

Description

A redesign project provides you an opportunity to think carefully and critically about the design and content of a document. For our course, you will be working both individually and collaboratively to redesign the English department website. This project will require you to consider audience, purpose, and authorship as they relate to a specific document. You and your team members will work together to research, propose, select, redesign, and persuasively present your redesigned site:

- Consider how purposes, audiences, situations, and methods affect writers', readers', and/or users' perceptions of written documents.
- Analyze various professional writing genres to consider how stylistic constraints (and potentials) affect the presentation and perception of information.
- Write persuasive, ethically responsible documents that demonstrate—via their form and content—an awareness of the audience's abilities, needs, and interests..
- Develop a set of investigative strategies for learning unfamiliar computer technologies and applications.
- Recognize and analyze the forms and roles that research plays in determining and meeting project goals and users'/readers' needs.
- Learn and apply strategies for collaborating successfully and equitably with peers on course projects.
- Understand and implement theories of document design (e.g., format, layout, graphics) in course projects.
- Conduct and manage a short-term project collaboratively.

Components

Rhetorical analysis of website

Your rhetorical analysis should include both a description of your team's selected site and an evaluation of the site's rhetorical effectiveness. In order to address these concerns thoroughly, you will need to research the context of your site; you need to build profiles for both its authors and potential audiences. In order to construct a detailed sense of the document's rhetorical situation, you should investigate not only the site itself but also other sites that focus on related themes and topics.

Also, please remain mindful of the importance of this activity. Your analyses will be the starting point for your redesign proposal, and your discussion should refer to specific aspects of the site.

- Description of the site and intended audience: Your discussion should include a brief description of the website including information about its structure, content, and overall themes. You should create detailed profiles of the site's author(s), audience(s), and purpose(s).
 - the author's name(s), background(s), characteristic(s), and assumption(s)
 - the names of any sponsoring organization and its general characteristics
 - implied and explicit audiences and their general characteristics and assumptions

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- the purpose(s) and goal(s) of the site
- the dates of publication and updates
- any insight that you can provide into the history of the site
- Analysis of the site's rhetorical effectiveness: In addition to a description, you also should include an evaluation of the site's rhetorical effectiveness. That is, you should consider the site's rhetorical effectiveness in relation to its intended audience.
 - How well does it identify and connect with a particular audience? (Include specific examples of how connection with the audience is or is not established.)
 - How well does it establish and pursue specific goals and purposes? (Include specific examples of how goals are or are not achieved.)
 - How well does it use the potentials of the web as a medium to achieve these goals?

Please keep in mind that your analysis should address issues of both form and content. In relation to form, please consider the following issues in your analysis:

- How rhetorically effective are the font choices (color, size, face, emphases)? Are they legible and consistent with the tone and theme of the site?
- How user friendly is the page layout? Does it make effective use of design principles (proximity, alignment, repetition, contrast)?
- How well constructed is the linking and interactivity? Is the site navigable rather than disorienting? Does it contain options for both internal and external movement? Does it provide users with helpful options such as site maps, contact information, navigation bars, multiple paths through the site, etc.?
- How consistent is the visual design of the page? Are the visual themes identifiable to users? Do formatting choices provide meaningful rather than seemingly random visual cues?
- How rhetorically effective and appropriate are images on the site? Do they enhance, rather than detract from, the goals of the page? Are they proportionate to the text? Are they effectively sized and cropped? Do they have a reasonable load time and legible resolution?
- How adequately has the site been proofread and tested? Are broken links, typing errors, broken images, and other glitches common or rare within the site?

In relation to content, please consider the following issues in your analysis:

- How reliable is the quality of the information provided? Is the content accurate? Does the site draw upon reliable sources? How can you tell?
- How well developed is the content? Does the site include relevant details and a thorough discussion of its subject matter?
- How appropriate is the site's tone? What mood(s) is the site trying to set (professional, playful, neutral, celebratory, anxious, indignant, etc.)? Is the tone/mood suitable to the purpose and intended audiences of the page?
- How timely is the content of the site? Is information provided about the subject matter current? How recently and thoroughly has the site been updated?

- How relevant is the content to the site's overall purpose? Does the site include materials that seem extraneous to its goals? Is it missing materials or information that are crucial to its rhetorical effectiveness?

Storyboard and Template

Storyboarding overview: Storyboarding is the process of creating a graphical representation of a web site's structure.

It involves diagramming the relationships, or links, between the various pages within a site.

Storyboarding often has been used in relation to other media, such as film, animation, and comic books. Much like its role in other production processes, storyboarding in web design allows you to conceptualize the "big picture" of your document—it prompts you to visualize how all the pages in a site relate to each other and how they work together (or not) as an organic whole.

See handout for further information.

Template: Your example redesigned pages should demonstrate a suggested layout for the starting node and a secondary node of your team's chosen site. Your starting node should convey both visually and textually the audience, purpose, context, and author considerations of your website. In other words, your design will need to include specific images, colors, themes, links, and organization and appropriate content. Your template nodes will provide us with a "fleshed out" and specific redesign.

Your examples should include the following two items:

- A template of a specific layout for starting node
- A template of a specific layout for a secondary node

Your templates must include color scheme, images, textual description, links, navigational tools, and interactive elements.

Report

Your report should cover the following content areas, but these areas must be organized according to the formatting guidelines. In other words, your report will not merely have three sections. Instead, you will integrate your content areas into separate sections within your report. Be certain to read the formatting guidelines carefully.

- **Overview:** your discussion should begin with a brief overview of the site, which introduces its author(s), purpose(s), and intended audience(s). The overview also should introduce the team's general concerns about the rhetorical effectiveness of the site. In discussing the current state of the site, you should highlight both its problems and potentials.
- **Recommendations:** after introducing the site's rhetorical context, discuss your recommended revisions to the site. Your presentation of these concerns should be focused and organized. Rather than simply offering a random list of individual issues (e.g., the background is too busy, a link on one of the nodes is broken, no

recent contact information is provided, etc.), your team should organize its recommendations into larger categories. These categories should draw upon the concerns that we discussed during our web rhetoric workshop (i.e., font choices, page layout, linking and interactivity, consistency, images, development and accuracy of content, appropriateness of tone, proofreading).

- **Rationales:** to make your report persuasive, include specific rationales for each of your recommendations. That is, in addition to describing your suggested revisions, you need to explain how and why they would improve the rhetorical effectiveness of the site. Your rationales should be backed by principles discussed in class, and they should be grounded in the rhetorical context of the site. Make certain that your recommendations are appropriate in relation to the site's purpose and feasible in relation to the author(s) presumed resources and abilities.

Using Microsoft Word, your redesign report should follow these specifications:

- as many pages as necessary
- 1-inch margins on all sides
- separate title page including the title of your report, team member names, submission date, and appropriate graphic
- 14-point Arial bold level one headers and 12-point Arial bold italic level two headers
- 12-point Times New Roman font for body
- descriptively titled subsections
- full block formatting (left justified, no indents for paragraphs, and one line space between paragraphs)
- name, last updated information, and page number in footer

Presentation

Your 10-minute oral presentation should engage our classroom audience with your rhetorically sound website redesign. Your presentation should be accompanied by a PowerPoint slide show. To organize your presentation, you should develop the following sections:

- **Project overview:** Your team should give an overview of your what you will address in your presentation. Note: Your overview section should summarize the content of your presentation not describe the general assignment
- **Overview of current site:** Describe the current site in terms of design, content, navigation, and interactivity. Relate these concepts to your rhetorical analysis of the site.
- **Recommendations and redesign:** Explain your recommendations for redesign. Include visuals of the new nodes as well as a chart of its navigational structure. The most important aspect of this section is to include your rationales for how your redesign is more rhetorically sound in terms of audience, purpose, and authorship.
- **Visuals:** Your team should integrate visuals throughout the presentation. Your visuals should not only have a professional appearance but also enhance the rhetorical effectiveness of your discussion.