

# Electronic Research and the *Rhetoric* of Information

DTC 356 | fall 2009 | section 1

West 145 (computer lab)

MWF | 1:10p – 2:00p

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## **Course Description & Objectives:**

DTC 356 is designed to explore the social and cultural role of information. As majors in an interdisciplinary degree program, you are positioned to understand writing – composing – through different genre, for different audiences, and for different rhetorical purposes. Composing in today's richly textured environments means not only producing a range of documents – from memos, reports, and brochures to slideshows, web pages, and technical documentation—but also the rhetorically grounded *design* of these documents.

Thus, in this writing-, analysis-, and production-intensive course, we will:

- consider various aspects of electronic research and evaluation of resources;
- explore how document design elements work within different types of documents; and
- examine the effects document design elements have on different readers/viewers/users.

We will also create documents using different tools (e.g., software applications like Microsoft Word, Adobe Photoshop using online image databases and materials we gather during the semester) so that we leave the class familiar with:

- navigating audience, purpose, and context (the rhetorical situation);
- selecting among different typographical elements;
- understanding how color works in particular documents;
- working with images (for instance, knowing when to select a graphic, piece of clipart, photograph, diagram, etc.);
- considering different types of data displays (e.g., table, bar chart, flow chart);
- exploring the impact and relevance of social and collaborative networking;
- negotiating the cultural and ethical implications of our document design work, including copyright, fair use, and issues of intellectual property ; and
- complicating these issues through work such as remix.

## **Required Text(s), Readings, and Materials:**

- Sturken & Cartwright (2<sup>nd</sup> ed; 2009) *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*
- Hill & Helmers (2004) *Defining Visual Rhetorics*
- Card (1999) *Readings in Information Visualization: Using Vision to Think* (optional for purchase or through Google Books)
- Readings as assigned and provided through ANGEL.

## Instructional Format:

This class meets MWF for 50 minutes. Several of these sessions will be devoted to technology instruction in the computer lab in which we meet. Class format includes discussion (both F2F and electronic) small group work, workshopping, posting to ANGEL, and other forms of collaborative work. **You will be expected to check both your email accounts and ANGEL daily for course updates and last-minute announcements such as class cancellations.**

## Grades:

document design presentation .....	100
reading discussions .....	100
modules 1-4 (150 points each) .....	600
mid-term recap.....	100
final project proposal .....	100
final project .....	500
<b>total points.....</b>	<b>1500</b>

		Points	Percentage
<b>A third absence will make a difference in your final grade; for every absence after one, your final grade will go down .25.</b>	Late work is not accepted. For specific circumstances, talk to me ahead of time.	1500–1425 = A	100–96 = A
		1424–1350 = A/B	95–91 = A/B
		1349–1275 = B	90–86 = B
		1274–1200 = B/C	85–81 = B/C
		1199–1125 = C	80–76 = C

## Attendance and Participation:

Participation is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL. Come to class prepared to discuss the readings due that day. Plan on expressing your ideas, frustrations, questions, confusions, etc., even if you're not able to articulate them without some hesitation—sometimes ambivalent or ambiguous remarks spark the liveliest discussions.

If you are absent, you miss valuable class time with your peers and will have difficulty keeping up with the pace of the class. If you miss class, you are still responsible for obtaining class notes and completing work you missed when it is due.

**\*\*Please Note: As classes sessions are only 50 minutes, lateness (10 minutes or more) will count as an absence.\*\***

## Academic Honesty:

Academic dishonesty, including all forms of cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication, is prohibited, as is knowingly facilitating academic dishonesty. The expectation of the university is that all students will accept these standards and conduct themselves as responsible members of the academic community. These standards should be interpreted by students as general notice of prohibited conduct. They should be read broadly, and are not designed to define misconduct in exhaustive forms. Faculty and their departments have jurisdiction over academic dishonesty discovered in their courses.

For this course, carefully read the information on academic dishonesty in the *WSU Student Handbook*. You can find this information at [http://www.tricity.wsu.edu/student\\_handbook\\_pullman.htm](http://www.tricity.wsu.edu/student_handbook_pullman.htm) under “Standard of Conduct for All Students”, Part III. According to this section of the student handbook, “Academic dishonesty includes cheating, falsification, fabrication, multiple submission, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, complicity, or misconduct in research.” Plagiarism is “knowingly representing the work of another as one’s own, without proper acknowledgment of the source....Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting as one’s own work the work of a ‘ghost writer’ or work obtained from a commercial writing service; quoting directly or paraphrasing closely from a source without giving proper credit; using figures, graphs, charts, or other such material without identifying the sources.” Each student is responsible for knowing and adhering to the university’s standards for honesty in his/her academic work.

For a first violation of the academic honesty policy, students will fail the assignment, the office in charge of student conduct will be notified of the violation, and the student may be required to attend a workshop. For a second offense, the student may appear before the university conduct board and may be dismissed from the university. Exception: if the instructor or board determines that the academic dishonesty is particularly egregious or blatant the student may be dismissed from the university, even if it is the first offense.

### **Severe Weather:**

The university does not close except under the most adverse conditions. If the decision is made to close the campus or delay the instructional day, key staff members and the news media will be notified. The closure status will also be posted on [www.tricity.wsu.edu](http://www.tricity.wsu.edu). If no notification is given, then students may assume that classes will proceed as usual.

### **Emergencies:**

In the event of any emergency, call 911. If you hear a fire alarm sound, leave the class and take your belongings (car keys, coats, backpacks, etc) with you. Exit the building immediately to your staging area, which is the Cougar Garden for East and West Buildings or the West Parking Lot for CIC Building. Stay in these areas during an evacuation until released. Evacuation routes are posted inside the door of each classroom. Remember that elevators do not work and fire doors swing closed during a fire alarm.

### **Copyright:**

Students can find the WSU copyright policy at <http://www.wsu.edu/Copyright.html>. Students are expected to read and adhere to this policy and copyright laws.

### **Americans With Disability Act (ADA) Statement:**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Classroom accommodation forms are available through the Disability Services Office. If you have a documented disability (even temporary) make an appointment as soon as possible with the Disability Services Coordinator Cherish Tijerina ([ctijerina@tricity.wsu.edu](mailto:ctijerina@tricity.wsu.edu) or 372-7351). You will need to provide your instructor with the appropriate classroom accommodation form from Disability Services during the first week of class. Late notification may mean that requested accommodations might not be available. All accommodations for disabilities must be approved through the Disability Services Coordinator.

**Subject to Change Clause:**

This syllabus, course calendar, and accompanying documents are subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

**Assignments:** (note that these are just brief overviews—full-length assignments and examples will be provided in class)

<p><b>document design collection</b></p>	<p>This is an optional assignment, but one I <i>much very recommend</i> that you engage in. Every week, add a document (or two or three or four or more) to your collection. You might look for interesting letterhead, flyers, photographs, announcements, invitations, newsletters, images from the web, brochures, wrappers or labels, magazine ads, etc.</p> <p>Save these materials in a folder and bring the folder to class. We will use the materials you collect as discussion points in class, and you should find the folder valuable as a visual and document design examples portfolio.</p>
<p><b>document design presentation</b> <i>100 points; due dates assigned the first week of class</i></p>	<p>Once during the semester, you will be responsible for bringing in at least one document that you want to share with the class. You may choose the examples you present from your document design collection. You can bring in either a “bad” example or a “good” example.</p>
<p><b>reading discussion</b> <i>100 points; due dates assigned the first week of class</i></p>	<p>Once during the semester, you will be responsible for bringing in a question or two or three linked to the day's readings. The goal of this activity is to start a discussion about the day's readings with the rest of the class. These might be direct questions, like: “On page 7, so and so argues that... How can we put this claim into practice as writers?” Or the questions might be merely inspired by the readings: “Today's readings asked us to think about color. How can we interpret this brochure through today's readings?”</p>
<p><b>class modules</b> <i>100 points each; due dates on schedule</i></p>	<p>Modules provide a space for you to explore, experiment, and gain some hands-on writing and design practice. Each module will relate to the week's readings and discussions. Modules <i>must</i> be completed in the order in which they appear on the course schedule; the modules are (or will be) available on our class ANGEL site.</p> <p>Class activities and discussions will help you prepare for the modules, but it is <i>your</i> responsibility to read the modules and to prepare</p>

and submit your work in its entirety, so read the modules carefully.

**final project (your choice)**  
*proposal (100 points)*  
*project product itself (500 points);*  
*due dates on schedule*

For this individual final project, your goal is to demonstrate a working knowledge of the principles discussed in class. You need not address *all* the principles discussed in class, but you must demonstrate that you chose carefully among the technical, visual, creative, analytical, etc. principles and issues we've discussed *and* focused your project appropriately.

**Course Calendar:**

- week 1: introduction and overview
- week 2-3: information literacy (conducting research and evaluating resources)
- week 4-7: visual rhetoric (typography, color, design, data display, etc.)
- week 8-9: social and collaborative networking (rhetorical considerations of virtual worlds and profiles)
- week 10-11: copyright, fair use, and intellectual property
- week 12-14: remix
- week 15 and finals: final presentations

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
1	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- course introduction</li> <li>- course goals activity</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Read Schriver (in ANGEL)</li> <li>- Read Markel (in ANGEL)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>what is rhetoric?</i> activity</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read Hill &amp; Helmers p. 1-21</li> <li>- Read Eshes &amp; Lupton (ANGEL)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discuss readings</li> <li>- situating this course in DTC</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read Moulthrop (ANGEL)</li> <li>- Read Wahlstrom &amp; Scruton (ANGEL)</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discuss readings</li> <li>-conducting research</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read Card chpt 1 "information literacy"</li> <li>- Read Battelle (ANGEL)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>- evaluating resources</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- read through the two links provided as additional resources on information literacy</li> <li>- go to WSU's library to your favorite database (for example, JSTOR or Project Muse) and look for their help information</li> <li>- Come to class with 3-4 questions on information literacy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discuss readings and questions</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read Sidler (ANGEL)</li> </ul>
3	Labor Day – no class	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reading discussion</li> <li>- begin module 1 group work.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- read Hill &amp; Helmers, chapter 4</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>- discuss readings</li> <li>- work on module 1 in class (group work required) &gt; due by 5p today in drop box.</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foss (ANGEL)</li> </ul>

4	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>-review the CRAP principles</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Wed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-read in ANGEL : Photoshop Color help, Johnson, Horton, and White</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-begin module 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Fri)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- read Sturken &amp; Cartwright, chapter 3</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>-module 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Mon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-read Sturken &amp; Cartwright, chapter 4</li> <li>-read Doumont (ANGEL)</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>-discuss readings</li> <li>- group presentations</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Wed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-read the Wysocki and Brumberger articles (ANGEL)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-discuss readings</li> <li>-begin module 3</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Fri)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-read in ANGEL Janssen, Heller, Meggs, Poynor, and White</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>-work on module 3</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Mon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-read Card, chapter 7</li> <li>- finish module 3</li> </ul>
6	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>-discuss readings</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Wed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-read Markel and Burke's chapters (ANGEL)</li> <li>- read Card chapter 5</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-discuss readings</li> <li>- recap discussion</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Fri)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-read Allen, Dragga, Dragga, and Tufte (ANGEL)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>-discuss readings</li> <li>-module 4 introduction</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Mon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-respond to the midterm recap discussion forum</li> </ul>
7	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>-discuss readings &amp; recap</li> <li>- module 4 work time</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Wed)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-finish module 4</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design of space activity</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Fri)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-read Selfe &amp; Selfe, Wodtke, and Ornstein (ANGEL)</li> <li>- post your group projects</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>-discuss readings</li> <li>- share group space design projects</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b> (due Mon)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-read Sturken &amp; Cartwright, chapter 6</li> </ul>
8	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>- discuss readings</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- complete the social networking exploration activity posted in ANGEL</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discuss social networking activity</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- read boyd, boyd, Hamilton, and Fienen (ANGEL)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>- discuss readings</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- read Virtual WSU (ANGEL)</li> <li>- explore Second Life's educational resources following the instructions in ANGEL</li> </ul>
9	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>- discuss SL experiences</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- read, (re)view, and interact with the links for various social and collaborative spaces posted in ANGEL</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discuss readings and explorations</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- read Sturken &amp; Cartwright (p 337-343)</li> <li>- read Lackey and Reid (ANGEL links posted)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- design presentation</li> <li>- discuss readings</li> </ul> <p><b>Homework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social and collaborative networking as critique (3 article links in ANGEL)</li> <li>- ethical considerations of social and collaborative networking (3 article links in ANGEL)</li> </ul>

10	<b>Class:</b> - design presentation - discuss readings & explorations <b>Homework:</b> - read Bound By Law (ANGEL)	<b>Class:</b> - discuss readings <b>Homework:</b> - read Rife, DeVoss & Rosati, and Johnson-Eilola, Selber & Stuart (ANGEL)	<b>Class:</b> - discuss readings - recap activity - sign up for discussion starters <b>Homework:</b> - read/view the 6 links in ANGEL on copyright, copyleft, fair use, and IP
11	Class cancelled	<b>Class:</b> - discuss readings and responses <b>Homework:</b> - follow the instructions in ANGEL for selecting some resources to share	<b>Class:</b> - class-lead discussion - discuss student research symposium <b>Homework:</b> - see ANGEL for links and readings on remix, parody, and pastiche
12	<b>Class:</b> - discussion starter - discuss readings <b>Homework:</b> - read Davis, DeVoss, Lackey, & Webb (ANGEL) - view Webb (ANGEL)	Class – Veteran’s Day	<b>Class:</b> - discussion starter - discuss Monday’s readings - discuss final projects <b>Homework:</b> - read Kelty On Remix (ANGEL) - contextualize remix with the CCCCs CFP (ANGEL) - view Digital Scholarship (ANGEL) - prepare final project proposals (ANGEL)
13	<b>Class:</b> - final project progress reports - discussion starter - discuss readings <b>Homework:</b> - examine 2-3 remix platforms (see ANGEL for links)	<b>Class:</b> - discussion starter - share readings & resources - final project progress reports <b>Homework:</b> - read Sturken & Cartwright (pp. 328-333) - read Remix Culture & Remix Theory (ANGEL)	<b>Class:</b> - discussion starter - work on final remix project
14	<b>Class:</b> - discussion starter - work on final remix project	<b>Class:</b> - work on final remix project	<b>Class:</b> - discussion starter - work on final remix project
15	<b>Class:</b> - discussion starter - work on final remix project	<b>Class:</b> - discussion starter - work on final remix project	<b>Class:</b> - work on final remix project
Finals	Student Research Symposium > Tuesday, December 15 <sup>th</sup> from noon – 1p		