

Writing 155A: Document Design & Production

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This is the first of two capstone courses in the Multimedia Communication track of the Professional Writing Minor. At the end of this course, you'll have a collection of work in a variety of professional genres, including employment-oriented documents. You will be able to use some of these documents as you apply for internships and jobs and as you create your professional website in Writing 155B.

The assignments in the course ask you to engage in activities that will help you improve as a writer in the following ways:

- refine your writing style
- compose in multiple media
- design documents effectively
- use a variety of software programs

The syllabus, schedule, assignments, readings, and resources for the course can be found on the Web at <http://sorapure.net/155a>. This website will be updated regularly.

Grades

The assignments for the course constitute your final grade, roughly as follows:

- Design Principles Project: 10%
- Logo Project: 30%
- Brand Deck: 30%
- Document Redesign Project: 20%
- Participation: 10%

Important Information

- Class meets in Phelps 1518.
- Because much of the work of the course will be done during class time, your attendance and participation are very important. You are allowed two absences; after that, your final grade will be lowered by one grade for each absence (e.g., if you are absent 3 times, an A becomes an A-; if you are absent 4 times, an A becomes a B+).
- If you arrive late to class, I count that as half an absence.
- Remember that even if you are absent you are responsible for any work that is done during class and for any assignments that are given or are due during class. Send me an email or come by my office during my office hours to find out what you missed.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you plagiarize on any of the assignments you will fail the class and will be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

Campus Resources

[UCSB Answers](#) has a list of resources that can help if you're experiencing food insecurity, housing insecurity, financial difficulties, or other concerns related to your mental, physical, or social well-being.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers counseling, self-help information and connections to off-campus mental health resources. They also offer help in stress management. CAPS can be reached at 893-4411.

Disabled Students Program (DSP) (893-2668) provides academic support services to eligible students with temporary and permanent disabilities.

Also, I am always available to help via email, during my office hours, or by appointment.

Students with disabilities: If you need special course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please speak to me or email me after the first or second class session.

Tentative Schedule of Class Activities and Assignments

WEEK 1

Monday 1/6: course overview; begin the Design Principles Project assignment:

- download and explore the [Antonio](#) template (from [SlidesCarnival](#)); note that you can use this template with either Google Slides or Powerpoint
- continue researching your design principle

Wednesday 1/8: in-class work on slides assignment:

- work with your partner to finish a draft of the five slides for your design principle, and upload the slides to our class [Box](#) folder before Sunday 1/12 at 5:00 pm
 - the filename should be the name of your design principle (e.g., contrast.pptx)
- prepare your 2-minute presentation for class on Monday 1/13
- read [Chapter 1: Research and Concepts](#), from *Graphic Design School*, by David Dabner, Sandra Stewart, and Abbie Vickress

WEEK 2

Monday 1/13: design principles slideshow; additional work on slides assignment:

- experiment with [Screencast-O-matic](#) to create a quick screencast

Wednesday 1/15: finish Design Principles Project; begin Logo Project assignment:

- complete and turn in (by Friday 1/17 at 5:00 pm) the Design Principles Project
- complete logo exercise #1 (on [Projects](#) page)
- read [Chapter 3](#) from *Stop Stealing Sheep* by Speikermann & Ginger
- read the Foreword, Intro, and the chapter “Why typography matters” in [Practical Typography](#) by Matthew Butterick
- watch [The History of Typography](#) 5-minute video by Ben Barrett-Forrest
- learn and have fun at the same time:
 - [Type Connection](#): “a typographic dating game”

- [KernType](#): a kerning game where you can compare your kerns to a typographer's solution
 - [I Shot the Serif](#): test your knowledge of serif and sans-serif fonts
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Week 3

Monday 1/20 — holiday!

Wednesday 1/22: group feedback on logo exercise #1; Adobe Illustrator tutorial #1 assignment:

- complete logo exercise #2 (on [Projects](#) page)
 - explore the following resources on logo design:
 - [The Art of Logo Design](#), 6-minute video
 - [The 7 types of logos \(and how to use them\)](#), by 99 designs
 - [31 Creative Techniques for Two-Letter Logos](#), by Company Folders
 - [40 Creative Lettermark & Wordmark Designs](#), by Bashooka
 - [Logo of Letters](#), by Before and After
 - [Lettermark Design](#), Pinterest
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WEEK 4

Monday 1/27: group feedback on logo exercise #2; go over readings; more Adobe Illustrator assignment:

- complete logo exercise #3 (on [Projects](#) page)

Wednesday 1/29: [Illustrator #3: \(Fun Stuff\)](#), time in class to work on logos; [exploratory writing for the Logo Design Memo](#)

assignment:

- complete a draft of the Logo Project (logos plus memo) and bring three printed copies to class on Monday 2/3
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WEEK 5

Monday 2/3: group feedback on Logo Project drafts

assignment:

- complete the Logo Project: bring a printed copy to class and email me the PDFs before class on Wednesday 2/5

Wednesday 2/5: **Logo Project Due**; Photoshop tutorials: [Photoshop 1 \(Interface & Layers\)](#), [Photoshop 2 \(Text\)](#), [Photoshop 3 \(Selecting & Combining\)](#)

assignment:

- read through several brand style guides; select and study three style guides that might serve as a model for your own
 - [How to Create a Brand Style Guide](#), by 99 designs
 - [21 Brand Style Guide Examples](#), by Hubspot
 - [Identity Designed](#), by David Airey
 - [Brand Identity Style Guides](#), by David Airey

WEEK 6

Monday 2/10: in-class work on creating a mood board: download [melissa carter modified.psd.zip](#) and this [tutorial for creating and modifying a mood board](#) assignment:

- check out the other mood board templates available in our Box.com folder or via the [Resources](#) page
- complete [brand exercise #1](#) and bring a digital version to class on Wednesday 2/12 (bring a print version as well, if you can)

Wednesday 2/12: group feedback on brand exercise #1 (here's a [nifty list of adjectives](#) that can be used to describe the style of a brand); continue work on the Brand Style Guide project assignment:

- read [Perfect Color](#), by Before and After
- add colors to your lettermark logo and lockup, with these [helpful instructions](#)
- complete [brand exercise #2](#) by creating the color palette, typography, and imagery pages for your brand style guide; upload your PDF(s) for these pages to the class Box folder before class on Wednesday 2/19

WEEK 7

Monday 2/17 — holiday!

Wednesday 2/19: group feedback on brand exercise #2; create Photoshop mockups assignment:

- complete [brand exercise #3](#) and upload your image(s) to the class Box folder by Monday 2/24 (bring a print version as well, if you can)
- make revisions to the pages you created for brand exercise #2; your revisions should incorporate white space, repetition of design elements across pages, and at least one of the other 13 design principles

WEEK 8

Monday 2/24: group feedback on brand exercise #3; [tips and tricks for business card design](#); business cards in [Canva](#); check out [logos and business cards](#) designed by previous students in the minor assignment:

- put your business card design into a Photoshop mockup
- samples to use in class: [horizontal](#) and [vertical](#)
- create a draft of the Brand Style Guide and upload it to the class Box folder before class on Wednesday 2/26

Wednesday 2/26: group feedback on Brand Style Guide drafts; cover, introduction, and voice sections [covers](#) and [intros](#) from the brand style guide examples assignment:

- complete the Brand Style Guide Project: upload the PDF to the class Box folder before class on Monday 3/2
- bring a copy of a poorly designed document to class on Monday 3/2

- you can take this opportunity to redesign your resume, even though it's not "poorly designed", in order to make it more unique and visually appealing
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WEEK 9

Monday 3/2: Brand Deck Project due; begin Document Redesign

assignment:

- write a description of the target audience, purpose, and potential distribution platforms and media for the document you're redesigning

Wednesday 3/4: InDesign tutorial

assignment:

- create a draft of your document redesign and bring a digital version to class on Monday 3/9 (bring a print version as well, if you can)
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WEEK 10

Monday 3/9: group feedback on redesigns; document redesign memo

assignment:

- create a second draft of your document redesign and a first draft of your redesign memo, and bring a copy of each to class on Wednesday 3/11

Wednesday 3/11: group feedback on redesigns; getting ready for Writing 155B!

assignment:

- complete the Document Redesign Project: bring a printed copy to my office and email me the PDF by Friday 3/13

Friday 3/13: Document Redesign Project due

DESIGN PRINCIPLES PROJECT

Part I

In Part I of this project, you'll work with another student to create and present five slides on a specific design principle: contrast, repetition, alignment, proximity, balance, hierarchy, negative space (or white space), grid, rule of thirds, golden ratio, focal point, Ockham's razor (as applied to design), wabi-sabi (as applied to design). All of the groups will use the [Antonio](#) template from [SlidesCarnival](#) so that there's consistency. The five slides you'll create are:

- a title slide with the name of the design principle and your names;
- two slides that define and exemplify the design principle:
 - What is the principle, why is it important (particularly in document design), how is it used?
 - You can have one slide that defines and one that provides an example; or you can define and provide examples on both slides.
 - Focus on the essentials and be concise. Strive to provide a quick, clear, easy to understand, easy to implement presentation of a design principle.
- one slide that intentionally breaks the rule or ignores the principle but is still effective;
- one slide that lists two or three resources (links to websites or citations in APA style) for further reading about the principle.

You should design your slides with your design principle in mind; in other words, all or most of your slides should exemplify the design principle you're discussing. Also be aware that your audience for this information is your fellow students in Writing 155A; make it relevant for them.

Go bold! Make your slides charming and delightful! Use your own examples and write in your own voice(s)!

You'll send me your slides on Sunday 1/13 before 5:00 pm. In class on Monday 1/14, each pair will have 2 minutes to present their slides.

Part II

Stay tuned.

Final version

I'll combine all of the slides and create a Design Principles PDF that you can use throughout Writing 155A and beyond.

LOGO PROJECT

After three exercises in which you engage with typography basics and logo design (see below), you'll create a personal lettermark logo in black and white using your initials (or your first or last name, if it's short). Keep in mind that the best logos are simple, scalable, memorable, versatile, and relevant. Your lettermark logo should also be reflective of your values, personality, and professional goals. For the final project, due Wednesday 2/6, you'll turn in the following:

- lettermark logo in four sizes when printed:
 - very small: width or height should be .25"

- small: width or height should be .75"
- medium: width or height should be 1.5"
- large: width or height should be 3"
- lettermark logo plus your full name ("lockup") at large size (approx. 3")
- logo design memo

For each element, please submit both a printed version and a digital version (PDF via email).

The logo design memo should explain the process you used in designing your lettermark logo, the choices you made, and the strengths and weaknesses of your final lettermark and lockup.

logo exercise #1

Explore the typefaces currently installed on your computer (or a lab computer). Look at Google fonts and the free font sites (see the [Resources](#) page), and download fonts that you like and that might work well for the logo project (note that you can't download fonts to lab computers). Then use the [exercise1.docx template](#) to create your initials in lower- and/or upper-case in various fonts. Print out the document and annotate it by noting the fonts used and any other comments (see [my example](#)). Bring a copy to class on Wednesday 1/22.

logo exercise #2

Use Adobe Illustrator (or another vector graphics program) to create 3 artboards with different options for your lettermark logo and your lockup. Think of each artboard as presenting variations on a theme, with your lettermark initials and full name in the same font or combination of fonts but presented in different placements or at different sizes. Export your work as a PDF, and print a copy for class on Monday 1/27.

logo exercise #3

Continuing with the artboards that you created in the previous exercise, add a shape to different versions of your lettermark logo and lockup. Try to design several possible variations, experimenting with different shapes, fonts, and placements. Use only black and white. Export your work as a PDF, and bring a copy to class on Wednesday 1/29.

BRAND STYLE GUIDE

After completing several exercises in Photoshop, you'll use Powerpoint/Google Slides or InDesign to create a brand deck that presents your visual identity. The project is due in print and PDF format on Monday, March 2.

required elements:

- your story/welcome
- lettermark logo and lockup in several colors
 - business card (including logo) front and back
 - business card mockup
 - one or more other mockups displaying your logo on an item (e.g., clothing, coffee cup, billboard, etc.)
- color palette
 - moodboard?

- typography
- imagery
 - moodboard?
- voice (optional)

brand exercise #1: mood board

Using Photoshop or another image editing program, create a mood board that identifies the image styles and colors that you might use as part of your visual identity. Save it as a PDF, upload it to our class Box folder, and bring a digital version to class on Wednesday 2/12. Bring a print version to class as well, if you can.

brand exercise #2: sections

In Powerpoint/Google Slides or InDesign, create a draft of your color, typography, and imagery pages/sections, save each as a PDF, and upload the PDFs to our class Box folder Wednesday 2/19. Use the pages of other brand style guides as models, including these [color pages](#), [typography pages](#), and [imagery pages](#).

brand exercise #3: mockups

Using Photoshop or another image editing program, create several mockups with your lettermark logo and/or lockup. Save these as JPGs or PNGs and bring digital versions to class on Monday 2/24. Bring prints version to class as well, if you can.

DOCUMENT REDESIGN PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to redesign a poorly designed document and to write a memo explaining your redesign. You can make changes in content as well as changes in the design of the document, if you think that changing the content will make for a more effective document. As for tools, you can use any software programs that you feel comfortable with. The final version of the document should be in PDF format.

For this project, you will turn in three items: the original document (or a photocopy), your redesign of the document (printed out and digitally in PDF format), and a memo in which you address the following questions, though not necessarily in this order:

- who is the target audience of this document? What purpose(s) or goal(s) is the document intended to achieve with this audience?
- what were the primary problems with the original design of the document?
- what specific changes did you make? why did you make each of these changes? what alternatives did you consider?
- what design principles did you follow in redesigning this document?
- are there any design problems that you were unable to resolve in your redesign? That is, are there any new or pre-existing design problems in your redesign?