

ENG 309, Computer-Aided Publishing

Bradley Dilger, Associate Professor of English
Spring 2018 ~ TR 1:30–2:45pm ~ Heavilon 227

This course provides an introduction to critical elements of design thinking which involve computing: user-centered design, type design, page design, and design through testing. You'll get practical skills, theoretical knowledge, and diverse experiences to help you engage in design projects, broadly speaking, using both traditional and electronic tools. Our introduction will include a strong practitioner emphasis, from texts to projects. We'll explore the connections of design and ethics, design and writing, and computing and design.

Goals & objectives

Expect to learn the following this semester:

1. Design theory and practice, including the use of type and page design to create attractive, usable documents, but with a broader emphasis on design thinking and best practices.
2. Elementary principles of user-centered design: the art and craft of iteratively developing documents and/or products with their users at the forefront.
3. Methods to test the designs of web sites, generalized for use in testing other documents and creative products.
4. Ethical principles associated with design and computing.
5. Best practices for using electronic web and document creation design tools such as the Adobe Creative Suite.

Our methods will be careful reading, re-reading, collaborative work and class discussion, the use of practitioner tools, and iterative design modeled after real-world practice.

(Official: "ENGL 30900: The development of the ability to write and design documents using electronic publishing technologies. Students will receive instruction in writing, graphics, and publishing software and will write, design, produce, and critique a number of publications.")

Readings

Two primary course texts are complemented by numerous articles I will distribute electronically via our course web site or Google Drive. In [our detailed schedule](#), find useful information about the ways readings will be used in class, so you'll know when you need to carefully read and retain information, or just become familiar with it for later reference. Reading is an extremely important part of designers' work, and it will be crucial for this class as well.

1. Krug, S. (2010). *Rocket Surgery Made Easy*. Berkeley: New Riders. 978-0321657299. \$17.
2. Lupton, E. (2010). *Thinking with Type: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, & Students* (2nd ed). New York: Princeton Architectural Press. 978-1568989693. \$17.

Please purchase the textbooks immediately. If you buy your books online, use priority shipping. Plan to keep your books, and use them accordingly in the future. **Don't rent.** The \$20 you'll save from renting or reselling them just isn't worth it in the long run.

I also recommend you purchase the latest edition of the publication and style manual relevant for your discipline: APA, MLA, IEEE, CSE, etc.

Contacting me

I'm eager to hear from you—office visits, emails, texts, and calls are all welcome. I don't use voice mail, though (it's not set up and I don't leave messages using it, either). So, if you call me and I don't pick up, please text or email me. I'll do the same. If you *really* want to leave a message, try 765-494-3730 (my program office).

Email: dilger@purdue.edu

Phone/text: 309-259-0328 (before 8:00pm, ideally; no voice mail)

Social media: cbdilger (Google Drive, Skype, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

Office: Heavilon 302A (hours tentatively TWR 9:00 to 11:00 and by appt.)

Web: <http://dtext.org/f17/309/>

About me

I study writing networks, writing programs, and writing transfer, which is the motivation of skills, knowledge, and experience from one context in a second. I'm also the co-director of [Crow, the Corpus & Repository of Writing](#), a web-based archive of writing and teaching materials designed for research and professional development. Besides teaching and research, I am director of [Introductory Composition at Purdue](#), supervising the TAs and lecturers who teach English 106 and 108. I'm lucky to enjoy my work very much, but I also like renovating my house, running, cycling, and watching college football. I'm very happy to be at Purdue and I hope you are too.

After eleven years at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois, I moved here in July 2014 with my bride Erin Easterling and my grrrls Madelyn (12) and Amelia (9). Erin is now a digital media producer for the College of Engineering. Before moving to Illinois, we lived in Gainesville, Florida, where I earned my PhD in English from the University of Florida in 2003. Before and during graduate school, I worked at two small advertising agencies, two newspapers, worked as a technical writer for Florida's Department of Agricultural Engineering and was co-owner of a software company specializing in internationalization.

Assignments

A few minor assignments will complement these. See the course web site for detailed assignments. Total points for each assignment are noted.

1. **Redesign portfolio. (250 points).** Redesign a small portfolio of found documents using hard copy and electronic tools. Annotate your designs to describe your thinking.
2. **Semester project. (500 points).** Complete a theoretical project which examines issues in computing and design in relevant research, or an implementation project which engages them through problem-solving.
3. **Class participation (150 points).** Discuss readings, participate in group work, and complete other activities. Evaluated twice: weeks 1–5 (50 pts), weeks 6–16 (100 pts).

4. **Reading responses. (100 points).** Write brief responses to the readings which show your careful engagement and prepare you for coursework.

Guide to success

1. Talk to me. If you write or call and don't hear back, try again.
2. Get help from me, others, and/or the Writing Lab if you need it.
3. Use the [detailed course schedule](#) to plan your work and better engage the readings.
4. Read carefully, early, and often. Always bring your texts to class.
5. Take notes in class and on the readings.
6. Use a laptop or your phone in class as needed—but keep your focus.
7. Participate as often as you can.
8. Be nice, honest, and respectful in class and when working in the community on class projects. Take care of classroom spaces.
9. Be on time for class and appointments. If you have to be late, enter class as quietly as possible. If you have to miss an appointment, please let me know.
10. Begin work on the projects immediately.
11. Ask if you need more time for any assignment—in advance if possible. Be aware I may say “no,” especially late in the semester.
12. Keep everything (drafts, notes, redos). Be prepared to show your work.

Policies

For convenience, live links are available in the PDF version of the syllabus on the course web site.

1. **Academic honesty is required.** All academic honesty violations will be reported and will result in a failing grade for the assignment and likely the course. See <https://www.purdue.edu/odos/academic-integrity/>.
2. **Accommodations for special learning needs are gladly arranged.** Please contact me to make an appointment to discuss any accommodations. If possible, please do this immediately. As per Purdue policy and Federal law, you must initiate contact with me and the Disability Resource Center; I cannot do so. See <https://www.purdue.edu/studentsuccess/specialized/drc/>.
3. **Active participation is required.** Reading course texts and participating continually is required. You must buy the assigned texts, do the readings, and come to class ready to talk about them. If you come to class without required texts, you will be marked absent.
4. **Attendance is expected.** If you miss more than four classes, your final grade will be reduced by one-half letter for every subsequent absence. Absences for bereavement (as per Purdue policy), or for other circumstances which I agree are unavoidable, will not count against this total. However, if you miss more than eight classes, for whatever reason, I will recommend you drop the course. See <http://www.purdue.edu/advocacy/students/absences.html>.

5. **Class cancellations and emergencies sometimes happen.** Please check your email before heading to class. If I cancel class, I'll notify in advance if I can. If class has to be cancelled due to weather or another emergency, or if an emergency occurs during classes, we'll follow Purdue's procedures and notifications from Purdue ALERT. We will discuss emergency procedures several times in the first weeks of classes. See <http://www.purdue.edu/emergency/>.
6. **Ethical and professional conduct is required.** I expect academic honesty, collegiality in class, and professionalism when working with others—especially in community engagement work. Purdue's non-discrimination policies apply to all classes and course activities. Everyone in our class should be treated with respect, grace, and common decency. See http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html.
7. **Feedback about the course is welcome any time.** Just drop me a line. If you want to be anonymous, put a note in my mailbox in Heavilon Hall 324. Or contact Professional Writing director Dr. Michael Salvo if you feel better speaking with someone else about a course-related issue.
8. **Grading uses a power of ten scale.** A=100–90, B=89–80, etc. Keep all graded assignments, and track your own grades. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have a question about a grade I assign. See "Grading" below for more.
9. **Mind all deadlines.** I don't accept late work, unless you have prior permission, or unless extreme circumstances warrant. In-class work cannot be made up; we'll have enough it that occasionally missing or botching it won't hurt your grade. For major assignments, if you need extra time to meet a deadline, please ask. I'm usually happy to give you more time—if you ask in advance when possible and explain how extra time will be mutually beneficial.
10. **Your privacy is important to me.** I don't want to know your PUID or Social Security numbers. Please don't put them on your assignments or in emails. In compliance with relevant privacy laws (FERPA), Purdue requires that I discuss grades with you in confidence, which means they cannot be emailed. Also, I may ask you to move a conversation from class or the hallway to a more private location.
11. **All Purdue policies apply.** See http://www.purdue.edu/studentregulations/student_conduct/.

Grading

1. I keep an electronic gradebook on Blackboard. Even so, please track your own grades. If you think I've made a mistake, or evaluated your work unfairly, please let me know. I am happy to re-evaluate your work.
2. Academic honesty violations will result in an F grade (1%) for the assignment. Severe violations will result in a final course grade of F as well. All suspected violations are reported.
3. Grades of "Incomplete" are only given in the case of military service, documented medical emergency, or documented death in the family.

4. The table at below left shows the points per assignment. Drop a zero to see the percentage of your final grade each assignment represents (e.g. 100 pts = 10%). This works for milestones, too.
5. The table at below right shows how I figure grades:
- I use the “Normal %” to figure the points you earn for an assignment of a given “Letter” grade. For example, a “B+” on a 50 point assignment earns you 44 points (88% of 50).
 - For drafts, I often assign pass-fail grades based on engagement with assignment objectives.
 - “Point range” shows how final grades are assigned. I do not assign D+ or D– grades.

Assignment	Points
Redesign portfolio	250
Semester project	500
Class participation	150
Reading responses	100
Total	1000

Letter	Normal %	Point range
A	95	1000-930
A-	91	929-900
B+	88	899-870
B	85	869-830
B-	81	829-800
C+	78	799-770
C	75	769-730
C-	71	729-700
D	65	699-600
F	50	599-0

Overview calendar

See the [course web site](#) for an [up to date, detailed schedule](#) with specific prompts about readings, activities, and assignments. Please use it to keep up with the reading and to make class most effective for you.

Week	Summary	Activities
1	Introductions all around	Purchase texts; begin readings & responses.
2	Principles of design	
3	Grid design	Redesign portfolio catalog & SFD.
4	Type & design	
5	Designing with personas	Redesign portfolio draft; First participation evaluation.
6	Introduction to testing	
7	Testing in depth	Semester project prospectus.
8	Designing with prototypes	
9	Studio week I	Semester project SFD.
10	Spring break	No assignments or activities.
11	Review week I	Readings TBD.
12	Testing in action	Semester project draft & testing plan.
13	Type & design II	
14	Ethics of design	
15	Grid design II	Semester project testing report & update.
16	Review week II	Readings TBD.
17	Studio week II	Second participation evaluation.
EX	Exam week	Final semester project & memo of transmittal; final redesign portfolio & memo.

Syllabus updated 2018-01-07. See <http://dtext.org/s18/309/> for most up to date version.