

MEJO 717 INFORMATION VISUALIZATION*MEJO717.966.SP17**1.11.17 – 5.5.17*

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Office Hours

Google Hangout / MATC Circle: Thursdays between 12 noon - 2 p.m.
Or email or call to schedule a meeting time.

Course Description

This course explores the overlap between several disciplines: cognitive science, design, information visualization, data visualization, information architecture and storytelling. In this course, you will learn the basic rules of graphic design and information visualization through readings, discussions on real-world examples and the design of several projects. The goal is not that you become a designer, but that you learn to visually organize information to communicate.

Course Outcomes

Students will:

- Investigate forms of information design, information graphics and data visualization
- Demonstrate understanding of design principles and information visualization
- Articulate cognitive theory as it applies to information design and data visualization
- Identify and analyze effective or misleading data charts, maps and visualizations
- Produce static and interactive information graphics and data visualizations
- Effectively communicate and defend visual communication strategies and opinions
- Develop and produce in-depth data and visual storytelling projects

Textbooks and Readings

This course requires two textbooks with additional weekly readings, tutorials and videos as needed. One textbook is free and online.

Textbooks and Readings (con't.)***Required*****The Functional Art**

Alberto Cairo

New Riders | Voices that Matter (2013)

ISBN-13: 978-0-321-83473-7

Required (Free and online)**The Non-Designer's Design Book, 3rd Edition (2007) or 4th Edition (2015)**

Robin Williams

Peachpit (2007 or 2013)

ISBN-10: 0-13-396615-1 | ISBN-13: 978-0-13-396615-2

NOTE: You should be able to find used versions of the Non-Designers text. This textbook is also offered free through the UNC library although it is the 3rd edition. I have not noticed much difference between the 3rd and 4th editions as it applies to foundational design understanding. So the 3rd edition is fine for this class although there may be slight page number variations.

Software

Adobe Illustrator is required software for this course. UNC Chapel Hill now provides students with a free subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud. Directions for this subscription are posted on Sakai course site.

Lynda.com is also required and is free to students. Lynda.com offers software training tutorials and videos. It can be accessed via UNC's Virtual Private Network (VPN). More details are provided on the Sakai course site.

Instructional Approach

This course features a variety of instructional methods including videos, readings from textbooks and online sources, tutorials, writing assignments and design projects. A class discussion forum is used for discussion, idea sharing and project critiques along with other online instruction digital tools.

Discussions

Discussion is an important activity for effective online instruction. Student teams will moderate one discussion during this course. It is important that you share ideas, respond to others and stay engaged. Great discussions are enriching.

When you are a discussion moderator, your responsibility is to lead us in discussion and understanding of the readings for that week. You will also moderate the discussion and keep classmates on-point.

Discussions (con't.)

As the course instructor, my role is to facilitate your discussions with each other. I will ask follow-up questions and provide additional information as needed but I will not step in to direct the discussion. Please email me if you have questions.

Grading

This course uses the graduate grading scale: H (high pass), P (pass), L (low pass), F (fail). Your overall grade will be based on the quality and completion of the following:

- Discussion/Moderating (20%)
- Writing Assignments (20%)
- Projects (60%)

Grading Scheme

95-100% = H

73-94% = P

64-72% = L

63% or lower = F

Schedule

Week 1: Information Visualization
Week 2: Information Design Bootcamp
Week 3: Information Design Bootcamp
Week 4: Visual Perception
Week 5: Visualizing Data
Week 6: Explanation Graphics
Week 7: Data-Driven Storytelling
Week 8: Charts and Graphs
Week 9: Ethics in Visual Storytelling
Week 10: Spring Break
Week 11: Cartography
Week 12: Immersive Storytelling
Week 13: Final Project
Week 14: Final Project
Week 15: Final Project
Week 16: Final Project

Honor Code

I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system (<http://honor.unc.edu>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean Charlie Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Seeking Help

If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness.

Diversity

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2011-2012 Undergraduate Bulletin <http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/>. UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. <http://eoc.unc.edu/our-policies/ppdhrm/>

Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Accessibility Services website at <https://accessibility.unc.edu/>

ACCREDITATION

The School of Media and Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them here: <http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/PRINCIPLES.SHTML#vals&comps>

No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas. In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on the last six bullet dots under "Professional values and competencies" in the link above.

Online Course Statement

1. By enrolling as a student in this course, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the Acceptable Use of online resources. Please consult the Acceptable Use Policy (<https://help.unc.edu/help/unc-chapel-hill-network-acceptable-use-policy/>) on topics such as copyright, net-etiquette and privacy protection.
2. As part of this course you may be asked to participate in online discussions or other online activities that may include personal information about you or other students in the course. Please be respectful of the rights and protection of other participants under the UNC Chapel Hill Information Security Policies (http://its.unc.edu/ITS/about_its/policies/index.htm) when participating in online classes.
3. When using online resources offered by organizations not affiliated with UNC Chapel Hill, such as Google or YouTube, please note that the Terms and Conditions of these companies and not the University's Terms and Conditions apply. These third parties may offer different degrees of privacy protection and access rights to online content. You should be well aware of this when posting content to sites not managed by UNC Chapel Hill.
4. When links to sites outside of the unc.edu domain are inserted in class discussions, please be mindful that clicking on sites not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill may pose a risk for your computer due to the possible presence of malware on such sites.
5. Online courses may at times require Web-based assignments that are public in nature and may be viewed by third parties online. This is especially true in social media and blogging platforms. Be mindful of the information you choose to share publicly as part of your assignments. Under the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and UNC's FERPA regulation (http://registrar.unc.edu/AcademicServices/PoliciesProcedures/StudentRights/CCM1_042762), a student's education records are protected from disclosure to third parties. However, FERPA protection does not extend to material shared publicly by students.