

ENGL 3378.001: Document Design & Publishing	Spring 2026
Instructor: Dr. Manny Piña Office Location: Faculty Center 277 Office Hours: MWF 10:00 am-12:00 pm Instructor website Zoom meeting link	Class Time: MWF 9:00-9:50 am Classroom Location: CI 223 Email: manuel.pina@tamucc.edu Phone: (361) 825-2640 Detailed course calendar Course canvas

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Official Catalog Description: *Focuses on the integration of text and visual rhetoric, such as graphics, for all kinds of professional publications, including: technical documents, media, public relations pieces, and advertisements.*

Instructor Description: There is a popular (mis)conception that writing and rhetoric are mainly about...well...writing, as in text and words. This course challenges this idea and proceeds from the foundation that the visual, too, is rhetorical. This is not to say, however, that you can separate the visual rhetoric from other aspects of rhetoric. Instead, you cannot separate form from function, design from content. Therefore, this course will continue to develop you as writers and rhetoricians by layering theories of visual rhetorics with/in discursive rhetorics.

While this course is heavily underpinned by design theory, it is also a highly practical course. This course is predicated on *doing* as much as *thinking* about document design. You, therefore, will be required to not only think “around” complex design scenarios, but also bring that (meta)cognition to bear in real and concrete ways via the course writing assignments.

This is admittedly difficult conceptual work, but it is essential to remember that you are not alone in this course. Writing and designing are inherently social activities, so collaboration is a key aspect of the course. The collaborative and service elements of this course are intensive and intended to be challenging. However, everything about the course is also designed to help you successfully navigate the challenges of working with/in collaborative writing settings, which you inevitably will encounter as a soon-to-be professional.

Finally, my job is to work *with* you. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me as a resource whenever you need it. Feel free to contact me to discuss assignments, the readings, or just if you need someone to listen. I am also happy to answer your questions outside of office hours via email at manuel.pina@tamucc.edu.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are one way the university and instructors measure what you should know, do, and value at the end of a course. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Apply basic graphic, layout, and typography techniques to enhance the readability and visual appeal of documents.
- Explore and articulate the role of visual rhetoric in creating and using documents.
- Use professional desktop publishing software to create documents for print and online.

These university SLOs also support workforce outcomes for technical and professional communicators. The 21st-century technical communicator creates documents that communicate effectively, persuasively, and concisely. Specifically, the technical communicator:

- Solves problems to help achieve an organization's goals
- Addresses a particular user/purpose/task
- Acquires, evaluates, and applies core knowledge and designs content
- Integrates cultural and ethical considerations
- Promotes collaboration
- Incorporates appropriate combination(s) of text or graphics
- Uses appropriate tools/media technology

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS & MATERIALS

- Anton, K. & DeJarld, T. (2019). *Adobe InDesign CC classroom in a book*, 2nd Edition. Adobe Press.
- A computer with reliable Internet access and a reliable office software suite.
 - TAMU-CC offers students free access to [Office 365](#).
- Access to TAMU-CC's Learning Management System (LMS) is available through [Canvas](#).
- Access to synchronous meetings is available through [Zoom](#).
- Visit TAMU-CC's [Island Online](#) to determine computer requirements for using Canvas.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Design analysis	200 pts
Professional Document Re/Design	250 pts
<i>Windward Review</i> client project & portfolio (Collaborative)	350 pts
Adobe <i>InDesign</i> weekly assignments	100 pts
Attendance	100 pts
Total Possible Points for Semester	1000 pts

IMPORTANT COURSE DATES

The following is a list of major assignment due dates for this course. Please note that this list only includes due dates for major writing assignments. For a more detailed description of the course sequence, please see the [Detailed Course Calendar](#) (also linked above in the syllabus front matter).

- **Design Analysis:** due 02.15.2026 @ 11:59 pm in Canvas
- **Professional Document Re/Design:** due 03.22.2026 @ 11:59 pm in Canvas
- ***Windward Review* client project & portfolio:** due 05.04.2025 @ 11:59 pm in Canvas
- **Attendance:** (See below for grading policy). Grades for attendance will be updated weekly in Canvas.

Important note: The dates of assigned readings (available on the [Detailed Course Calendar](#)) and assignment due dates are subject to change. The instructor will communicate any changes to the class in advance.

GRADING SCALE

The scale below will determine final letter grades; it shows the relationship between number grades and letter grades. To ensure fairness, all numbers are absolute and will not be rounded up or down at any stage. For example, a B will be inclusive of all scores of 800.000 through 899.9.

A	900.0-999.9 pts
B	800.0-899.9 pts
C	700.0-799.9 pts

D	650.0-699.9 pts
F	< 649.9 pts

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

University policy statements are available for [review and download by clicking here](#).

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS POLICIES

The College of Liberal Arts policy statements are available for [review by clicking here](#).

COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

- This is a small class.
- My approach to the classroom is highly collaborative and community-oriented, favoring activities such as discussions and small-group work.

These two things mean that every absence affects what is possible during a given class meeting. If I design a lesson for 11 students and only five are in attendance, then the lesson is lost—for everyone. This means that, especially in a class like this, your attendance is crucial; when you miss classes, **it not only adversely affects you but also hinders our ability to function effectively as a community of learners.**

That being said, I understand that life can be unpredictable, and you may not be able to attend every class meeting throughout the semester. I want to incentivize responsibility through a socially just approach to class attendance. Therefore, attendance will be a portion of your grade this semester—not large enough to torpedo your overall grade, but sufficient enough to encourage the limiting of absences. Attendance will count for 10% of your overall grade in this course and will be graded as follows:

- ≤ 3 absences = full credit (100 pts)
- 4 absences = 90% (90 pts)
- 5 absences = 80% (80 pts)
- 6 absences = 70% (70 pts)
- 7 absences = 0 % (0 pts)

Important note: There is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. If you have a medical emergency or are experiencing extenuating circumstances, please contact me so that we can ensure it is properly documented with Student Services.

EXTRA CREDIT VS. REVISION

As a general rule, I do not assign extra credit opportunities. However, since all writing is essentially unfinished, your assigned grades on your writing assignments are likewise unfinished. That is to say, as your writing can always be improved, so too can your grade. If you are not satisfied with your grade even after one, two, or even three revisions, you can work to improve your grade as long as the writing itself also improves.

As long as you are in contact and contract with me about any given piece of writing, and that text continues to improve, so will your grade. This does not mean that you can look back on your grade a week before the semester ends and then decide to go back and revise assignment 1 for a higher grade. Revision needs to be a continual, timely, ongoing process, not a last-minute ditch effort to save your grade. **Any request to continue to revise a piece of writing for a higher grade must be initiated within 1 week of receiving the initial grade.** The focus of this course, and my primary concern, is your improvement as writers, not grades.

LATE WORK

I have intentionally assigned due dates for assignments. Work that is turned in late represents a significant disruption in both my and your workflows. Therefore, late work will not be accepted except in extenuating circumstances. What constitutes an extenuating circumstance is situation-dependent and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis between the instructor and the individual student.

My best advice: regularly communicate with me (as well as with your other professors). If you have trouble or lack experience with self-advocacy, please let me know, and I will work to equip you with strategies to enhance your self-efficacy.