

Course instructor

Kevin King

Contact information

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Office hours

Meetings by appointment

Class time & location

Tuesdays, 9:00am – 12:00pm, B124

Paper writing tips

You can approach the writing of your paper in the same way that you wrote for your research topic proposal. Remember to focus on the central argument that you are making towards the research subject in your paper.

Always ensure that you support your statements throughout the document, to give them credibility. A great way to do this is by using quotes that you insert within your text from other authors or designers. These can be statements that they have made, and should help support your point of view (central argument) on your paper's subject matter.

Another way of helping validate your statements to the reader is by using figures to visually support and illuminate the concepts you are discussing. You can do this by carefully selecting an image or creating a diagram that you insert in the figures area of your document, and then referring to it directly prior to or after the sentence that you refer to the concept.

Please consult the writing guide that is available on the BDES server in our class's folder for examples of first and third-person voice, as well as a formal writing tone. You should write in as clear and direct a manner as possible, and avoid using colloquial language.

Footnotes design tip

In deciding on how to setup your footnotes, consider that it can save time to format your footnotes using InDesign's footnote feature. This makes footnote entry faster, but also means that you must place your footnotes at the bottom of the text block.

Typeface choice tip

Choose a typeface family that has a comfortable primary text weight, but that also has a large enough range in weight styles that allows you to differentiate the different areas of the paper you need. If you can find a typeface that meets this criteria, and has caption weights, that is a bonus ☺

RESEARCH PAPER

Your major project for this semester will be the undertaking of a research topic that you will investigate and prepare an academic paper that demonstrates your ability to engage in critical research analysis, and to discuss and defend a central argument to an audience pertaining to that analysis. You should consider that your audience will be design practitioners, who have a post-secondary education.

A good paper will thoroughly investigate a subject of your choosing, and present your research in a clear way that adequately supports the statements on your findings. It is not a requirement for the project, but you may also push to provide a unique contribution to the discourse on your chosen subject.

METHODOLOGY

Having first prepared a research topic proposal, you will essentially proceed to conduct the bulk of your research and begin constructing your paper's writing and presentation in this phase. You should use your proposal document sections as a means for engaging with your research and the writing of your paper, which provides you with a scope for laying out your paper's sections. You will have also begun to establish your document design in your proposal, and may continue forward organizing your paper in this manner.

The best starting point for beginning work on your paper is to gather sources and engage in a critical analysis of them. Throughout the semester in the course, you will be presented with methodologies for critically analyzing and discussing historical subjects, and framing their relevance in contemporary practice. Gather your sources and make notes pertaining to them, which you will use as talking points in your paper.

A good methodology for approaching your writing is to break down your paper into manageable pieces. You can do this by assigning a word count to each of your sections. Your paper should include at least two major sections, with a small number of sub-sections. The following sections are required – optional sections are marked *:

Title page

Table of contents

Introduction

Major section one

Sub-section one

Major section two

Sub-section two

Conclusion

***Appendix**

Bibliography

***Acknowledgements**

Figures tip

Your figures are an essential component of your paper's final presentation, as they ultimately provide the viewer with evidence of your findings and the statements that you make throughout your paper. Ensure that your figures use images at as high a resolution as possible so that all of the details that require reflection by the viewer are clearly visible. Additionally, you have a limited amount of space to show figures, so ensure that you choose images or diagrams for the points that most require illumination.

Your figures can be images that you scan or take a photograph of, and can also be created by you with digital design tools or analog media.

Additional writing resources

In addition to the writing guide that has been provided for the course on the BDES server in our class's folder, the following articles by Gerry Leonidas serve as great guides to academic writing for design:

GERRY LEONIDAS, "Writing for design students, part 1: A pattern for structured writing". *Medium*, 27 January 2016
<https://medium.com/@gerryleonidas/writing-for-design-students-part-1-a-pattern-for-structured-writing-687c7a985342>

GERRY LEONIDAS, "Writing for design students, part 2: Describing things". *Medium*, 4 November 2016
<https://medium.com/@gerryleonidas/writing-for-design-students-part-2-describing-things-c99f48123dac>

GERRY LEONIDAS, "Writing for design students, part 3: three essentials". *Medium*, 29 September 2018
<https://medium.com/@gerryleonidas/writing-for-design-students-part-3-three-essentials-652dbd886271>

PAPER SPECIFICATIONS

Your paper's writing should constitute roughly **2,000 words**, which excludes the figure captions, footnotes, and bibliography text. The page count may vary, depending on how many figures you integrate into your document. You should use full-colour reproductions for figures where relevant.

Please remember that **any writing, ideas or images that are not your own must be properly cited and footnoted wherever they occur in your paper's text**. Not observing this violates YSDN's academic integrity code, and will result in an automatic failure on the project.

Your paper should be formatted for 8.5 × 11" letter size paper.

DOCUMENT DESIGN

As visual designers, the way that we present our research as visual communication can have a major impact on the way our work is received. This means that when we are presenting our document, we should consider appropriate hierarchy strategies that allow us to organize our content in a way that allows the reader to navigate easily through the document, and digest the information contained within it comfortably. We want to impart a visual typographic style, however, this should not to be confused with drawing attention to the design devices that we use: our goal is for the clear comprehension of the content.

Please work in Adobe InDesign to layout your abstract in an appropriate manner. You may use the InDesign template file that you are using for your reflection journal entries as a starting point, and examples of abstract paper layout structures are available on the BDES server in our class's folder.

When designing your proposal, remember to consider what the purpose of this document is: to serve as a platform to present a discourse surrounding a given research topic, and to defend a major argument that you are presenting towards this topic. This reveals to us the document elements that we must develop styles for:

- ☞ The appearance of main text, and devices for emphasis (italics, superior figures for calling to footnotes, references to captions)
- ☞ The treatment and location of footnotes on each page in relation to the main text area. (Should they run underneath the main text area, or in a separate column beside the main text?)
- ☞ The treatment and location of captions within the page layout. (How does it separate itself clearly from the main text?)
- ☞ The appearance and location of running heads and folios in relation to the main text area, footnotes, and figures with their captions
- ☞ A system for consistently presenting images for use in figures (how large will images be shown throughout the paper? Will they be shown at intervals of 50% and 25%? It is best to keep this scales to a small range ((1–2)) and to keep them consistent throughout the document)

Please use proper typographic style for text—as outlined in *TypeTips*—which will be provided in class and is available on the BDES server in our course’s folder.

DUE 31 March 2020

SUBMISSION SPECIFICATIONS

Please submit your final PDF file to the BDES server in our class’s folder. Please name your PDF file as follows to ensure your file can be located for grading purposes:

firstname_lastname_research-paper.pdf

GRADING

This project is worth a total of 35% of the course grade. Criteria for evaluation will include:

- 35% Clarity and breadth of support of central argument
- 25% Relevance of topic and central argument to course topics at large
- 25% Quality of written communication
- 15% Presentation and design of document