

## ***ATEC 3320 Introduction to Writing and Editing for the WWW Spring 2010 Syllabus***

---

### **Course Information**

<i>Course Number/Section</i>	ATEC 3320.001 and ATEC 3320.002
<i>Course Title</i>	Introduction to Writing and Editing for the World Wide Web
<i>Term</i>	Spring 2010
<i>Days &amp; Times</i>	T/Th 10-11:15 T/Th 11:30-12:45

### **Professor Contact Information**

<i>Professor</i>	Janet Johnson
<i>Office Phone</i>	972-883-2076
<i>Email Address</i>	janet.johnson@utdallas.edu
<i>Office Location</i>	JO 5.608F
<i>Office Hours</i>	M/W 11-12 Or by appointment
<i>Virtual Office:</i>	Google IM: janetnews@gmail.com
<i>Website:</i>	<a href="http://www.virtualrhetoric.com/write">http://www.virtualrhetoric.com/write</a>
<i>Twitter:</i>	cyberwrite

### **Course Pre-requisites**

Rhetoric 1302

### **Course Description**

Writing well for the World Wide Web requires the same amount of talent and practice that writing well for print media demands but with additional critical differences. Web writing starts with targeting an audience (readers/users) and developing content that is interactive across multiple modalities such as text, images, and other media. Links are the power behind the internet and internal and external linking alters the manner in which we read online text and thus its design and content. While traditional web development models have favored graphical design principles, or the way a website “looks” over how it “reads,” or its information architecture, current studies show that successful websites are those with loyal subscribers who come back again and again for good content.

ATEC 3320 is a writing and reading intensive course that requires completion of both individual and collaborative projects. Students focus upon improving their writing and editing skills so that they may more effectively apply those skills in creating effective web content. The course will also address some basic principles of design, but the students will not study the more complicated

facets of multimedia design, dynamic content, and/or creation of graphics, which are territories of other ATEC courses. This course will concentrate on writing to many audiences as well as create useful and informative content that will engage an audience. Students will also dabble in marketing and analyzing their blog's statistics to understand that content matters.

### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

- To improve **writing and editing** skills as applied to hypertext
- To understand the characteristics and nature of hypertext
- To comprehend the World Wide Web as a multifaceted communication medium
- To analyze proficiently the various audiences who may represent potential users
- To understand and analyze basic design theory, communication theory, and rhetorical strategies to help students effectively communicate online messages to their intended audience

### **Required Textbooks and Materials**

#### *Required Texts*

- Letting Go of the Words: Writing Web Content that Works (2007)
  - ISBN:9780123694867

#### *Recommended Texts:*

- A dictionary
- A grammar/style guide

#### *Other requirements and responsibilities of the student:*

- A home Internet Service Provider or frequent access to the Internet
- Access to a digital camera
- A Twitter account
- A Wordpress blog
- A working knowledge of technology.
- Understanding where assignments are turned in and double-checking the technology to make sure your assignments are posted correctly.

#### *Suggested Course Materials*

I suggest that you bring a USB thumb drive to save any work we do in class. Saving your work saves YOU from the agony of losing points on an assignment due to volatile technological mishaps due to WebCT, e-mail or server breakdowns.

## Assignment Calendar

Assignments	Point Value	Due Date
Two Web site critiques (50 points each)  Where to turn in your critiques? Turnitin.com.	100	Critique #1: 2/4 by class time via Turnitin.com  Critique #2: 4/1 by class time via Turnitin.com
Professional Blog: See assignment sheet	500	Semester long project that will be graded at the end of the semester  Finalized Blogs are due May 2.
Midterm: Professional Blog	200	Midterm 2/25
Professional Blog Presentation	100	April 27 and 29
Professional Communication Grade	100	All Semester
Total Points You Can Earn	1000 points	

## Grading Criteria and Expectations

Your work will be graded by the following criteria:

- **Analysis of Audience and Purpose:** Anytime you are writing for print media, broadcast news and for the web, you should always have a target audience. Audience research is important in all areas of the media. The World Wide Web is no exception. Keep in mind your target audience because the World Wide Web caters to niche audiences. Just try to think about how the World Wide Web is like a mall, there is something for everyone!
- **Organization and Development (Overall Content):** It is important to structure information in a logical order that makes sense to your targeted audience. Your ideas and arguments should be supported through evidence and analysis. Every paragraph should have one idea as well as transitions that make the piece flow.
- **Thesis or Main Point:** Any piece of writing should support a main point, central claim, or thesis. Your web content should support a main point that you are communicating to an intended audience.
- **Style:** Word choices, use of language and sentence structure are important in any effective piece of writing. Each genre, you will find, will have a different style for the intended audience.
- **Accessibility:** Creating accessible web sites takes finesse. One must use effective hyperlinks, appropriate headings and subheadings and clear navigational icons. Web site accessibility is refers to the ease that your users can easily find information quickly. You want to make your web site easily navigated, informational as well as basic design.

- **Format (Delivery and Design Features):** Web writers create certain visual effects. For example, the size, color and style of font. Although we will not go in depth in design, it is hard NOT to talk about the basic design principles that can help you effectively place your words on the World Wide Web. Good design creates a more accessible and user-friendly web site. Remember how you feel when you see a cluttered web site, you tend to click away. A good design and format will heighten the delivery of your message and create credibility.
- **Professionalism:** Think of this class as your job. You will prepare work in the same professional and ethical standards that you would in the workplace. I expect you to proofread and edit all of your work before turning it in. I expect you to edit for misspellings, grammar and punctuation. Also, professionalism requires respect for your fellow classmates. I expect everyone to respect each other's opinions and constructive criticism on peer reviews, presentations, as well as our class blog. Treat this class as you would a job. What you do in this class can be kept for future use as a professional portfolio. Create work that will be useful to you as well as to a future employer.

An "A" assignment will include all of these components as well as succeed my expectations.

### Grading Scale

930 – 1000 = A	730 -769 = C
900 – 929 = A-	700 – 729 = C
870 – 899 = B+	670 – 699 = D+
830 – 869 = B	630 – 669 = D
800 – 829 = B-	600 -629 = D-
770 – 799 = C+	599 and below = F

### Course Policies

#### *Late Work*

**I do not accept late work AT ALL.**

If you are making a presentation, do not ask me the day of your presentation to change your date. If you are not prepared or do not turn in an assignment, you will get an F on that particular assignment.

#### *Class Attendance*

I allow you 2 free absences with no penalty, after 5 absences (counting the 2 freebies) you fail.

Just remember to communicate with me. Please speak to me privately if you have an extended hospital stay, illness or family emergency that can be documented. The earlier you talk to me about a potential problem, the better for you.

### *Classroom Citizenship*

See the attached ATEC 3320 Fact Sheet

### *Room and Equipment Use*

- Tampering with or destroying any of the computers, printers, Smart Board, white boards, modems or wiring in the classroom is prohibited. Violations will result in disciplinary action by the Dean of Student's office.
- The classroom maybe used only for ATEC 3320 related activities. You may not work on other class projects, check your email, print, work for other classes, burn CDs that are not part of ATEC 3320 assignments, or install software. Any violation of the above restriction would refer a student to disciplinary action with the Dean of Students office. A second violation will result in the student receiving an "F" in the course regardless of the quality of class work.

## **Student Conduct & Discipline**

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

## **Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or

material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

## **Email Use**

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

## **Withdrawal from Class**

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

## **Student Grievance Procedures**

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

## **Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

## **Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:  
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22  
PO Box 830688  
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688  
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

## **Religious Holy Days**

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

## **Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities**

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address given below. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. ([http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel\\_Risk\\_Activities.htm](http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm))

*These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*

**ATEC 3320 Fact Sheet:**

- Instructor, Janet Johnson
- Office phone: 972-883-2076
- Email: [janet.johnson@utdallas.edu](mailto:janet.johnson@utdallas.edu)
- Web site: <http://www.virtualrhetoric.com/write>
- I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE WORK-don't ask!
- I allow you 2 free absences with no penalty, after 5 absences (counting the 2 freebies) you fail. I have a new system on my iPhone that will make this quick and easy!
- If you see the door closed, do not knock. You should have been on time! It will count as an absence. I am required to be on time, I expect you to be on time.
- If you are in class, participate! During an activity, if I see you surfing the net, working on other schoolwork or chatting online, I may ask you to leave and record you as absent. Take advantage of workdays, that means no homework and my guidance.
- If you respect me, I will respect you
- Save the excuses, I've heard them ALL!
- If you foresee a problem with an assignment, tell me before the due date. I will generally try to help you as best I can. If I don't know about a problem, I can't help you.
- I expect you in class. If I happen to assign an online day, I expect to see your assignment posted on time.
- DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK, "DID I MISS ANYTHING IMPORTANT?" I will respond, "YES, Everything I do is important." If you come to class you will stay informed. I do not have time to micro manage. Always check our class blog!
- Turn off your cell phones.
- Do not run outside to answer your phone during activities. I will count you absent and may not let you back in class so I suggest not knocking on the door.
- I know this is a weird request, but please no feet on the tables. This class is a professional environment. Respect your classmates and keep your body parts to yourself.

- If you start talking to your classmates while I am talking, I will ask you to leave and record an absence. It's very annoying when I get interrupted and the last thing you want is a grumpy professor.
  - The Professional Communication grade is up to me. You earn this through participation, attendance, respect, well written emails, oral skills, etc.
  - The last thing I want is to see any of my students fail. I will help you in any way possible.
- With that said, it is your responsibility to do the assignments on time and double check to see if assignments posted. If I don't see an assignment is posted to Turnitin.com or to your blog, I count that as a 0 or lower the grade. So, always double-check your work—this is YOUR grade and YOUR responsibility.

## ATEC 3320 Calendar

Date	Assignment
Tue 1/12	Introduction to class
Thur 1/14	Chapter 1-2 Set up Blogs and Twitter Account
Tue 1/19	Writing Workshop Set up Blogs
Thur 1/21	Chapter 5-Writing Information Chapter 6 Focusing on Your Essential Messages
Tue 1/26	Chapter 8-Tuning up your Sentences Chapter 13 Getting from Draft to Final Web Pages Writing
Thur 1/28	Writing workshop
Tue 2/2	Chapter 3 Starting Well
Thur 2/4	Critique #1 due
Tue 2/9	Chapter 4 Getting There
Thur 2/11	Writing Workshop
Tue 2/16	Chapter 7- Designing Your Web Pages for Easy Use Writing Workshop
Thur 2/18	Writing Workshop
Tue 2/23	Writing Workshop
Thur 2/25	<b>Midterm Blog Due w/ 8 stories</b>
Tue 3/2	Chapter 9 Use Lists and Tables and Chapter 10 Breaking up your Text with Headings
Thur 3/4	Writing Workshop
Tue 3/9	Chapter 12-Writing Meaningful Links
Thur 3/11	Writing Workshop
Tue 3/16	Spring Break
Thur 3/18	Spring Break
Tue 3/23	Writing Workshop
Thur 3/25	TBD
Tue 3/30	Writing Workshop
Thur 4/1	Critique #2 due

Tue 4/6	TBD
Thur 4/8	TBD
Tue 4/13	TBD
Thur 4/15	Work on Finalizing Blog
Tue 4/20	Work on Finalizing Blog
Thur 4/22	Work on Finalizing Blog
Tue 4/27	<b>Blog Presentations</b>
Thur 4/29	<b>Blog Presentations</b>

## **Semester Blog Project**

The purpose of this semester long project is for you to practice WRITING! This class is a writing intensive course. This project will help teach you how to:

1. Develop a project.
2. Write for the web.
3. Learn to track statistics for your web sites, which will help with writing with certain keywords in mind.
4. Learn to write to a target audience.
5. Learn to market a Web site.

### **What you will need:**

1. Access to the Internet.
2. A Wordpress blog.
3. Access to elearning.
4. Sign up for a Twitter account and request to follow *cyberwrite*. (Twitter has proven to be a useful tool for quick questions and answers between students and I. It also provides me a quick way to update you in case I'm sick or if I need to contact you or remind you about assignments. I highly encourage you to participate.) You will also market your web site using Twitter.
5. Knowledge of how to work the technology.

### **The nuts and bolts:**

1. Develop an idea for your blog. You may not do a creative writing, movie review, music review, or video game review ONLY blog. Your idea must be informative, and newsworthy and interesting. The idea is to find something that you are PASSIONATE about and create a blog that gives a different perspective from what you regularly see and read on the Internet. Read the handout that I posted on elearning in the folder titled Reading 1.

2. Each week we will work on your blog as well as peer review your classmates' blogs. Please keep posting stories to your blog. The great thing about a blog is that you can become a better writer throughout the semester. Build upon the criticism and knowledge you gain. At the end of the semester I will look at how you've grown from story #1.
3. One original podcast is required. (Do NOT attempt this until I tell you too!)
4. Think of this blog as your own media outlet. You are the reporter and you are the media. Treat this blog as your own citizen journalism outlet. This means to go out and interview people, find facts and discover information on your own. Do not rely on the Internet for your source of information. Use outside sources that you discover on your own. Overall, original content is what will make your blog unique and strong.
5. Learn to read data about your web site that can lead you to improve your blog. We will use Google Analytics.
6. At the end of the semester you will turn in a detailed report of your statistics and a two-page reflection of your experience keeping your blog.

**Midterm Requirements for the blog:**

1. Eight stories posted by February 25.
2. Each story should be 25+ words.

3. **Worth 200 Points!!!!**

**Rubric for what I will be looking for in the Midterm Blog:**

1. Quality of writing, which includes, mechanics, style, grammar, spelling, proofreading skills. Did you use the inverted pyramid?
2. Consistency: If you are writing about underwater basket weaving then I expect each post to reflect on some aspect to your theme.
3. Visual Attractiveness: Does your blog look professional?
4. Use of multimedia elements: photos, videos, graphs, charts, and tables.

5. Use of different venues on the WWW to market your Web site.

6. Quality of information.

- Did you go beyond Internet sources?
- Did you credit pictures, sources, quotations, etc?
- Do you tell me something “new” about your topic?
- Professional
- Did you do original reporting and research?

7. Did you post the minimum 8 stories that are 250+ words?

**FINAL Blog Requirements:**

1. Twenty new stories posted by May 2. You should have a total of 28 stories.
2. Each story is 250+ words
3. A collection of the 28 stories posted to Turnitin.com. (we’ll discuss this further.)
4. A 2-page reflection paper over your Web site. ( I will include more information at a later date)
5. Turn in a final statistical analysis of your Web site.
6. A presentation to the class over your blog experience.

**7. Worth 500 points!!!!**

**Rubric for what I will be looking for in the FINAL Blog:**

1. Quality of writing, which includes, mechanics, style, grammar, spelling, proofreading skills. Did you use the inverted pyramid? Did your writing evolve over the semester with the tools you have learned?
2. Professional writing techniques.

3. Consistency: If you are writing about underwater basket weaving then I expect each post to reflect on some aspect to your theme.
4. Visual Attractiveness: Does your blog look professional?
5. Use of multimedia elements: photos, videos, graphs, charts, and tables.
6. Use of different new media venues on the WWW to market your Web site.
7. Quality of information.
8. Did you post the minimum stories that are 250+ words.
9. Did the blog stories improve over the semester.
10. Uniqueness of your topic.
11. Citizen Journalism skills: Interviews, original reporting, use of sources, etc.
12. Final statistical analysis: Did your hits go up on your blog during the semester?