WRTG 3020-022    Spring 2015

Word & Image
MWF 12:00–12:50PM  MUEN D144

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Materials
* Seeing & Writing 4 (course text)
* course D2L site <learn@colorado.edu> (all course assignments will be posted on D2L, as well as links to and instructions for accessing other media)
* electronic messages (please use alexfobes@hotmail.com for all correspondence)
* in-class handouts
* notebook for in-class writing
Course Description
Students will explore the extraordinary 20th- and 21st-century convergence of word and image through a host of artistic and social media, with the goal of honing their discursive ability and versatility. Readings and viewings will include a cinematic novel, poetry, fiction, non-fiction, and theory, as well as photography, painting, sculpture, film, and all that falls in between. In a variety of approaches, students will analyze, critique, and create visual texts, select and pursue lines of inquiry related to their areas of interest, and apply their informed knowledge of word, image, form, and perspective to refine their communicative skills and style. The course supports the Program for Writing and Rhetoric’s sustainability goals and culminates in a service-learning poster project through which students will conduct research and generate creative texts with persuasive images to aid a local non-profit organization. Commitment to service-learning and engaged class and workshop participation are a must.

University of Colorado at Boulder Core Requirement
WRTG 3020 fulfills the core upper-division writing requirement for students with majors in Arts and Sciences and meets the CCHE criteria for an Advanced Writing Course (GT-CO3) in the Colorado System of Higher Education. The course is approved for the Arts and Sciences core curriculum, written communication, and builds on skills practiced through the first-year writing core requirement by applying an advanced understanding of rhetorical concepts to communication within specialized fields.

Service-Learning
Service-learning is a form of experiential education that integrates academic instruction with educationally meaningful community-centered work that is appropriate to curricular goals in order to enrich and enhance the learning experience, teach civic engagement, and meet community-defined needs.

This section of WRTG 3020 is a service-learning course, in which you will be required to put in a minimum of 12 hours with a local non-profit. You will choose your organization within the first two weeks of classes and then arrange to attend any training and to complete your hours. The service-learning project will be a primary focus of the second half of the course and will require you to draw on the skills and knowledge you gather in the first half of the semester through the visual analysis and persuasive text assignments. Much of the in-class writing and discussion in our class will
center on your community-based work, and your understanding of the non-profit—its aims and its obstacles—will inform your use of visual rhetoric in the persuasive poster and be critical to the success of your service-learning project. Your first-hand experience as well as the related research you conduct should provide you with a unique and important perspective on your chosen topic, from which you can write with authority and for the betterment of the community. Specifically, the service-learning project will include a 2-3 page proposal that identifies the target audience of your persuasive poster as well as a 3-4 page annotated bibliography summarizing the sources that can provide you with diverse points of view and authoritative knowledge about a research topic of your choice that relates in some way to your work with the non-profit. Before the semester’s end, you will create a persuasive poster that serves a particular need of your organization, present it to both the class and your organization, and complete a polished 8-10 page inquiry essay on a related topic that enables you to avail yourself of your first-hand experience to create new and important knowledge.

**Course Objectives**

**Rhetorical Knowledge**
- To use texts from rhetoric, discourse studies, communication, or related fields to extend understanding of rhetorical concepts related to word, image, and the visual arts
- To develop sophisticated strategies for critical analysis of art and multimodal rhetoric
- To learn more sophisticated ways to communicate knowledge to appropriate audiences
- To apply reflective strategies to the synthesis and communication of knowledge

**Experience in Writing Processes**
- To generate multiple drafts to arrive at a successful text
- To hone strategies for generating ideas, revising, editing and proofreading for discourse related to the visual arts and visual rhetoric
- To effectively critique our own writing and that of our peers
- To use a variety of technologies for writing and research
- To learn to evaluate sources for accuracy, relevance, credibility, reliability, and bias

**Mastery of Conventions**
- To select and adapt genre conventions related to a particular contextual use of word and image
To use the specialized vocabulary, format, and documentation suitable for each task
To control features such as style, syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling

Effective Communication Strategies
- To enhance our ability to compose messages for specific audiences and purposes
- To enhance our ability to communicate to a variety of audiences through the use of word and image
- To enhance our ability to adapt content and style to respond to the needs of different audiences through the use of art and visual rhetoric

Advanced Content Knowledge
- To carry out a sophisticated analysis of the work of artists, scholars who write on the visual arts, and professionals who employ visual rhetoric
- To engage and communicate effectively with specialized discourse communities
- To create and employ visual rhetoric that serves your purposes and those of the community as you communicate with members of your discipline or profession and local leaders

Competence in Writing and Rhetoric
- To sharpen our skills in critical thinking, written communication, and reading about the visual arts through the use of word and image

Course Evaluation
20% Visual Analysis Assignment*
20% Persuasive Text Group Project and Presentation*
40% Service-Learning Project (Proposal, Visual Rhetoric Poster,* Related Inquiry Essay,* and Project Presentation)
20% Participation in class (Preparation,** Contributions, Discussion, In-class Writing, Influence on Others, Involvement in Workshops and Group Exercises)

* In order to receive full credit for the major assignments, you must first complete all drafts (and, in the case of the persuasive text and inquiry essay, a research proposal) by the dates due and thoroughly revise your work. WRTG 3020 is taught as a workshop, and therefore your timely participation in the peer review process is essential. Unrevised final drafts, or first drafts or proposals submitted after the deadlines will lower your final
grade for the overall assignment by ten percentage points (i.e. one full letter grade). Be sure to save extra copies of your work to safeguard against the unlikely event of it being misplaced, stolen, destroyed, plagiarized, swallowed by voracious and frothy wolverines, etc.

**Preparation:** you will earn full credit (i.e. 100%) for each homework assignment if you complete it thoroughly and thoughtfully and submit it to the Dropbox by the hour it is due (you will earn up to 80% for assignments submitted late). Assignments are usually due the night before we meet so that I have time to review them before class. (You will receive verbal feedback on your homework in class, and written feedback on your major writing assignments). Keep in mind that each individual peer review you post in the Discussions Forum counts as a separate homework assignment.

**Attendance and Participation**

It is the quality of your participation that counts, not its quantity. Good participation is predicated on thoroughly and thoughtfully preparing for each class and effectively engaging your peers. It involves having something valuable to contribute, listening and responding to everyone else, performing well and inspiring others, and minimizing whatever happens to distract others from the task at hand: in general, doing one’s utmost to foster a productive, stimulating learning environment in the classroom. **For this reason, use of cell phones, laptops or other electronic devices in class is not permitted and may significantly affect your final grade. You are permitted—though not encouraged—to miss class three times without providing a documented excuse in writing. (Per department policy, absences are excused only in the case of documented emergencies, and three late arrivals and / or early departures shall be deemed an absence.)** Using phones or other electronic devices will result in your being deemed “absent”; having more than three unexcused absences will directly impact your final grade; after three absences, each additional missed class will lower your overall final average in the course by one percentage point. (If you would like to use an electronic device in class for educational purposes and have a special reason for doing so, let me know before class.) Remember it is not necessary to call or email to explain the nature of an absence; just be aware of the attendance policy and see me ahead of time if a special circumstance will cause you to miss a number of classes. You are responsible for all assignments, including peer review work, as well as any material discussed in class during the period you are away.

Keep in mind that your diligence and degree of involvement in group work, as well as your commitment to providing high-quality, constructive
feedback in workshops are of paramount importance. You will be evaluated on your ability to recognize strengths and weaknesses in your peers’ writing and to suggest effective strategies for revision. As we shall see, these skills will help you become both a better writer and a more critical judge of your work.

**Office Hours and Conferences**
Before each of the major writing assignments, we will have the opportunity for a one-on-one conference. In addition, please feel welcome to take advantage of office hours (T 3-5PM in Norlin E117A or another nearby study room, and by appointment) throughout the semester to discuss any questions, problems or concerns you may have regarding the course, grades, to evaluate paper topics, or to receive feedback on your writing etc. If you have questions resulting from your own non-attendance, please check our course D2L site and/or check with your peers regarding the material you have missed, or come to see me in person. If the hours scheduled for consultation are not convenient, feel free to talk to me after class or email to set up an appointment. Email is by far the easiest way to contact me (alexfobes@hotmail.com); if you do call, the best time to reach me is during office hours. Note that you may also occasionally be receiving formal communication regarding the course via email; be sure to check your university email account at least once every 48 hours.

**Useful Links**
Writing Center (info, appointments):
www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html
MLA Citation:
http://www.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res_strategy/citing/mla.html
Purdue Owl: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/
Oregon State Writing Tips and Handouts:
http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/index2.htm
International Association of Word and Image Studies: http://www.iawis.org/
Local Non-Profit Organizations: http://greatnonprofits.org/city/Boulder/CO
http://www.commfound.org/cultureofgiving/nonprofits/list?page=7

**Notes**
Due dates
Extensions will be granted only if you contact me before the due date with a compelling reason, and late papers will be subject to a penalty.
University of Colorado at Boulder Honor Code
All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://honorcode.colorado.edu

Plagiarism
This is an extremely serious offense at CU that can result in failure in the course or even expulsion from the university. You can expect me to follow the guidelines suggested by the University Honor Code. Plagiarism not only includes copying from a published source, but also presenting another student’s work as your own. If you have any questions about how to properly acknowledge a source, please consult me. Information on the University of Colorado's honor code can be found here:
http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

Campus Policy on Classroom Behavior
Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html>
<http://www.alumniconnections.com/links/link.cgi?l=3958272&h=12345&e=UCBI-20130104183129>
Discrimination and Harassment
The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://hr.colorado.edu/dh/

Special Accommodations
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at <dsinfo@colorado.edu>. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see “Temporary Injuries” under “Quick Links” at the Disability Services website: <http://www.alumniconnections.com/links/link.cgi?l=3958265&h=12345&e=UCBI-20130104183129> and also be sure to discuss your needs with me.

Religious Observances
Campus policy requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please let me know in advance if you have any such conflict with the schedule.
WRTG 3020-022  Abbreviated Course Schedule with Major Due Dates (subject to change):

Week #1
1/12, 1/14, 1/16  Introductions; Carroll’s Mouse; “Mallarmé’s “A Throw of the Dice will Never Abolish Chance”; Wysocki & Lynch, “About Visual Modes of Communication”

Week #2

Week #3
1/26, 1/28, 1/30  Huidobro, Preface to Cagliostro; Wiene, The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari; Murnau, Nosferatu; due 1/30: First (3-4 page) Draft of Visual Rhetorical Analysis; Effective Communications

Week #4
2/2, 2/4, 2/6  Perloff, “From Avant-Garde to Digital: The Legacy of Brazilian Concrete Poetry”; Joyce, Finnegans Wake (excerpt); Writing Workshop #1 (2/6)

Week #5

Week #6

Week #7
Week #8

Week #9

Week #10

Week #12
3/30, 4/1, 4/3  Berger, “Ways of Seeing”; Dalí & Buñuel, Un chien andalou; Hamilton, The Man with the Golden Gun; due 4/1: (300-word) Design Brief

Week #13

Week #13

Week #14
4/20, 4/22, 4/24  Final Project Presentations

Week #15
4/27, 4/29, 5/1  Reflective Text; due 4/29: Final Drafts of 8-10 page Inquiry Essay and Persuasive Poster
Visual Analysis

First Draft due by 8PM, Friday, January 30th (900-1200 words)
Final Draft due by 5PM, Monday, February 16th (1200-1800 words)

For this assignment you will select an image and write an analysis. Select an image (any kind of image—a photograph, a painting, an advertisement, a poster, a webpage, a movie still, or even a calligram or concrete poem) that you find interesting and provocative of multiple types of interpretations. As you are getting started, you may wish to skim through Appendix B of Seeing & Writing 4 (pgs. 736-43). Your essay should include some introductory context for the image, such as the original source, and explanatory details, if necessary, regarding the genre of the image. In order to enhance your analysis, strengthen your argument, and demonstrate to your audience that you are an authority on your chosen image, be sure to cite a few experts (secondary sources) on the topic. Your analysis should also include a copy of your chosen image, as well as in-text citations and a Works Cited page (MLA style).

The essay should have a unique, specific thesis, be logically organized, and use an engaging method of development; in addition, it should contain an analysis of some of the following points (whichever ones are relevant), and include examples and secondary sources to provide specific support for your ideas:

- What could be the key ideas and/or purpose behind this piece? Is the piece designed to be primarily informative, celebratory, or persuasive? How can you tell?

- For what specific audience(s) was this piece designed? Where did it first appear? What clues does the image provide regarding the intended audience (language of any text, assumptions about shared knowledge, design elements, cultural references, color choices, etc.)? What assumptions do you think the designer is making about his or her audience?

- Identify evidence of any rhetorical appeals used by the author (many images use more than one appeal), and specify the
dominant appeal. Is the image highly situated in one culture, or do you see a more universal appeal? (Remember that not all images are designed expressly to persuade, nor are all best analyzed through the Aristotelian lens of ethos, pathos, and logos.)

- What parts of the image situate it in a particular time and/or context? Use examples and explain your perception of the context.

- Does the image suggest a call to action? What actions, changes in thinking, and/or new ideas does the piece suggest for the audience?

**Purpose:** To demonstrate your ability to analyze an image rhetorically, using specific support and examples.

**Audience:** A visual rhetorical analysis is an academic genre used to determine particular rhetorical devices selected by authors/designers. An academic audience is implied, and your real audience for this particular exercise is your classmates and instructor.

**Persuasive Text Group Project Assignment**

For this project you will draw from both peer-reviewed and credible lay publications to create a persuasive text about a topic idea of your choice. “Text,” in this usage, might mean a blog, a video, a multimedia essay, or a standard essay with some strong visual elements. (Projects that are predominantly visual will necessarily include a detailed outline, prolegomenon, and/or script.) I am open to different formats, so if you have an idea that is not described, run it by me. Individual topics will be tweaked by the group, and your idea may change a bit from the original focus. Using the research question you have developed as a group, you will collaboratively create a “text” that makes an educated and persuasive case for some sort of call to action. You are not expected to “solve” the problems of your issue; rather, you should demonstrate that you have done extensive research and have come to educated conclusions about what positions/ideas you find the most reasonable and compelling. A call to action in your project should suggest some change(s) the reader/viewer should consider: a change in perspective, a type of action that might be
taken, a specific behavioral change, people to contact, new ways of thinking, etc.

This project differs from a research paper in several key ways. A research paper reports information about a topic, usually with little analysis on the part of the writer. A deliberative text, on the other hand, is formulated to be more like a rebuttal paper within a debate. In order to have a persuasive and informed rebuttal, skilled rhetoricians (i.e. the ones in this class) must demonstrate both an awareness of preceding conversations about the issue (their awareness having been cultivated through research) as well as a thorough understanding of the subject that they are attempting to address. Such a demonstration should include an acknowledgement of the complexity of the problem being addressed. You should use a creative approach to educate and persuade your audience, using logic, visual appeals, testimonials (interviews), or whatever else you think is appropriate.

**Audience:** You must decide on a specific lay audience, and specify that audience for the project. You should target a particular group, demographic, board, etc. that is a real audience related to your issue. “The general public” is not a workable demographic; be more specific. The easiest way to determine an audience is to look for a type of publication (a specific magazine or newspaper, a committee or government group, a website, etc.) with an audience that would actually have interest in learning about and/or taking action related to your topic.

**Purpose:** The purpose is persuasive, but a thoughtful audience is not persuaded by one-sided rhetoric. Rely on effective appeals to make your case, and don’t “preach to the choir.” By definition, persuasion implies that members of the audience have “moved,” by learning something and/or changing their position. Therefore, if you create a text that will be compelling only to people who already agree with your point of view, you will have failed, persuasively speaking. Shoot for an audience that may be open to persuasion, and then design your text and calibrate your tone so that your case is compelling for that audience.

Divide tasks according to the individual strengths within your group—writing, research, editing, technical and/or presentational skills. Everyone will fill out a confidential group evaluation at the end of the course, so be sure to pull your weight with the project. Since the formats will vary, there is no set “page” number for the project.

**Group Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography:** due by 5PM, Tuesday, February 24th (**we will meet in Norlin E117A on Wednesday, February 25th; please be ready at your group’s assigned time***)
Group Presentations: Wednesday, March 4th
Final Version of Group Project: due by 5PM Friday, March 13th

Group Project Proposal & Annotated Bibliography

Length: 8-10 pages; depending on group size (2-3 page Proposal & 6-7 page Annotated Bibliography)

Purpose: The purpose of the proposal is to demonstrate that you have chosen an interesting and worthwhile topic, that you have begun to discover more about it by researching both peer-reviewed publications and credible lay sources, and that you have also chosen a specific target audience for your persuasive text. You should have at least one particular driving question – something you genuinely want to learn an answer to – and multiple “researchable” questions by the time you submit the proposal.

Components: Rather than write a formal proposal, you simply need to (1) type concise answers to the following questions (in thoughtful, complete sentences) and (2) complete an annotated bibliography (explained on the other side of this page). In order to receive credit and a letter grade for the group project assignment, you must complete the research proposal, annotated bibliography and final version by the dates due, and be ready to deliver your presentation on Monday, October 13th.

1. State your topic, being as specific as you can.
2. What is your guiding question that you want to investigate through your research?
3. What are some of the focusing (“researchable”) questions that will help you narrow down the topic and shed light on the main, guiding question of your research? How will you create new and valuable knowledge on your topic?
4. What is the “occasion” that is prompting you to create a persuasive text on this topic? Address some or all of the following questions:
(a) Why are you writing about this topic now? Why does this subject matter, and to whom does it matter?
(b) What got you interested in this subject?
(c) What people or organizations are speaking or arguing about this subject?

5. Write briefly about your research strategy: How do you plan to find answers to your questions? What sources do you think you might turn to as you investigate your questions? Be as specific as you can.

6. Who is your specific target audience?
   (a) Why might this audience have an interest in learning about and/or taking some sort of action related to this topic?
   (b) For what reasons might people in your specific target audience disagree with your position on this topic?

7. What rhetorical appeals and/or strategies will you employ to persuade your target audience? How will you respectfully acknowledge and refute the potential counterarguments of your chosen audience?

8. What sort of “text” do you intend to create?
   (a) Why have you chosen this form?
   (b) How will it combine both words and images?

9. OPTIONAL: Tell anything else you think is relevant at this stage in your research and/or explore some questions or uncertainties you may have about your ideas or about the feasibility of pursuing this topic.

**The Annotated Bibliography:** For your proposal to be accepted, you will need to include a complete annotated bibliography. This bibliography must contain a variety of authoritative sources, including both peer-reviewed publications (of a particular field or profession) and credible lay publications (publications which are not limited to a specific discipline or profession but are nonetheless reputable). All sources must be cited MLA style, unless you specify a reason for using another
style of citation. If you are unfamiliar with MLA style, try consulting one of the following websites:

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res_strategy/citing/mla.html>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Also, for each of your sources, type a one-paragraph summary that states its main points and explains how you will use the source in your persuasive text.

Thus, completing your annotated bibliography involves not only listing your sources, but also reading them carefully and writing a paragraph for each. At this stage of your research, you should have at least three or four good sources for each person in your group. (In other words, a group of 4 should provide an annotated bibliography of at least 12 sources.)

**Persuasive Text Group Presentation Guidelines**

On **Wednesday, March 4th** (be ready to go at **12PM**), your group will deliver an interactive presentation to the class, using visual aids gleaned from your group project (video, blog images, charts, etc.). **Presentations should be geared toward the real audience of the class (not the audience designated for the group paper, unless the class is part of that demographic), and while you are not expected to solve the problem/issue, you should have a specific call to action for the audience.** In other words, the audience should be motivated to take some action, change their minds or rethink their positions, etc. Make this call to action as specific as possible, and keep in mind that the call to action may involve more than one objective.

Each group will have a total of approximately 10-12 minutes (depending on group size) for all aspects of the presentation, with five additional minutes for technology set-up. Interactive elements can be in any form you like, just keep the time limits in mind. Verbal or written quizzes, group discussion of key elements, and illustrative activities can all work well. You should decide beforehand as a group who will be speaking and how you will change speakers. It is fine to designate only one or two people as primary speakers, but all group members should participate in any discussions/questions from the class.
You are welcome to use your own laptops for the presentation, but to be safe you should also email the materials in case there are difficulties getting the projector to recognize your system.

Remember that effective visual aids (including PowerPoint, Prezi, Keynote, etc.) should add something to the discussion beyond a simple outline. Anything best represented visually works well (maps, stats, graphs, photos). Since this is a persuasive multimedia presentation, rhetorical strategies such as ethos, logos, and pathos may play a visual role as well as an aural one.

On the day of the presentation, your group will supply a basic outline for me to follow along. You may use a few notecards, outlines, or other visual aids to guide your own speaking. Grades are based primarily on effective content, i.e. supported points, effective and thoughtful use of rhetorical appeals, the extent to which to which you have successfully geared the presentation toward this audience, etc. Effective use of visual aids is also a significant factor that is considered “content” for these purposes. The form and style of your presentation is an important, though secondary concern. Be sure to practice good habits of public speaking, engaging the class, making eye contact, projecting yourself effectively, pacing your presentation, respecting time limits, minimizing distracting speech fillers and/or body movements, etc.

Use the group project as the basis for your presentation, but do gear it toward the real audience of this class. Keep in mind the demographics and the shared levels of knowledge we have here, and base your level of explanation on that knowledge.

Service-Learning Final Project—Important Dates and Details (subject to change):

Due 2/20: (300-word) Summary of your Service-Learning Project so far (by this date you should have met with a representative from your non-profit and completed any needed training)

Due 3/20: (5-7 page) Project Proposal & Annotated Bibliography (by this date you should have completed at least 6 hours of service for your non-profit organization)

Due 4/1: (300-word) Design Brief
Due 4/6:   (6-8 page) First Draft, Service-Learning Inquiry Essay

Due 4/13:   Peer Reviews of Inquiry Essays (by this date you should have completed at least 9 hours of service for your non-profit organization) (Writing Workshop #2 in class on 4/13)

Due 4/15:   First Draft, Persuasive Poster for Service-Learning Project (Graphic Design and Visual Rhetoric Workshop in class on 4/17)

4/20, 4/22 (in class) Service-Learning Project Presentations

Due 4/29:   Final Draft of Service-Learning Project (8-10 page Inquiry Essay and Persuasive Poster); by this date you should have completed 12 hours of service for your non-profit organization

Communicating with Your Non-Profit

If for any reason you experience difficulty communicating with your non-profit, be sure to -cc me (alexfobes@hotmail.com) on your email messages to your contact person as a way of documenting the effort you are putting in. Remember that many non-profits are understaffed and therefore not always able to respond promptly; and that you can help ensure your success in this project by focusing on how you can best be of service. It is sometimes possible to switch organizations in mid-semester, but keep in mind that doing so may entail more work for you, as the project requirement is 12 hours of service for one organization. If you do decide you would like to explore the possibility of switching organizations, be sure to let me know as soon as possible so I can help you find an organization whose aim, hours, and location match your own needs; in order to be able to participate in our project, someone at your chosen organization needs to contact me directly and indicate a willingness to work with us.

Service-Learning Inquiry Essay:

For this assignment, you will begin by conducting research and pursuing a specific line of inquiry related to a particular aim or obstacle of the non-profit that you have chosen to work with this semester. The particular focus of your essay is up to you, and you are welcome to investigate a topic that will inform your use of visual rhetoric in the persuasive poster you create for your service-learning organization.

Remember that your first-hand experience working with the non-profit does count as research; for the purpose of this essay, the people you talk to over the course of your work with the organization can be considered primary sources. By drawing on your personal experience and citing primary sources who are involved with your topic, you can both animate your essay and demonstrate that you have a unique and important perspective on
the topic. In this research essay, you may choose to weave in the story of your own work with the organization (or specifically, the parts of your service-learning experience that relate to your particular focus in the paper) or to incorporate relevant anecdotes of your experience with the non-profit. (Remember to use first person only when it strengthens your essay, and that you want your audience to regard you as an authority on your topic.)

In order to show your readers that you are an important source of information and provide them with a broad view of your specific topic, you will also want to cite other sources that address the implications and ramifications of your topic on a national or international level (i.e. in order to offer your audience a valuable perspective on what your non-profit is doing, you might choose to examine how other such organizations in the US or around the world are dealing with a similar issue; you might also want to research the extent of the problem that your organization is striving to address, and/or the methods your organization is employing to address the problem). For this reason, you should plan on citing at least 8-10 authoritative sources in your essay that in some way shed light on the issues that your organization is dealing with.

**Persuasive Poster:**

The poster itself will be evaluated on its ability to communicate visually (using both word and image) a specific message that a particular audience will find persuasive. In creating your poster, you will want to draw on the graphic design and effective communications skills we will sometimes be focusing on in class.

Since your poster will also be judged on the extent to which it serves a need of your non-profit organization, it is essential that you exchange and discuss ideas for it with the relevant people in your organization. For example, the representatives from your non-profit that you talk to might suggest that you create a poster that they can use to advertise an event, to attract more volunteers or donors, or to raise awareness about an issue to a specific group of people. The poster should thus be directed toward one particular audience whom your non-profit is seeking to persuade. The final draft of your persuasive poster should ultimately reflect not only your understanding of persuasive texts and graphic design, but also your knowledge of the non-profit itself and the audience it is trying to reach.

**Project Proposal & Annotated Bibliography (5-7 pages, due March 20th):**

Your (2-3 page) proposal should respond to the following questions:

i) What is the name of non-profit organization you are working with, and what is its mission?

ii) What are some of the greatest challenges that your organization is facing?
For the Inquiry Essay:
(a) What is the guiding question you want to investigate through your inquiry essay?
(b) What are some of the focusing (“researchable”) questions that will help you narrow down the topic and shed light on the main, guiding question of your research?
(c) Write briefly about your research strategy: how do you plan to find answers to your questions? What sources do you think you might turn to as you investigate your questions? Be as specific as you can.
(d) How will your essay create new and valuable knowledge on this topic?

For the Persuasive Poster:
(a) What are some of the organization’s needs that you feel you might be able to address effectively in a poster?
(b) Who exactly is the specific target audience you are trying to reach in your poster?
(c) Describe the poster you plan to create, being as specific as you can. How will it be useful to your organization? How will it persuade your specific target audience? Explain the purpose of the different elements in your design, and why you think they will be effective (make reference to Dave Underwood’s strategies for effective communications and graphic design, and explain how your design will help you achieve your goal for the poster).

(iii) OPTIONAL: Tell about anything else you think is relevant at this stage in your research and/or explore some questions or uncertainties you may have about your ideas.

The Annotated Bibliography: For your proposal to be accepted, you will need to include a complete annotated bibliography. This bibliography must contain a variety of authoritative sources, including both peer-reviewed publications (of a particular field or profession) and credible lay publications (publications which are not limited to a specific discipline or profession but are nonetheless reputable). All sources must be cited MLA style, unless you specify a reason for using another style of citation. If you are unfamiliar with MLA style, try consulting one of the following websites:
Also, for each of your sources, type a one-paragraph summary that states its main points and explains how you will use the source in your inquiry essay. Thus, completing your annotated bibliography involves not only listing your sources, but also reading them carefully and writing a paragraph for each. At this stage of your research, you should have at least five or six good sources; thus, your annotated bibliography should include a summary and Works Cited information for five or six reputable sources that you might want to cite in your essay.

**Service-Learning Project Presentation**

The purpose of this presentation is for you to share your experiences working with your non-profit this semester, demonstrate your familiarity with that organization, practice the rhetorical skills associated with oral presentations, and better understand the audience you are writing for. After the presentation you will also receive feedback and follow-up questions from your peers.

**Requirements:**

- 4-5 minute presentation (please plan your time carefully; allow a minute for questions; after five minutes, you will be asked to stop)
- Make good eye contact (you may refer to note cards if necessary; avoid reading anything—note cards, transparencies, PowerPoint, etc.)
- Be sure to provide a bit of background information on your non-profit—what its goals are, what sort of challenges it faces, etc.
- Show your design for the persuasive poster. Mention who your target audience is for the poster, and how you hope that audience will respond.
- In addition to the poster itself, use one other audio or visual aid—whatever you feel will be most appropriate and effective in communicating your message to the class. n.b. Remember you have various options—the blackboard, handouts, PowerPoint, Prezi, Keynote, posterboard, a short video clip, etc.
- Say a little about some of the work you have done with the non-profit—what you learned from this project, what has surprised you, etc.
- Consider / use different strategies of engaging the class and holding everyone’s attention (it’s OK to employ a conversational approach, though you should be doing most of the talking)
- Practice your presentation the day before (this is without doubt the best way to prepare for any presentation—time yourself when you do so)
- Be ready to go at 12PM on the day you are scheduled, and provide beneficial feedback when you are not presenting (presentations can be rescheduled only if you provide a valid, documented excuse for your absence).