Note: This syllabus may represent a past offering of this course and future course offerings may differ.

HCDE 510: Information Design

Instructor: Prof. David Farkas
Quarter/Year: Autumn 2011
Course Schedule: T/Th
Course URL: http://faculty.washington.edu/farkas/TC510/

Course Description
HCDE 510 surveys communication from the beginning of writing to present-day digital media and future prospects. We focus on how human beings communicate complex ideas for such purposes as instruction, managing a complex organization, and shaping public opinion. We consider changing literacies (including the visual turn and social media) and how new literacies may change the role of extended text.

Course Objectives
- Increase understanding of communication, information technologies and culture
- Open topics of inquiry on the subject of communication and information
- Enhance your ability to reason about information design issues and create information products.

Grading and Assignments

Note: I may modify the weighting of the course assignments and add a limited number of extra readings and written assignments.

Exam #1 - 20%
Exam #2 - 20%
Prezi Design Project - 25%
Variations Project - 35%

Exams

Each of the exams will consist of approximately five questions to be answered by brief essay-style answers (no more than one page per question). The questions will cover the course readings and all class discussion. The exam will not cover our dialog on GoPost (the course bulletin board) unless the GoPost posts are discussed in class

Prezi Design Project

Prezi is a web-based "infinitive canvas" presentation tool. It is free and there is ample documentation. In contrast to the display constraints of standard slideware, Prezi presentations pan and zoom freely. After learning Prezi, students will design and build a
Prezi presentation that reveals interesting characteristics of the infinite canvas. Your Prezi presentation can be effective or ineffective. The key point is that your design will embody design concepts that help us better understand Prezi, the infinitive canvas, and more broadly information design.

Variations Project

The course project is complex and it is necessary that you work on it throughout the quarter. It consists of these components:

Design Variations. Start by choosing a "base document." This should be a standard expository document (e.g., a typical academic paper, a report, etc.). Then, without greatly changing the content, create four variations on this document. You have great latitude in your choice of variations. These, for example, are all good options: STOP, QuikScan, a Knowledge Map, Prezi (infinitive canvas), or a video. One of your variations can be hypothetical; that is, you can describe something you do not actually create—such as a VR environment.

The variations don’t need to improve the original document; your goals are to exercise the key course concepts, to engage in creative design activity, and to establish the foundation for a truly interesting reflection paper.

Variations Paper. The Variations Paper is a discussion of your base document and the four variations. Discuss the particular characteristics of your base document. How does it differ from other standard expository documents? Then discuss your variations drawing upon the concepts taught in the course. Also, explain the strengths and weaknesses of each variation.

Other Activities

There is no grade for class participation, but I may raise the final grade of students whose class participation and GoPost contributions are outstanding. Each student is required to contribute a weekly post to GoPost, excluding purely social posts (which are encouraged). Failure to post weekly to GoPost will result in a deduction from the course grade.

This is the URL for our GoPost bulletin board:
https://catalyst.uw.edu/gopost/board/farkas/23308/

Course Schedule

Week 1
September 29 – Introduction to Course
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**Week 2**
October 4 – Early History of Literacy; Basic Communication Concepts
   - GoPost activity: Write a short bio of yourself.
October 6 – Information Design Concepts: Medium, Genre, Format and Behavior

**Week 3**
October 11 – Traditional Information Design and New Directions; In-Class Workshop: Consumer Information Labels
   - Browse the Web for basic information on graphic design; Find at least two resources you can recommend to the class and post them on GoPost
October 13 – Oral Communication and Slideware; The Infinite Canvas; Introduction to Prezi

**Week 4**
October 18 – Be prepared to state 10 things that are interesting about the day’s readings
October 20 – What is the Standard Expository Model?; Challenging the Standard Expository Model: The STOP Report; What is the future of SEM?
   - Post your practice Prezi file to GoPost

**Week 5**
October 25 – Changing Literacies
October 27 – Document Production and Reuse; Intellectual Property

**Week 6**
November 1 – Exam 1
November 3 – Hypertext and Modularity

**Week 7**
November 8 – Review Exam; Planning for Upcoming Assignments; Designing for Selective Reading
November 10 – Guest Class Noah Iliinsky, “Designing Information Visualizations”

**Week 8**
November 15 – Multimedia; Virtual Reality
November 17 – Two-Minute Previews of Variation Projects; The Web and eBooks

**Week 9**
November 22 – Adaptive/Intelligent Documents; Synthetic Interviews
   - Prezi Design Projects Due
November 24 – No Class: Thanksgiving
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Week 10
November 29 – Exam 2
December 1 – Class Discussion of Prezi Presentations
  -Variations Projects due

Week 11
December 6 – Presentations on Variations Projects; Review of Exam
December 8 – Presentations on Variations Projects; Course Wrap-Up