

English 3120—Document Design

Overall English Department Mission Statement

The English Department at Dixie State College strives to instill in students an appreciation for the centrality of language and literature in human culture, particularly their function in social, historical, and political contexts. Students who major in English master skills in analyzing and evaluating texts and other media, as well as learning how to produce focused critical essays.

Emphasis Mission Statement (Professional and Technical Writing)

The Professional and Technical Writing program at Dixie State College of Utah prepares students for careers in technical, scientific, medical, legal, and business writing environments. Courses introduce students to the procedures and practices that professional writers and editors use regularly, including grant writing, freelance writing, interactive media development, magazine production, technical editing, and document design. To further enhance their understanding of language and verbal communication, students in our program investigate areas such as composition theory, visual rhetoric, and the history of rhetoric, as well.

Course Description

Required of English majors pursuing an emphasis in Professional & Technical Writing, and open to students who wish to create effective professional documents for the workplace. Successful students will demonstrate competence in all aspects of document design, including (but not limited to) the following: overall organization and layout; usability theory, application and testing; data organization and display; visual rhetoric (the use of color, size and white space); and theories of writer-based and reader-based writing. Also examines existing research on how different readers process information in different ways. Students will write their own technical documents, for both print and online contexts, in order to apply knowledge learned in class. Prerequisite: ENGL 2010 (Grade C or higher). SP

Course Goals:

By the end of English 3120, students will have significantly improved their ability to do the following:

- Discuss, analyze, and apply conventions for professional document design
- Design documents appropriate to audience, purpose, and context (both print and electronic)
- Use basic vocabulary in document design
- Apply design and usability theory to the construction of a substantial document
- Answer basic theoretical and practical design questions in a midterm and final exam

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of English 3120, students will demonstrate their ability to

- Name, describe, and apply basic design principles

- Produce a variety of documents in print and electronic formats appropriate to audience and purpose
- Analyze existing documents for contemporary design principles as well as for the rhetoric embodied by the designs

Methods of Assessment:

Formative Assessment Methods

Quizzes

Midterm exam

Individual Design Projects

Group Design Projects

Summative Assessment Method

Final Exam

Audio/Visual presentation

Design Portfolio

Value-Added Assessment Method

Pre/Post Test: Students will take a course-specific pre- and post-test, to assess the ways in which their learning has increased during the semester. This will be a multiple-choice test.