

Information Design

1. Project Summary

1.1 Learning Outcomes

- Recognize that digital composition and communication is process-based and situation-specific
- Apply theoretical models to real-world communication scenarios and user experiences.
- Understand how to construct profiles for digital audiences and users of information.
- Develop information and content that adheres to the principles of universal design
- Utilize a variety of primary and secondary sources of information to support project deliverable
- Design content that is universally accessible and adaptable from the concept stage to the execution stage.

1.2 Objectives

- Apply genre conventions to write various project documents
- Learn and use new digital tools to create engaging and dynamic representations of information.
- Develop an information campaign on an identified topic or issue related to digital media for a specific audience.

1.3 Background

Your job is to develop an information design based on the topic or issue you've been writing about in your digital media blog. By this point, you should have a good grasp on the scope of the topic and the range of people affected or involved. You will propose and develop a design to inform or persuade this audience. To do so, you must research the topic and the affected audience and determine the most effective way to approach the rhetorical situation. The final deliverable of this project may be an infographic or an interactive, dynamic web text.

1.4 Deliverables and Grade Weights

- Proposal Memo (20%)
- Audience Analysis and Impact Report (20%)
- Information Design Product (40%)
- Critical Review (20%)

2. Deliverable Specifications

2.1 Proposal Memo

Compose a proposal memo that outlines the message, audience, and timeline for your information design project and provides a rationale for your platform and delivery choices. The proposal should include the following sections:

- **Background and Message:** Provide context for the topic or issue you've been writing about in your blog and explain the message you want to convey with this design.
- **Audience:** Provide an abbreviated sketch of the intended audience of the information design. The more specific you can be the better (in other words, "disadvantaged elementary school students in rural areas" is better than "children"). This section becomes the foundation for the Audience Analysis and Impact report.
- **Evidence and Support:** Describe sources of information and content you will use for this design. The type and rigor of your evidence will depend on the message and the needs of the intended audience but could range from studies published in scholarly journals to BuzzFeed lists. List specific sources and articulate how you plan to use the evidence.
- **Timeline:** Create a timeline and list of benchmarks for the project based on the realities of your own schedule. Demonstrate how you will complete each step to meet the project deadlines.
- **Platform and Delivery:** Choose a design platform and explain your choice. You should consider the affordances of the platform you choose in comparison to other platforms (for example, what does Sway do for you that Piktochart cannot?). Then, provide a hypothetical explanation of how the design would be distributed or delivered to the specified audience.
- **Licensing:** Choose a license for your design and provide rationale for your choice. Remember the license must be compatible with the licenses for any media or content you've included in your design.

Length

500 words (+/- 100 words)

Resources

- [Memo format and context](#)
- [Proposal types and content](#)
- [Creative Commons Licenses](#)

Deadline

February 1, 11:59pm to Blackboard

2.2 Audience Analysis and Impact Report

The success or failure of an information campaign depends almost entirely on the campaign's understanding of its audience. Compose a report on your design's intended audience and the intended outcomes/impact of your campaign. The report should include the following sections:

- **Background:** Provide as much context for your intended audience as you can. This might include demographics, shared experiences, cultural values, or knowledge, experience, and training.
- **Identified Need:** Explain why the intended audience needs the information you want to convey. Articulate the intended benefit of the information contextualized with the audience's background.
- **Variability:** Specify the domain of your audience. Are there fringe use cases? How might someone not a part of your intended audience use the information? Imagine use cases that may fall outside the established audience domain.
- **Where/When/How:** Develop a use case or user story for your design that explains how the audience will interact the information, where they will acquire it, and when they will use it.
- **Barriers to Delivery:** Articulate the barriers that exist between the information and the audience. Are there any gatekeepers between the intended audience and the information? If so, explain how you will overcome them (For example, the principal or administration of a school would have to approve the distribution of an infographic to their students).
- **Flowchart or System Map:** Visualize how your information design will get to the intended audience and how members of the audience will use the product. Include feedback loops that exist between you, the gatekeepers, and the end users of the information.

Length

1250-1500 words

Resources

- [Purdue OWL Audience Analysis](#)
- [Audience Analysis in Technical Writing](#)
- [Wikipedia: Flowchart](#)

Deadline

February 8, 11:59pm (to Blackboard)

2.3 Information Design Product

Your information design may be static (an infographic) or dynamic (a web text). You will have justified your choice of medium in the proposal memo. Your submission should be considered a final draft. Any changes you choose to make based on peer feedback are discretionary. The following specifications are general and may not apply to every design:

- **Message:** Identify a message or argument (think of it as a “thesis statement”). Though the message may be implicit, it should not be vague, and the identified audience should recognize it immediately.
- **Evidence:** Use evidence and support as appropriate based on what you outlined in the proposal. Anything you use must be appropriately cited or attributed within the bounds of the design’s license.
- **Data:** Include data, statistics, or other “hard data” as appropriate and visualize it in a way that your audience will understand.
- **Transitions:** Use consistent and intentional transitions between content elements as afforded by the medium. Avoid abrupt, unclear, or tangential transitions, just as you would in an essay.
- **Citations and Attributions:** Provide citations of referenced content and attributions of incorporated content in a visually effective way. Users of your design should be able to locate easily any content you reference.
- **License:** Include a license for the design that is compatible with any content that you incorporated.

Length

Varies based on medium.

Resources

See design resources in Blackboard.

Deadline

February 15, 11:59pm (to Blackboard)

2.4 Critical Review

The final part of the project is a critical review of a peer's information design. You will respond to a peer's design without having access to the proposal or audience analysis report. Thus, you will react to the design as an outside audience would (though not necessarily the intended audience). You will write a critical review that addresses the following aspects of the design:

- **Message:** Does the design clearly identify a message? What is it, and is there room for interpretation? Is there anything about the design that obfuscates the message or complicates its delivery?
- **Audience:** Is the intended audience clear? How narrowly can you guess the intended audience? Do you think the message requires that the design itself identify an audience?
- **Evidence:** Does the design use evidence and support? What kind of evidence, and is it appropriate for the message and context? Is it appropriate for the audience you identified? Does the design include proper citations and attribution?
- **Visual Design:** Does the design use consistent and intentional transitions between content elements as afforded by the medium? Are there abrupt, unclear, or tangential transitions? What is your overall evaluation of the design itself? What would you change?
- **License:** Does the design adhere to the chosen license?

Length

500 words (minimum)

Resources

- [Feedback in the Writing Process](#)

Deadline

February 22, 11:59pm (to Blackboard)