

IDC 6002 Information Design Fall 09

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*****Read this syllabus carefully and refer to as often as needed to be knowledgeable about course goals, expectations, and success strategies.**

Course Description (from the catalog)

Prerequisite or Co-Requisite: IDC 6001, IDC 6030

Study of the main design elements in information products with an emphasis on rhetorical and theoretical underpinnings for design decisions. Students work on designing and redesigning products in various media. Should be taken as soon as possible after admission.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to analyze documents using gestalt and rhetorical principles
- Demonstrate the ability to create documents using gestalt and rhetorical principles
- Collaborate effectively to analyze and redesign documents in various contexts
- Synthesize and present information from an external authority

GeorgiaVIEW Vista 8 Course Tool

Southern Polytechnic now uses GeorgiaVIEW Vista 8 for all online courses. If you are reading this syllabus inside the course, you have, clearly, learned how to set up your account and log in.

If you are reading this syllabus outside the course, you can access the course by clicking on the green button (GaVIEW Vista 8) on the SPSU website home page: www.spsu.edu

1. Then, *log in*.
 - a. Your user name: your spsu email id. For example, mine is cbarnum
 - b. Your password is your BANNER PIN
2. After successful log in:
 - a. Confirm that you can access the course without problems from *any* computer that you may use.
 - b. Run the browser check for every computer that you will use.
 - c. If you experience any technical difficulties, call the SPSU Help Desk at 678-915-4357 or log into the University System of Georgia 24/7 Online Support Center at <http://help.view.usg.edu>

Wimba Live Classroom Course Support

Horizon Wimba Live Classroom a web-based tool that provides live (synchronous) classroom opportunities with both instructor-led and team/student access for workshops. It's available on

the home page of the course. Be sure to run the wizard to configure your computer for optimal use. For toll-free use of the talk feature (voice over IP), you will need a headset that is computer-compatible and that has speaker/microphone capability. You also need high speed internet access to upload and share your work (this is a requirement of our program).

Horizon Wimba provides technical support 24/7. The contact information is as follows:

- Technicalsupport@horizonwimba.com
- 866-350-4978

We will use Live Classroom for workshops on **three** scheduled evenings (6 PM to 8:30 PM Eastern time). Consult the course calendar for these dates.

If you have a conflict with any scheduled workshop meeting, please let me know at your earliest convenience, and I will try to work with you to resolve it. However, regular attendance at these sessions is expected and essential.

Technology Needs

You will be expected to be able to use Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. You will also be expected to post assignments as Word or PowerPoint files *and* as PDF documents (to retain your design elements). If you do not have software for saving documents as PDF files, you can download a free PDF creator from www.PDF995.com (or other freeware options available from the internet).

For the weekly video podcasts that I have produced as support and instruction, you will need to download iTunes. Click on the link **for weekly podcasts** on the homepage of our course and follow the instructions from there.

You will be expected to have high speed Internet access.

For any technical questions for which you can get help from your classmates, use the discussion topic labeled "**Technical Forum.**"

You can also call the SPSU help desk: 678-915-4357

Library Access

Distance learning students at SPSU have access to library services and resources equivalent to on-campus students. A library barcode is not required. To connect to the library resources, use **Hornet Connect** <http://connect.spsu.edu>

Then log in using your SPSU email username and password at https://connect.spsu.edu/dana-na/auth/url_default/welcome.cgi.

GIL Express is available to distance learning students using your SPSU ID. You can request your SPSU ID by using Banner Web; or, by calling the SPSU University Police/ ID Department at (678) 915-7348.

With GIL Express, you can check out books through two options:

- walk-in service at any University System of Georgia library or

- online by making a request using GIL Express. Books may be picked up at and returned to any USG library.
- Or, if you want to obtain a student ID card to use at your local library or university library, contact Kasey Helton, khelton@spsu.edu and provide your name, student ID number, and mailing address. You will then receive an SPSU student ID card (without photo). There will be a comment on the ID card that a photo ID will need to be presented when using the SPSU ID card.

Reference questions may be directed to the Reference Desk (toll-free): 1-866-513-9516. Local callers should use 678-915-7471.

Office Hours and Email

Although this is a fully online course, if it is convenient for you, I would encourage you to make an appointment to meet with me on campus. For many of you, however, it won't be convenient or even possible to meet in person, which means that discussion and Live Classroom sessions are essential to class learning and attaining course goals. We can meet in Live Classroom, as needed, or, if the class wants to designate a mutually convenient time for virtual office hours, I can set up a time to be available.

Reserve your use of email to me for things that can't or shouldn't be discussed publicly. For any questions that would be of interest to your classmates, post these to one of the designated or open discussion topics.

I will check into the course regularly during the week (but not necessarily every day, and not generally on weekends). You can expect timely responses to email within these parameters.

Please reserve the use of my email outside the course for those items that are so time-sensitive that they require same-day response.

Texts

Required

Kostelnick, C. & Roberts, D.D. (1988). *Designing visual language: Strategies for professional communicators*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Williams, R. (2008). *The Non-designer's design & type books*, deluxe edition. Berkley, CA: Peachpit Press.

Strongly Recommended

American Psychological Association.(2005). *Concise rules of APA style*. Washington, DC. (or the new 6th edition, 2010)

Course Structure and Attendance

GeorgiaVIEW Vista 8 is the focal point for all activities in this course. It is important to visit the course frequently, *not less than several times per week*. Housekeeping messages will be placed

in **announcements**. You are responsible for keeping up with due dates for all activities and assignments and for reading and noting any announced changes.

Regularly check the course **calendar** for all due dates and activities, including scheduled Live Classroom meetings. Most weekly course activities begin on a *Monday* and end on a *Sunday* evening.

You can make your own notes in the calendar and you can also print it out. I highly recommend that you do both.

Approach to Assignments/Grades

Discussions

A significant, early part of the semester is focused on discussion and interaction about the materials and texts presented to establish a basis for learning about information design and to build an online community. Most of the required discussion takes place in the first five weeks of the course *when there are no other graded assignments due*. Discussions begin on Monday and conclude on Sunday.

Workshops

The first project assignments provide the opportunity to work for two weeks with a partner in developing ideas for each workshop assignment. Each workshop assignment provides the chance to work with a new partner so as to learn from each other and improve the process of document design as well as the collaborative learning process.

Individual Projects

The book report/oral presentation provides the opportunity for all of us to learn from each other. It also provides the opportunity for you to use library resources to identify and read appropriate professional reviews that assess the quality of the selected book. And it provides the chance to design in a different medium and for a different context. Check the calendar for deadlines to post your proposed choice of books. This assignment is archived in Live Classroom.

The final project—a redesign of a product and a report about the redesign—provides the opportunity to demonstrate the learning acquired through all the activities and assignments leading up to this assignment. Do not delay in starting on this project, as it should be something you work on throughout the course. Check the calendar for the required discussion postings on topics and drafts for this assignment.

Due Date for Assignments/Missed Assignments

Due dates for assignments are posted to the course calendar. To be received on time, your assignment must be posted to the assignment drop box *before the time expires for the assignment*. Up to the time the assignment drop box closes, you can take back your assignment if you want to resubmit it.

However, any assignment that is not posted by the due date and time, will not be accepted, *unless* you request and *receive* permission to submit it after the due date. A request does not result in an automatic acceptance, as the expectation is that work will be submitted on or before the due date.

If permission is granted to submit an assignment late, you will have to send it via email as an attachment. Late assignments may lose a letter grade for missing the deadline.

Assignments

The assignments listed in the table below include:

- discussions
- workshops
- book reports of a supplemental book relevant to graduate students
- major redesign project

For all written assignments, consult the learning module for the assignment. It contains instructions for the assignment, supporting materials, and student samples of work from prior semesters.

Assignment	Weight	Description of Assignment
Workshops (3) 10% each	30%	Information design/redesign projects based on concepts from the texts and other reading; one partner needs to post redesign and report on redesign to Assignment drop box.
Book report PowerPoint presentation	15%	PowerPoint presentation presented and archived in Live Classroom and posted to the Assignment drop box.
Document redesign (including interim redesign) and report of redesign	35%	Redesigned document effectively applies the design principles covered in the course. Report discusses principles in document redesign (including interim redesign) and employs effective design principles and vocabulary.
Class participation/online discussion	20%	Grading based on discussion rubrics (for individual and leadership participation)

Grades

A = 90—100

B = 80—89

C = 70—79

D = 60—69

F = anything below 60

0 = work not submitted when due and not approved for late submission (also any work that exhibits evidence of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty)

Note: As this is a required course in our program, any student receiving below a B must repeat this course.

Grade Rubrics

Written Assignments

For the workshops and redesign assignments, your work will be evaluated using the grade rubric shown below. You will also receive additional comments from me. When assignments

are graded, you should check not only My Grades your grade, but also the assignment dropbox for my comments.

Criterion for effectiveness
Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the purpose of the assignment
Demonstrates a thorough understanding of audience, purpose, and context
Creates a design that reflects a thorough understanding of audience, purpose, and context
Conveys a clear understanding of the issues with the original design
Conveys a clear rationale for the redesign decisions made
Uses appropriate language of information design to describe the issues and approaches to redesign
Demonstrates an awareness of effective visual dimension principles of information design in attractive layout and design of redesigned products
If graphics are used, shows an understanding of grid structure/gestalt principles and makes appropriate graphical choices
Reflects appropriate research/reading in describing issues and making decisions
Sets an appropriate ethos and tone
In reporting, uses a well defined document structure with good principles of design (headings, white space, font choices, text features, etc.)
In reporting, uses effective language/style that is free of grammatical/punctuation/spelling errors

Discussion

Plan on accessing the course *at least* several times during each week, preferably more regularly. When you get online, allow sufficient time to participate fully in online discussions and activities. Before you post to discussion, be sure to read the postings of all others first so that you avoid repetition and also reflect on the postings of others.

Check in to discussion at the early part of each week and then return during the week to read and respond to new postings by others. Do not wait until the end of a discussion topic to begin posting. The frequency, distribution over the discussion period, and quality of your postings and interactions with others' postings is an essential element in your success in this course.

Consult the ***discussion grade rubric*** for specifics about how grades will be assigned for discussions.

In addition to your individual participation in discussion topics, you may also be assigned as a discussion leader for a topic. Consult the additional requirements for ***discussion leaders*** to learn the specific expectations for those who lead discussions.

For any other topics not covered by official discussion topics, you can create a new topic of interest by using the "***Open Topics***" discussion area.

A discussion area called "***Community Forum***" is for topics outside the particular focus of this course (but these can be very enjoyable and can help us build community).

Discussion Grade Rubric

The following discussion grade rubric will be used. Minimum requirements for each grade category are presented. Discussions exceeding minimum requirements will receive a higher grade within the category.

Grade	Interpretation
Excellent (= 100)	<p>The postings are accurate, original, relevant, thought-provoking, and well written (proofread for spelling/typos). When other postings are present, the student shows evidence of having read and absorbed the postings of the others. The student posts <i>frequently</i>, over a period of days throughout the week to interact with the postings of others and contribute to the ongoing discussion.</p> <p>Minimum requirements for a grade of 90:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First post, minimum 250 words, by Wednesday 11 PM. ▪ Second post, minimum 250 words, by Thursday 11 PM ▪ Third post, minimum 250 words ▪ All posts show evidence of response to others ▪ Minimum of 5 total posts, over at least 3 days
Above Average (B)	<p>The postings lack at least one of the above qualities, but the postings are above average quality. The postings make a good contribution to our understanding of the issue being discussed. The student may have posted several times, but perhaps all in close proximity, thereby not spreading out the postings.</p> <p>Minimum requirements for a grade of 80:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three posts, minimum of 250 words each ▪ All posts show evidence of response to others ▪ Posts are spread out over several days
Average (C)	<p>The postings lack 2 or 3 of the required qualities. Comments merely based on personal opinion fall in this category. Little or no reflection on the postings of others also falls in this category. Although there may be several postings, they all occur within one day/night.</p> <p>Minimum requirements for a grade of 70:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three posts, minimum of 250 words each ▪ All posts show evidence of response to others ▪ Posts are closely spaced over a day or two, not spread out over the discussion period
Below Average (D)	<p>The posting(s) present no new information. One point may contribute to the collegial/community atmosphere; or there may be only one or two postings.</p>
Unacceptable (F)	<p>The posting—a single comment—adds little or nothing worthwhile to the discussion.</p>
No credit (0)	<p>The student does not participate in the discussion. Or the posting(s) are not submitted by the cutoff date/time.</p>

For Discussion Leaders

The following additional requirements are expected:

- By Tuesday evening, pose one or two interesting questions in a kick-off posting for the topic.

- Contribute to the ongoing discussion during the week so that it generates further interaction from others.
- Summarize the discussion at the conclusion on Sunday (or Monday of the following week)

Students with Disabilities

If you believe that you may need accommodations in this course, please contact the counselor working with disabilities at 678-915-7361 to ensure that appropriate accommodations are made.

Professionalism Statement (adopted by the IDC Graduate Faculty)

The IDC program encourages the productive and enriching discourse that occurs between students and faculty. These exchanges form a valuable part of your academic experience and prepare you to be an effective member of a professional community.

As a student, general university policies on conduct do not exhaust your obligation to conduct yourself, both in person and in writing, as a professional. This means your words and actions should represent your professional competence and personal respect for all members of the SPSU community including your instructor(s) and your fellow students.

In order to make your experience at SPSU a positive one, we expect that students will adhere to professional standards of conduct in their communications with others. Please respect and work cooperatively with your colleagues and instructors.