

# Sp19 - 2-DESIGNING TEXT ECOLOGIES (43455)

## Course Policies: RHE 330c, Designing Text Ecologies (Unique # 43455)

### Course Description

How do people use texts to communicate and solve problems in organizations - and how can we help them improve? In this class, you'll learn how to answer that question. You'll design and conduct a field study of an organization, watching actual people communicate and solve actual problems. You'll analyze the results, generating a model of how they communicate and where their solutions do and don't work. Finally, you'll design a text that will help them fix their problems.

### Instructor

Clay Spinuzzi, [clay.spinuzzi@utexas.edu](mailto:clay.spinuzzi@utexas.edu)

### Texts

Spinuzzi, [Topsight 2.0 Links to an external site.](#)

Online readings in Canvas

### Class location and hours

TTh 11am-12:30pm in PAR 6

### Instructor's office hours

TTh 9-10:30am and by appointment in PAR 17

### Projects

- Project 1: Designing a study of an organization (20%)
- Project 2: Conducting the study of the site (25%)
- Project 3: Modeling the study results (25%)
- Project 4: Recommending a solution (20%)
- Project 5: Designing an intervention (10%)

### Attendance

You are allowed four unexcused absences. The fifth absence will cause you to fail the course. Excused absences include religious holidays, family emergencies, and illnesses.

If you are going to be absent, you need to contact me before the absence or as soon as you can after the absence, and bring documentation if you are going to be absent for medical reasons.

I tend to email students who are getting close to their limit in absences. Check your email regularly, especially if you have missed several classes.

### **Late Assignments and Drafts**

Turn in any assignment—essays, drafts, etc.—at the beginning of the class period that they are due. If your Project 1-4 is late, I will lower it one letter grade for each calendar day that it is late. I will not accept late Project 5s, which are due on the last class day.

Short, out-of-class assignments are not accepted late. You can not make up in-class work.

I do not allow extensions on projects. If your project is not completed by the due date, you may need to decide whether to hand it in late or to hand the incomplete project in on time and revise it once you receive feedback (see below).

### **Revising Projects**

Revision is an important part of writing classes. In this class, you'll be revising your drafts in response to peer review and instructor's comments before you turn in the final draft of each project.

I will also accept revisions for Projects 1-4. You can revise these projects for an improvement of up to a quarter of the percentage points you lost. For instance:

- If you received a 60%, you lost 40%. You can revise up to 10%.  $60+10=70$ .
- If you received a 70%, you lost 30%. You can revise up to 7.5%.  $70+7.5=77.5$ .
- If you received an 80%, you lost 20%. You can revise up to 5%.  $80+5=85$ .
- If you received a 90%, you lost 10%. You can revise up to 2.5%.  $90+2.5=92.5$ .

Remember:

- Revisions will be due one week after you receive feedback on a project.
- I cannot allow revisions for Project 5.

### **Plagiarism and Collusion**

See the Department of Rhetoric and Writing's statement on plagiarism and collusion at <http://www.drw.utexas.edu/first-year/writing/plagiarism>.

Here's what you can do to cover yourself against plagiarism or collusion:

- At any stage of your writing, keep your drafts, notes, papers, and research materials. If a question of plagiarism arises, you'll have a paper trail. (In addition to protecting you in this course, paper trails will also protect you in a variety of other academic, public, and work-related contexts.)
- Don't use editing services. Don't ask anyone, even family or friends, to edit your paper or help you write it. You need to do that work yourself.
- If you need additional help with your writing, contact the University Writing Center, the University of Texas Learning Center (UTLC), Student Judicial Services, or other

official University organizations. These organizations are trained to help you without colluding in plagiarism.

- Last but not least, ask me if you have any questions about honesty.

## Grading

Class attendance will not be used to determine the grade, except that missing five absences will cause you to fail the course.

We will not have a final exam.

Plus/minus grades will be assigned for the final grade. I'll follow the scale below (which is the Canvas default) to assign final grades. Final grades will not be rounded.

<b>%</b>	<b>Letter grade</b>
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
<60	F

## Writing Flag

This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

## Ethics and Leadership Flag

This course carries the Ethics and Leadership flag. Ethics and Leadership courses are

designed to equip you with skills that are necessary for making ethical decisions in your adult and professional life. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments involving ethical issues and the process of applying ethical reasoning to real-life situations.

### Independent Inquiry Flag

This course carries the Independent Inquiry flag. Independent Inquiry courses are designed to engage you in the process of inquiry over the course of a semester, providing you with the opportunity for independent investigation of a question, problem, or project related to your major. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from the independent investigation and presentation of your own work.

### Email Notification Policy

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

### Special Needs

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD).

## Course Summary:

Date	Details	
Tue Jan 22, 2019	Introduction to RHE 330c; introduction to Project 1	11 am to 12:30pm
Thu Jan 24, 2019	Field studies and writing; Read Topsight 2.0 Ch.1-2; Spinuzzi 2010	11 am to 12:30pm
Tue Jan 29, 2019	RHE 330c: study design and protections; Topsight 2.0 Ch.3-4; Belmont report	11 am to 12:30pm
Thu Jan 31, 2019	RHE 330c: Gaining permission and preparing to study;	11 am to 12:30pm

Date	Details
	Topsight 2.0 Ch.5-6
Tue Feb 5, 2019	Peer review P1
Thu Feb 7, 2019	RHE 330c: Observations; Topsight 2.0 Ch.7; McCarthy et al RHE 330c: Turn in P1; assign P2 <a href="#">Project 1: Designing a study of a site</a>
Tue Feb 12, 2019	RHE 330c: Interviews and artifacts; Topsight Ch.8-9
Thu Feb 14, 2019	RHE 330c: Other data; Ch.10; Spinuzzi 2012
Tue Feb 19, 2019	RHE 330c: Member Checks and Triangulation; Topsight 2.0 Ch. 11-12; Teston
Thu Feb 21, 2019	RHE 330c: Coding; Topsight 2.0 Ch.13; discuss Teston and Propen & Schuster in terms of coding
Tue Feb 26, 2019	RHE 330c: Writing the interim report; Topsight 2.0 Ch.14
Thu Feb 28, 2019	RHE 330c: workshop the interim report
Tue Mar 5, 2019	RHE 330c: Turn in P2; assign P3; Introduction to models <a href="#">Project 2: Conducting the study at the site</a>
Thu Mar 7, 2019	RHE 330c: Resource maps and handoff chains; Topsight 2.0 Ch.15-17; Gygi and Zachry
Tue Mar 12, 2019	RHE 330c: Triangulation tables; Topsight 2.0 Ch.18; turn in drafts of resource maps and handoff chains
Thu Mar 14, 2019	RHE 330c: Breakdown tables; Topsight 2.0 Ch.19; turn in drafts of triangulation tables

Date	Details
Tue Mar 19, 2019	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK
Thu Mar 21, 2019	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK
Tue Mar 26, 2019	RHE 330c: activity systems; Topsight 2.0 Ch.20
Thu Mar 28, 2019	Activity systems, part 2
Tue Apr 2, 2019	RHE 330c: activity networks; Topsight 2.0 Ch.21
Thu Apr 4, 2019	RHE 330c: Topsight tables; Topsight 2.0 Ch.22-23; turn in drafts of micro and macro models (activity systems, activity networks, breakdown tables)
Tue Apr 9, 2019	RHE 330c: Peer review P3
Thu Apr 11, 2019	RHE 330c: Turn in P3; Assign P4; Read Topsight 2.0 Ch.24
	<a href="#">Project 3: Modeling the study results</a>
Tue Apr 16, 2019	RHE 330c: From findings to recommendations; Topsight 2.0 Ch.25
Thu Apr 18, 2019	RHE 330c: Writing the recommendation report; Topsight 2.0 Ch.26
Tue Apr 23, 2019	RHE 330c: Workshop P4

Date	Details
Thu Apr 25, 2019	RHE 330c: Turn in P4; Assign P5; Topsight 2.0 Ch.27-28; how to collaborate <hr/> <a href="#">Project 4: Recommending a solution</a>
Tue Apr 30, 2019	Working toward design solutions: Read Topsight 2.0 Ch.29-30; Evia & Patriarcha
Thu May 2, 2019	Working toward design solutions: Read Topsight 2.0 Ch.31-33
Tue May 7, 2019	RHE 330c: Workshop P5
Thu May 9, 2019	RHE 330c: Turn in P5; post-mortem; class evaluations <hr/> <a href="#">Project 5: Designing an intervention (group project)</a>