Historicizing Rubric

A critical element to understanding a literacy technology is to understand how even the newest digital media is intertwined with older media. Graduate students in this course as well as TWC majors choosing to also register for WRIT 4995 Senior Project concurrently with WRIT 4662 will “historicize” a soft Web technology and the complexity of human decision-making driving its development.

To begin, you will need to read [Haas, C. (1999). On the relationship between old and new technologies. (Links to an external site.)](http://www.sciencedirect.com.ezp3.lib.umn.edu/science/article/pii/S8755461599000031)

There you will note that **historicizing**, according to Writing Studies researcher, Christina Haas (1996), is “the reciprocal process of placing computer literacy technologies into historical contexts and, in turn, using those historical contexts to more fully understand today's technologies" (p. 205). In conducting this research process, you will need to address 1) the political and rhetorical movements motivating a soft web technology development; and 2) how this particular technology is shaped by print media.

**Soft technology**, in the context of this assignment, is an HTML-minded element with a standards body making decisions about its development. Examples include HTML and CSS elements, as well as their respective attributes and properties. You will trace an element’s cultural history and the implications of its current use. Most importantly, historicizing a soft technology involves understanding its link to print media and learning how to incorporate it into your web-based writing process.

[Note, based on our 1:1 discussions, some of you have chosen to research a topic, e.g., historicizing editing, rather than a specific HTML-minded element. Also note the revised due date for your first draft.]

Overall, your task is to research, analyze, and write in modalities akin to the soft technology being examined. You will have until week 10 of the semester (**due 11/11**) to create a draft / prototype website about this particular technology, discussing its links with print media and the "many 'voices'" (Haas, 1996, p. 165) driving its development. You will share this site for discussion with other graduate and TWC students as well as members of your small group (during Module four). **The final draft of your website will be due Nov. 28.**

Grading rubric

* A/N for Writ 4995 students; S/N for Certificate and MS graduate students in technical communication.
* Demonstrates your ability to establish a lineage between old and new technologies and the properties of such a relationship.
* Grounds the historical project within a particular community and culture. Locates some point of conflict or (mis)appropriation of a particular tool within the bounds of a community's writing practice.
* Constructs some preliminary core categories about the writing practices bound to the technology.
* Historicizing website incorporates the particular writing modes linked to the soft technology.