

PRWR 3910 3.0 The Mechanics of Style Expanded Course Description

This course is designed to introduce the protocols and practices involved in the design of books and related print and online formats, and to explore relevant theoretical and experiential bases for page, text, and book layout. Students will learn and apply methods of analysis to a variety of publications as such methods relate to various forms of rhetoric. The course then offers students the opportunity to adapt and apply these protocols, principles and theories with the use of industry-standard software such as InDesign.

Beginning with an overview of communications and book history, this subject looks at print- and book- development as these involve book structure, page/content components, and genres and types. PWR 391 moves on to consider the constituent elements of printed books today: text and visuals, types of and rationales for organizational items and patterns. Consideration is given to the stages of book production and to editing and publishing-industry practices. A variety of types of books and documents will be examined as representative of theories design and patterns of discourse, and as subjects for critical analysis.

Consonant with current media and publishing developments, online books and documents will be analyzed and examined with respect to variations between the two interfaces [page and screen] in terms of design, layout, and markets.

Organization of the Course: Classes will include lectures, focused and general discussions, and individual and group presentations. Students will learn about page-design and desktop publishing software in lab and workshop classes, designed to offer hands-on, guided practice and in-class exercises and assignments.

Course Learning Objectives

Purpose: The purpose of this course is to expose students to the essential concepts concerning the origins and development of the components of book design and the principles and practices involved in book production today.

Learning Objectives: With successful completion of this course, students will be able to

- Identify critical stages in the history of book and communications history
- Understand and articulate rhetorical modalities as related to book content and design
- Identify and put into use the elements of visual rhetoric
- Learn, recognize and apply proven strategies and practices in elements of page design: i.e., typography, spacing, layout, image-use and integration
- Critically examine and analyze various texts and books, supported by the knowledge of sound editorial principles and practices
- Discern between content and design requirements in major categories of books
- Understand and interpret, through discourse and application, fundamentals of book design for print and online display
- Apply, in classroom workshops and independent work, the principles of document design with the use of page-making applications
- Work with style sheets, grids, and templates in the preparation of documents
- Learn to assess requirements and objectives of various stages of the book production process, with reference to major publishers and independent publication