25%)	pts.	Exams and Extras (25%)	pts.	Presentations (15%)	pts.
Document #1*	100	Webpage (ongoing)	50	Midterm	100	Leading Class Discussion	100
Document #2*	200	In-Class Participation	100	Final	100	Final Presentation	100
Document #3*	300	Canvas Posts	100	Essay/Project	100	Project Presentation	100
Information Design Critique	100						
Total	700	Total	250	Total	300	Total	300

*Portfolio Assignments

Definition of A, B, C, D, and F Grades

Remember, your final grade is a combination of the four areas above in the Assignment/Grade Distribution tables. An 'A' means your work was excellent—not mediocre, average, or just good. A 'B' means your work was good—not quite excellent but definitely above average and thoughtful. A 'C' means your work was barely adequate enough to satisfy the assignment—showing a lack of effort or thought for the assignment guidelines. A 'D' or 'F' usually means assignments were late, missing, or incomplete—often this work does not demonstrate appropriate college-level work for a 4000/5000-level class. Of course, this also goes without saying, but *excellent*, *good*, *barely adequate*, etc. are held to different standards for undergraduates and graduate students.

Late Work

An assignment is due at the beginning of the class for which it was assigned. Honestly, there is no excuse for assignments being late in a 4000/5000-level class, but I have a policy anyway. All non-portfolio late work will **reduce** the assignment by 10% for each class period it is late. Therefore, an assignment worth 100 points that is one class meeting late will not be able to have a grade higher than 90. **If a portfolio assignment is late**, your overall grade will be 5% less. Therefore, if you turn in a portfolio assignment a day late, your final grade begins at 95%. If you will not or cannot be in class on the day an assignment is due, you should make arrangements to get the assignment to me via another student, put it in my mailbox, or upload the assignment online and e-mail the link to me. Of course, you must still bring in a hardcopy (if required) of the assignment on the next class meeting. **Remember, I will not accept assignments attached to e-mails.** Please discuss any problems you may have regarding attendance or late work **before** class if at all possible. Remember, you are responsible for making up all work missed. Something I've learned from past semesters is that if you don't turn things in on time early in the semester, you end up not turning other things in on time (or at all). Do your best to get all your work in to me on time. If you are absent, get the information from another student. Do not expect me to e-mail the class notes to you. Of course, never e-mail me and ask, "so...like, Dr. Toscano, man...did we...like...you know...do anything the other day in class?"

Attendance

I will take attendance every day. It is very important that you attend every class in order to keep up with the work and reading. Your grade will be lowered after missing 2 classes. Your final grade will be lowered by a full letter grade for each day missed beyond 2 absences. After 4 absences (the equivalent of 8 twice-a-week classes), you will receive a failing grade for the course. Please make an effort to come to every class on time. Don't just skip class because you feel you have two "free" days. Save your absences for emergencies. There are no such things as excused absences. Only students participating in UNC Charlotte sponsored activities (with the proper documentation) will not be penalized for missing class. I will ask you to request a meeting with the Dean of Students if you have situations that you feel should allow you an exception to missing more than 2 classes: <http://unccdsync.com/>. Cars break down, parking is limited, students get sick, and traffic is brutal, but class still happens. Your participation may also be lowered for excessive tardiness.

Participation

Although this course has a hands-on or applied component, students are expected to read and articulate their understanding of the course's assumptions. Because separating theories and practices is artificial (if not impossible), we will discuss theories behind the rhetorical strategies of information design and digital publishing. However, unlike a course dominated by theory, we will not have class-wide discussions for the entire class time. Instead, students should expect discussions at the beginning of class and more practical endeavors in the second half of class. **In-class participation** is expected, and you should be ready to be called on at any time during class and work diligently when we break up into smaller groups. If you're not in class, you can't receive credit, so your participation grade will be affected. I will note your participation (or lack thereof) daily. Thoughtful participation means that you engage critically in our discussions or ask engaging questions about the subject. Simply providing quips or telling the class an irrelevant story about some reality program does not warrant thoughtful participation. **Doing work for another class or distracting other students will lower your participation grade—even to the point of falling below 25% (meaning, you can have a negative participation grade).** Additionally, you must do weekly Canvas posts that count for 10% of your overall grade. More information about these posts will be on the class Assignments page online.

Please see me ASAP if you're concerned about your participation grade because you're shy or if you don't understand these requirements. Telling me at the end of November that you didn't participate because you're the quiet type or because you didn't understand what "thoughtful" meant will be too late. Even worse, e-mailing me after the semester is over to complain that participation isn't a "valid" class assignment is too late. The purpose of participation is for students to have control over their own learning and to reinforce critical thinking generally and "critical technological awareness" specifically. I am willing to provide a quasi-alternative on Canvas to supplement a student's participation grade, but please note that discussion, which allows speakers to exchange ideas, is an extremely important component of critical thinking. **If you feel you need such a supplement, you should IMMEDIATELY start posting on Canvas.** The supplement is available until Monday, November 20th at 6:00 pm.

Textbooks

The textbooks are required. If you don't have them by the second class meeting (8/28)—or proof they're on their way—your final grade will be lowered an entire letter grade. Yes, I will walk around to check whether or not you have the books. Every week afterwards that you don't have the books with you, your grade will be lowered an entire letter grade for each week. Therefore, you will have an 'F' by the fifth class meeting (9/18) if you don't bring in the books. There are absolutely no exceptions to this. If you have financial issues (including third party issues with financial aid), those are irrelevant and won't grant you an exception to this policy. Even if the campus bookstore and Gray's Bookstore don't have these textbooks, you must still get them. I've included the ISBN numbers above, so you can purchase these books online if you haven't already. Don't wait if you intend to remain in the course. I may (not "will") grant an extension if you can show me proof of purchase and that the textbooks are on their way to you.

Academic Integrity

All UNC Charlotte students have the responsibility to be familiar with and to observe the requirements of *The UNC Charlotte Code of Student Academic Integrity*. This Code forbids cheating, fabrication, or falsification of information, multiple

submission of academic work, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials (such as Library books on reserve), and complicity in academic dishonesty (helping others to violate the Code). Any further specific requirements or permission regarding academic integrity in this course will be stated by the instructor, and are also binding on the students in this course. Students who violate the Code can be punished to the extent of being permanently expelled from UNC Charlotte and having this fact recorded on their official transcripts. The normal penalty is zero credit on the work involving dishonesty and further substantial reduction of the course grade. In almost all cases, the course grade is reduced to "F." If you do not have a copy of the Code, you can view it on **UNC Charlotte's Academic Integrity** website at <http://integrity.uncc.edu/>. Standards of academic integrity will be enforced in this course. Students are expected to report cases of academic dishonesty they become aware of to the course instructor who is responsible for dealing with them.

If you try to pass off any work in full or part as your own without proper credit being given to the original source—you will receive an 'F' in this course. If you use non-sanctioned resources (e.g., other classmates) to complete tests, exams, and other assignments, you will receive an 'F' in this course.

In addition to the above identification of Academic Dishonesty, students should be aware of technology-mediated concerns related to Academic Integrity. The Oxford English Dictionary defines "[integrity](#)" as "The condition of having no part or element taken away or wanting; undivided or unbroken state; material wholeness, completeness, entirety." A second definition states that integrity means "The condition of not being marred or violated; unimpaired or uncorrupted condition; original perfect state; soundness." Therefore, anything that draws students' attention away from course activities and goals is a violation of academic integrity because it corrupts the soundness and condition of learning. For instance, engaging in critical thinking/awareness is a sound, perfect state activity for this course; on the other hand, **devoting attention to facebook, texting, messaging, and non-class-related Web surfing or e-mailing corrupts the learning goals of this course.** Although we may point to the Internet in general and social media sites specifically in our discussions of 21st-Century communication, engrossing oneself in them during class to "catch up with friends" divides your attention and may be distracting to members of this class. **This violation is as serious as plagiarism and will result in an 'F' in participation the first time and an 'F' in this course for a subsequent violation.** This syllabus section is your warning. Yes, it is obvious when you are using computers and handheld devices to take notes or when you use them to corrupt the learning environment.

You will also receive an 'F' in the course for other academic integrity violations specified on the [UNC Charlotte Integrity Web site](#). Do not expect another warning—this is it. Please see me if you need further clarification regarding cheating, fabrication or falsification of information, multiple submission of academic work, plagiarism, or complicity in academic dishonesty. Again, so there's no confusion, you will most likely fail the course if you violate any part of the academic integrity code.

Statement of Academic Freedom

I strongly encourage students to use class as a place for free inquiry and intellectual growth. Although we as a class will not always agree or be comfortable with the views of others, every student has the right to his or her own tastes and convictions (but don't mistake those for sound, well-reasoned opinions). I promise to be fair and always support your right to look at the world from your own position, but I encourage all students to branch out and consider multiple perspectives. If you think design elements have single, universal, or straight-forward meanings...well, you're about to get a radical new perspective in this course. Our biases filter our interpretations of the world around us. Family, culture, media, law, religion, etc. influence how we perceive the world. Your perspectives might be similar to those close to you, but your worldview isn't universally held. **I will not tolerate any harassment or abuse (emotional or physical) or any instance where others adversely affect students' learning. Remember, harassment isn't just verbal—making harassing or abusive posts won't be tolerated.**

Instructional Modifications

Students who have a condition that may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria are encouraged to meet with the Disabilities Resource Center (<http://ds.uncc.edu/>) to identify, discuss, and document any feasible instructional modifications or accommodations. Please inform me about circumstances requiring any instructional modifications you may need in order to complete the course requirements successfully. I don't need specifics on a condition, but I will need to know what specific accommodations you will need.

Inclement Weather/Building Issues

Some buildings can have HVAC problems. Occasionally, the powers that be close buildings and classes are canceled because it is too brutally hot to remain inside. If a building related “issue” cancels class, continue to keep up with the class webpage, readings, and [Canvas](#) posts. The library has lots of space and many computers. We’ll pick up where we left off on the syllabus when we return to class. This also goes for inclement weather that closes school—we’ll pick up where we left off when we return, so keep up with the syllabus.

Right to Make Changes

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives, to compensate for missed classes, or to make our lives easier.

Important Dates and Administrative Information

The syllabus schedule below has important dates marked. Students are responsible for not only knowing course deadlines but also knowing UNC Charlotte deadlines (drop/add, billing, vacation, etc.). Please visit the following link for the registrar’s calendar: <http://registrar.uncc.edu/calendar>.

Schedule for Readings and Assignments (Have readings and assignments done before class.)

August 21	Introduction to the course. Get online. Make a webpage. Say hello.
August 28*	<i>Design for Information</i> “Introduction” (pp. 7-15) <i>The Non-Designer’s Design Book</i> Ch. 1, 2, & 8 (pp. 113-124 at least, but try for the whole enchilada...umm, I like enchiladas, but I like burritos more)

*August 28th—Big day for the semester:

- Last day to add, drop with no grade * 11:59 PM
 If you’re not registered, you will not be allowed to continue in the course
- Last day to submit a grade replacement request * 11:59 PM

September 4	LABOR DAY—No Class
September 11	Document #1 WORKSHOP —must have something for a classmate to review <i>Design for Information</i> Ch. 1 <i>The Non-Designer’s Design Book</i> Ch. 3
September 18* **DUE**	Document #1 DUE: Business Card and Letterhead <i>Design for Information</i> Ch. 2 <i>The Non-Designer’s Design Book</i> Ch. 4

*September 18th— Deadline for ALL students to apply for December 2017 graduation

September 25	<i>Design for Information</i> Ch. 3 <i>The Non-Designer’s Design Book</i> Ch. 5
October 2 **Exam**	Midterm Exam Workshop on future assignments or do other work

Midterm Grades Due by Noon on Friday, 10/06

October 9th & 10th: No Class—Fall Break

October 16 **Due**	Document #2 DUE: Flyer or Advertisement <i>Design for Information</i> Ch. 4 <i>The Non-Designer’s Design Book</i> Ch. 6
October 23*	<i>The Non-Designer’s Design Book</i> Ch. 9, 10, 11, & 12

*October 24th: Last day to withdraw from courses with a “W” grade

Please review the new Withdrawal Policy before considering withdrawing from any course: <http://provost.uncc.edu/policies/withdrawals>

October 30	Document #3 WORKSHOP —must have something for a classmate to review <i>Design for Information</i> Ch. 5
November 6 **Due**	Document #3: Tutorial <u>or</u> Brochure DUE <i>The Non-Designer's Design Book</i> Ch. 7
November 13	Information Design Critique WORKSHOP —must have something for a classmate to review <i>Design for Information</i> Ch. 6
November 20 **Due**	Information Design Critique DUE

November 22nd – 25th: Thanksgiving Break

November 27 **5182 Due**	ENGL 5182 Projects or Bibliographic Essays DUE 5182 Project Presentations Final Presentation Workshop
December 4 **Due**	Last Day of Class Portfolios DUE Final Presentations (4182 & 5182) Website finished
December 11 6:30-9:15pm	FINAL EXAM Let me know ASAP of any conflicts you may have with our Final Exam time.

Commencement December 16th (congratulations)