Designing, Analyzing, and Presenting Visual Communication

# **English 150, Spring 2019**

## **Overview**

You will summarize the highlights of your Assignment 3 (Profile of a Campus Program or Organization) or Assignment 4 (Understanding Place or Artifact: Campus Landscape, Building, or Art) by creating a visual form of communication such as a brochure, infographic, or electronic poster. In other words, you are repurposing material you have presented primarily in the written mode in an effort to emphasize the oral, visual, and electronic modes. This assignment has three parts:

* Summarize what you learned and convey to others in a visually interesting/appropriate way (50%)
* Write a short reflective paper about the design decisions and rationales for your visual (25%)
* Present your work to the class by sharing your visual communication and design decisions (25%)

Visual communication, like verbal communication, is rhetorical: its effectiveness depends on a good fit between audience, purpose, and material. Excellent and important content can be undermined by poor visuals; likewise, snazzy visuals will not overcome a weak argument or a poor organizational plan.

Whether you choose a brochure, infographic or a poster will depend on the nature of your topic and of the information you need to relay. Posters depend more on visual components and being read from a distance while infographics and brochures (as the name suggests) lend themselves to information and visuals. See the end of this assignment sheet for information about designing infographics and posters.

## **Analysis Paper**

After you complete the visual part of this assignment, write a paper of about 300-400 words in which you explain the rhetorical decisions you made in the creation of your brochure, infographic, or poster. Essentially, you will be explaining how you matched your content to the audience and purpose of your communication using elements of visual design. You will need to be specific here, incorporating information from your writing manual, pages 45-49 in your ISUComm Foundation Courses Student Guide, and the Design Principles module on our Canvas site. Be sure to explain major decisions such as the following:

* Genre selection (brochure, infographic or poster?)
  + Infographic: Choose if you want to teach; allows information to be presented in a visual format.
  + Poster: Choose if you want to publicize; allows you to show descriptive aspects of your topic.
* Image selection (e.g., photographs, figures) and placement
* Style choices (color, font, and typography)
* Amount and placement of text

Simply writing “I chose blue because I thought it looked nice” is not a rhetorical decision. You should explain how this particular image fits your audience and purpose for your poster or infographic.

### **ePortfolio Connection:**

Add your visual and/or presentation to your “Visual” page. Record yourself giving your presentation, and add it as a video to your Oral page. See the ePortfolios support site for help.

## **Presentation**

You will also make a five-minute presentation to the class in which you share about the experience of creating a visual communication product. Note insights gained into your topic and elaborate on design decisions and selection processes for choosing sources and visuals. Explain how these were developed for a specific audience. Finally, share your most surprising/interesting discovery about yourself as a communicator/designer. Use your infographic/poster itself as visual support for your presentation.

### **Evaluation Criteria for Presentation**

At a minimum, your presentation should satisfy these criteria. However, the grade is based not only on whether a feature is present or not, but on how well it has been integrated.

#### **Context**

* Introduction identifies the purpose and focus of your presentation
* Presentation establishes its interest both for you and your audience

#### **Substance**

* Presentation focuses on insights in and reflections on design and communication decisions
* Presentation delivers relevant information and conclusions (i.e., avoid padding the product)

#### **Organization**

* Presentation is organized clearly around key points that support your focus
* Presentation uses transitions, reminders, and forecasting to guide your audience’s attention

#### **Style**

* Language choices are suited to the purpose of reflecting on earlier work to an audience of your peers
* Language choices should sustain audience attention

#### **Delivery**

* Volume and rate of speaking allow audience to understand content
* Gestures, eye contact, expression, and posture maintain audience interest and confidence
* Notes may be used, but avoid reading