

# ENGL 2123-202: Rhetoric of Visuals and Infographics

Spring 2020 (8:00 Tor R, 9:30am to 10:50am)

## Syllabus

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Hybrid format In order to provide space to socially distance students, the onsite class has been split into two with half of the students assigned to attend on Tuesday each week, and half to attend on Thursday each week. More details are posted to D2L.

Office hours Tues. noon to 3:00pm  
Thurs. noon to 2:00pm

Other hours by appointment

Course description A theoretical and practical inquiry into visual rhetoric and infographics, the visual display of information. Students learn how images are used to communicate and persuade; how culture influences the creation, delivery, and interpretation of visual messages; and how this knowledge can be applied to the creation, arrangement, and delivery or display of visual information, data, and evidence.

Student learning outcomes

1. Students will understand and apply the principles of visual rhetoric in their analysis of and justification for design decisions.
2. Students will understand many of the ethical, legal, cultural, and economic issues that impact the creation, interpretation, and use of visual messages
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply skills needed to conduct research and/or engage in creative activities.
4. Students will be able to communicate analyses, interpretations, and significance of research through variable media.
5. Students will collaborate with peers/faculty and learn to address real-world problems, answer real world questions.
6. Students will develop and apply design, teambuilding, and management skills to evaluating, researching, creating and presenting visual information and arguments.
7. students will synthesize course readings, discussions, and assignments in a team project

Upon completion of this course, students will have demonstrated the following Texas Core Curriculum Core Objectives:

*Critical Thinking Skills*, to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information. Learning activities and measurements: Completion of individual and team critical analyses/redesign and data visualization assignments.

*Communication Skills*, to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication. Learning activities and measurements: Class and team discussions, completion of course writing and design assignments, and class presentations, both individual and team-based.

*Teamwork Skills*, to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal. Learning activities and measurements: Students will employ skills in team building, design, and project management in a collaborative data visualization project which includes the creation of an infographic based on the team's research, an oral presentation, an end-of-project report, and team-member evaluations.

*Personal Responsibility Skills*, to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making. Learning activities and measurements: Students will demonstrate these skills in the individual and team critical analyses of infographics and the data visualization assignments and the completion of team member evaluations.

Required course texts Williams, Robin. *The Non-Designer's Design Book*. Peachpit, 2015. [4<sup>th</sup> edition]  
Wong, Donna M. *The Wall Journal Guide to Information Graphics*. Norton, 2013.

Assignments	<b>Individual assignments</b>	
	• Critical analysis and redesign 1	5
	• Critical analysis and redesign 2	10
	• Infographic dos and don'ts (flyer & presentation)	10
	• MLA/APA citations	5
	• Class demographics bar chart assignment	5
	• Editing quizzes	10
	• Research report w/graphic (related to team project)	15
	• Celebration of Scholarship reflection essay	10
		<b>70 individual points</b>
	<b>Team assignments</b>	
	• Data visualization project proposal	10
	• Written report w/ team created infographics	10
	• Class presentation of project w/ infographics	5
		<b>25 team points</b>
	<b>Team member evaluations</b>	<b>5 evaluation points</b>
		<b>100 total points</b>

Grading system A = 100—90%  
B = 89—80%  
C = 79—70  
D = 69—60%  
F = <60%

Late submission All assignments will be due on dates assigned. **No late work will be accepted.** Students falling two assignments behind are subject to administrative withdrawal from the course by the instructor.

Absentee policy Attendance is taken at the beginning of class: students who arrive late need to notify the instructor at the end of that class session of their attendance.

Negative points: Points are deducted against the final grade for unexcused absences:

- -0 points for 2 absences
- -2 points for 3 absences
- -4 points for 4 absences
- Two tardies (i.e., arriving 5-14 minutes late) are counted as one absence.

- Arriving 15 minutes late or leaving 15 minutes before class ends counts as an absence.
- **After 5 unexcused absences, a student is subject to being dropped from the course with grade of "F."**

E-mail format	When sending emails to the instructor, a student should include in the subject line his or her last name, course, and the content of the email (e.g., Jones 2123 question).
Academic dishonesty	All students are expected to adhere to the Midwestern State University Student Honor Creed when completing any work for this course. When using the ideas of other unpublished and published sources, students must use accepted documentation conventions (i.e., MLA). See the MSU Student Handbook (PDF attached to Course Documents in D2L) to read the Student Honor Creed and the university's policy on academic dishonesty.
Professionalism	Members of this class are expected to treat one another with courtesy, professionalism, and respect. Repeated unprofessional, rude, or inappropriate behavior can result in 50-100 points being deducted from a student's final grade for the course per instance of such behavior.
Cell phone use	<b>Cell phones and earbuds need to be put away during the class session</b> (e.g., in a pocket, purse, or backpack). If you receive a call or text to which you need to read or respond, please leave the room to do so. If you are using an e-text, please access the e-text on the class computer—not on a cellphone. <b>Earbuds are not allowed in class</b> unless you have obtained permitted use through Disability Services and provided the instructor the necessary documentation.
Research and creative opportunities at MSU	Enhancing Undergraduate Research Endeavors and Creative Activities (EURECA) is a program that provides opportunities for undergraduate students to engage in high-quality research and creative activities with faculty. EURECA provides incentives and funding through a system that supports faculty and students in a cooperative research process. For more information contact the Office of Undergraduate Research, (940) 397-6274 or <a href="mailto:eureca@msutexas.edu">eureca@msutexas.edu</a> . Or visit the <a href="#">EURECA website</a> .
Americans with Disabilities Act	<p>Midwestern State University is committed to providing equal access for qualified students with disabilities to all university courses and programs, and by law, all students with disabilities are guaranteed a learning environment that provides reasonable accommodation of their disabilities.</p> <p>This guarantee is provided through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA reads: "No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subject to discrimination by any such entity."</p> <p>To obtain disability support services, students must be accepted for admission to Midwestern State University, complete a request for services form available through the Office of Disability Services, and provide current documentation from a qualified professional (such as a licensed physician, psychologist, audiologist, etc.) diagnosing the disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.</p> <p>If the instructor does not have proper notification, she will expect the same performance from each student enrolled in the course. For more information visit <a href="#">Disability Services at Midwestern State University</a></p>



## Assignment Schedule

Textbook abbreviations: *Non-Designer Design Book* (NDDDB) and *The Wall Journal Guide to Information Graphics* (WSG)

Week	Day/Date	Assignment and/or Activity
Week 1	TR Jan 12,14	Introduction to the course and to each other NDDDB introduction to principles of design Set up Google drive folder for class activities
Week 2	TR Jan 19,21	Have read NDDDB Ch1 Introduction, Ch2 Proximity, Ch3 Alignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to class, in Google drive, post definitions of “proximity” and “alignment” as a design principle described by Williams.</li> <li>• Bring to class an informative flyer or picture of an informative flyer for redesign assignment</li> <li>• Discuss and send a document to WEPA printer on campus</li> </ul> <p><b>Quiz 1.</b> Subject/Verb Identification. (Quiz will open on Monday, Jan 18 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Jan 24, at 11:30 p.m.)</p>
Week 3	TR Jan 26,28	Have read NDDDB Ch4 Repetition, Ch5 Contrast and Ch6 Review of Design Principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior to class, post your definition of “repetition” and “contrast” as a design principles</li> <li>• Workshop Redesign 1</li> </ul> <p><b>Quiz 2.</b> Phrases/Clauses/Fragments. (Quiz will open on Monday, Jan 25 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Jan 31, at 11:30 p.m.)</p> <p><b>Due: Critical Analysis and Redesign 1, upload to Dropbox next Sunday Jan 31, before 11:30 pm (original flyer plus your redesign and critique)</b></p>
Week 4	TR Feb 2, 4	Have read NDDDB Ch7 Design with Color, Ch8 Extra Tips & Tricks, and Ch9 Essentials of Typography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the research process</li> <li>• Workshop critical redesign 2</li> </ul> <p><b>Quiz 3.</b> Comma Splices and Fused Sentences. (Quiz will open on Monday, Feb 1 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Feb 7, at 11:30 p.m.)</p>
Week 5	TR Feb 9, 11	Have read NDDDB Ch10 Type (& Life), Ch11 Categories, and Ch12 Type Contrasts Workshop critical redesign 2 <p><b>Quiz 4.</b> Subject/Verb Agreement (Quiz will open on Monday, Feb 8, at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Feb 14 at 11:30 p.m.)</p> <p><b>Due: Critical Analysis and Redesign 2 uploaded to Dropbox next Sunday Feb. 14, before 11:30 pm (original flyer plus your redesign and critique)</b></p>

Week	Day/Date	Assignment and/or Activity
Week 6	TR Feb 16, 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss infographic dos and don'ts presentation assignments</li> <li>• Sign up for infographic presentation</li> <li>• Discuss conducting research, possible topics</li> <li>• Discuss MLA/APA citation assignment due next week</li> </ul> <p><b>Quiz 5. Pronoun-antecedent Agreement.</b> (Quiz will open on Monday, Feb 15 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Feb 21, at 11:30 p.m.)</p>
Week 7	TR Feb 23, 25	<p><b>Due: MLA/APA citation assignment due, printed at beginning of class (T or R depending on day you attend).</b></p> <p>Have read in <i>WSG Infographic Dos and Don'ts</i> Introduction and The Basics (1-29):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Charting</li> <li>○ Numbers</li> <li>○ Data integrity</li> <li>○ Data richness</li> </ul> <p>Discuss infographic dos and don'ts presentation assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Open with a reading/content quiz question</li> <li>○ Handout saved as a pdf</li> </ul> <p>Watch and discuss Storytelling with Data video (27min.)</p> <p><b>Quiz 6. Pronoun Case.</b> (Quiz will open on Monday, Feb 22 at 5:00 a.m., and close on Sunday, Feb 28, at 11:30 p.m.)</p>
Week 8	TR Mar 2, 4	<p><b>Individual presentations begin: upload handout to Dropbox by 5:00 pm the day prior to your presentation. (Two-three student presentations each class period)</b></p> <p>Have read WSG (30-43):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fonts: Legibility P1</li> <li>○ Fonts: Topography in charts P1</li> <li>○ Color: Basics P2</li> <li>○ Color: Palettes P2</li> <li>○ Color in charts P3</li> <li>○ Color chart templates P3</li> <li>○ Color Scale application P4</li> <li>○ Coloring for the color blind P4</li> <li>○ Lines: Height and weight P5</li> <li>○ Lines: Y-axis increments P5</li> <li>○ Lines: Legends and labels P6</li> <li>○ Lines: Clean lines Clear Signals P6</li> </ul> <p>Discuss team formation for major team research project. Note topic posting assignment due next week.</p> <p><b>Quiz 7. Commas</b> (Quiz will open on Monday, Mar 1, at 5:00 a.m. and close on Sunday, Mar 7, at 11:30 p.m.)</p>

Week	Day/Date	Assignment and/or Activity
Week 9	TR Mar 9, 11	<p><b>Prior to class, post one (or two) possible research project topics to the Discussion Board with attachments or links to <i>at least</i> four sources related to each topic</b> (each team-member needs to include at least two sources.)</p> <p>Have read WSG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lines: Left-right y-axis scales P7</li> <li>○ Lines: Comparable scales P7</li> <li>○ Vertical bars: Form and shading P8</li> <li>○ Vertical bars: Zero baseline P8</li> <li>○ Vertical bars: Multiple bars and legends P9</li> <li>○ Vertical bars: Broken bars and outliers P9</li> <li>○ Horizontal bars: Ordering and grouping P10</li> <li>○ Horizontal bars: Negative bars P10</li> </ul> <p>Collect class demographic information and review class demographic assignment</p> <p><b>Teams formed: Create and share a team Google drive folder and document.</b></p> <p><b>Quiz 8.</b> Semicolons and colons. (Quiz will open on Monday, Mar 8, at 5:00 a.m. and close on Sunday, Mar 14, at 11:30 p.m.)</p>
Week 10	TR Mar 16, 18	<p><b>Due: Class demographics bar chart assignment due, printed, at beginning of class</b></p> <p>In class, in Google drive team folder, outline Team Project proposal.</p> <p>Have read WSG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Charting your course: Work plan P11</li> <li>○ Charting your course: Communicating progress P11</li> <li>○ Percentages: don't average percentages P12</li> <li>○ Copy Style in Charts P12</li> <li>○ Pies: Slicing and dicing P13</li> <li>○ Pies: Dressing up the slices P13</li> <li>○ Pies: Slicing a slice P14</li> <li>○ Pies: Proportional pies P14</li> </ul> <p><b>Quiz 9. Parallelism</b> (Quiz will open on Monday Mar 15, at 5:00 a.m. and close on Sunday, Mar 21 at 11:30 p.m.)</p> <p><b>Due: Team data visualization project proposal w/ Gantt chart due, uploaded to Dropbox by Sunday, Mar 21, before 11:30 pm</b></p>

Week	Day/Date	Assignment and/or Activity
Week 11	TR Mar 23, 25	<p>Have read WSG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pictograms: choice of icons P15</li> <li>○ Pictograms: Comparing quantities P15</li> <li>○ Tables: Grid lines P16</li> <li>○ Tables: Numbers, alignment and ordering P16</li> <li>○ Tricky Situations: Missing data P17</li> <li>○ Tricky situations: Big numbers, small change P17</li> </ul> <p>Team workshop View: Preparing Effective Oral and Poster Presentations March 25 5:00-6:00 pm in Zoom (This will be recorded for later viewing.)</p> <p><b>Quiz 10. Apostrophes.</b> Quiz will open Monday Mar 22, at 5:00 a.m. and close on Sunday, Mar 28 at 11:30 p.m.</p>
Week 12	TR Mar 30, Apr 1	<p>Have read WSG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tricky situations: Comparable scales ant vs. elephant P18</li> <li>○ Tricky situations: Coloring with black ink P18</li> <li>○ Maps: Mapping and shading P19</li> <li>○ Do the Math: Mean, medium, mode P19</li> </ul> <p><b>Entire class meets in ZOOM on Tuesday at 9:30 am: No classes on Thursday and Friday (Holiday)</b></p> <p><b>Due: Individual research progress report, uploaded by Wed Mar 31, before 11:30 pm</b></p>
Week 13	TR Apr 6, 8	<p>Team workshop</p> <p>Attend: Online Celebration of Scholarship (April 7-9). The forum will be a virtual symposium hosted on ForagerOne.com. The links will be posted here once they are set. Open to the MSU Texas community.</p> <p><b>Due: Celebration of Scholarship reflection essay due, uploaded to dropbox by Sunday, April 11, before 11:30 pm</b></p>
Week 14	TR Apr 13, 15	Team workshop for final presentation
Week 15	TR Apr 20, 22	<p><b>Final presentations on T or R:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Final presentations uploaded by midnight prior to assigned class day (T or R)</b></li> <li>● <b>Final team written project due, uploaded by Thursday, April 22, 11:30 pm</b></li> <li>● <b>Team evaluations (survey tool) due by Friday, April 23, 11:30 pm</b></li> </ul> <p><b>April 23 Last day to withdraw from a course, 4:00 p.m. Drops after this date = "F"</b></p>
Week 16 Finals Week		<b>Grades posted</b>