

Course: WRIT 345
Term: Fall 2023
Section: 1

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Writing *with* Communities Assignment Sheet

Overview

In the final unit, we take what we have learned about how writing shapes and gets shaped by a community to partner with a campus organization and help them move their work forward. In this unit, we partner with the University of Mississippi Speaking Center (SC) to help them construct promotional documents and materials to promote a spring 2024 event at the university. The event commemorates a protest on Feb. 27, 1970 by Black students about their treatment on campus. This is the second event sponsored by the university that commemorates the students' demonstration. The first commemoration took place in February 2020.

To learn more about the demonstration and the response by the university in 1970, we will begin the unit by reading articles about it. We will also look at articles that get at some of the challenges involved in creating materials for a broad audience, or maybe more accurately multiple audiences.

Then, we will work through the design process:

1. We will meet with Speaking Center representatives to get a better sense of their needs. From this meeting we will create a design brief.
2. Next, we will conduct tutorials on the software that we will use to design the promotional materials.
3. Then, we will design mockups to present to our partner.
4. After receiving feedback, we will revise these materials.
5. Finally, we will write a transmittal letter and create a repository to deliver editable versions of these materials to our partner.

Goals & Objectives

There are a number of important goals embedded in this unit. Some relate to the university and its goals. Others relate to your professional goals and to the pedagogical goals for the course. I address those now because I believe that it's important to consider any concerns that you may have with providing labor for a local organization that you may never have heard of.

In terms of addressing the university's goals, our partnership with the Speaking Center dovetails with the University of Mississippi's institutional philosophy to "nurture excellence in [...] learning, creativity, and research" and to "devote its knowledge and abilities to serve the state and the world." Additionally, the partnership reflects the aims of the university's Flagship Constellation on Community Well-Being. These Flagship Constellations represent university-wide initiatives that leverage the university's intellectual and financial resources in order to address local, regional, and national issues. In particular, the Community Well-Being Constellation addresses issues related to local communities' "economies, personal health, environmental health, food security, housing, and infrastructure." Put simply, this partnership represents the work that the university administration feels is most valuable at this time, and the university feels that way

because these sorts of partnerships improve the university's reputation and the reputation of its alumni.

In terms of addressing your professional goals, our partnership provides you with hands-on experience in project management, professional research, problem solving, and designing documents. In sum, the partnership represents the sort of experiences that many employers are looking for when they hire interns or new employees as professional writers. Additionally, the community-engagement bend provides valuable experience for students interested in pursuing master's degrees in a number of different disciplines. Because the project is situated with a partner—albeit one on campus, it reflects how your academic work could have an impact beyond the classroom. Grad school admissions folks dig that stuff. This partnership provides you with an important real-world example of how you applied ideas from a class outside the classroom.

Finally, in terms of pedagogical goals, this partnership helps you consider community writing from the perspective of writing *with* the community as in a partnership where both parties benefit. In the first unit, we explored definitions of community writing, and we put the voices that we associate with our individual communities onto paper to share these communities with others who may be unfamiliar with them. In the second unit, we considered how writing, conceived broadly, can impact wider communities by developing podcasts on topics of your own interest related to ongoing community issues, specifically voting and electoral processes. In this final project, you get first-hand experience writing with a community. It asks that you balance your voice and identity with the voice and identity of the partner, the Speaking Center.

Deliverables

In completing this unit, you will have developed the following materials:

- A collaboratively composed design brief
- Individually composed promotional materials
- A collaboratively composed letter of transmittal that includes the promotional materials

Grades

This unit is worth 35% of your grade. Of that 35%, each component is worth 25%:

- Your reading responses and participation in partner meetings
- your contribution to the design brief
- your promotional materials
- your contribution to the transmittal letter and files

Design Brief Template

A design brief establishes clear expectations between a business and the designer. A design brief template cannot be a “one size fits all” because design projects vary so much, ranging from product innovation and improvement to service delivery, software development, and graphic design. Use this template as a starting point and modify as necessary.

Business name:

Client contact:

Contact number:

Due date for completion: <If you have any dependencies which make a particular start and end date critical make sure you communicate these before you brief a designer. You may need to negotiate with the designer depending on how in-demand they are and the complexity of the project. The due date for completion is when you expect to have the final, approved design in your hand, **ready for use.** >

Review date/s: <There should be at least one client review to ensure the design meets client expectations. You can also use this section to specify completion dates of other key stages.>

Budget: <Provide an idea of how much money you plan to spend. This enables the designer to be realistic when they provide options.>

Product/service/brand name: <Aim to reflect the purpose of the design project in its title. If it's in the public domain title may need to include branding.>

Key objectives: <Main business benefits of getting this design successfully delivered.>

Marketing objectives and target audience: <Detailed description of the target market and marketing approach. Include details such as occupation, gender ratio, average age, nationality/location, psychological demographic, lifestyle preferences, advertising and promotional plans, distribution etc.>

Regulatory issues: <Note any regulations which will impact the design e.g. product labelling laws.>

Scope: <detailed list of everything this project is expected to deliver.>

Not in scope: <Use this section to specify design elements that are out of scope e.g., if you're completing a web design project but don't want an email newsletter.>

Purpose and function: <Use this section if you are briefing a product designer. To be able to provide a workable design, the designer needs to know what the product is supposed to be able to do, who will be using it and in what circumstances. This information may be obvious to the inventor but still needs to be spelled out clearly for the designer.>

Format: <Use this section if you are briefing a graphic designer. Depending on how you plan to use the design(s) specify if it is for print or web, file format, file size, resolution or other attributes. For printed items tell the designer about the stock you plan to use as factors such as

absorbency can affect the final result and therefore the designer's approach.>

Design Project plan: <List the project milestones, what is needed to complete them and who is responsible.>

Attachments: <Provide anything you want to use e.g., existing logos, sketches of prototypes, examples of designs or products (as benchmarks or comparison), or competitors you need to stand out from. Specify requirements such as minimum resolutions for samples to be used in the final design.>

Measures of success: <How will you ensure the design is appropriate for your objectives and audience e.g., will you show samples to your potential customers, run surveys, etc.??>

Writing *with* Communities Calendar

Dates	Class Work	Homework
Week 11: 10/24 & 10/26	Unit 3 Intro and Podcast Draft Review	Read “Embracing the Messy Business of Learning” before class on 10/26. Read materials on the BSU protest and commemoration before class on 10/31.
Week 12: 10/31 & 11/2	Working <i>with</i> a Local Partner to Develop a Sense of Purpose: Dr. Moore’s visit/Finishing Design Brief	Response 9 due before class on 11/2. Finish design brief in class on 11/2. Look for examples of effective advertising on campus, and bring them to class on 11/7.
Week 13: 11/7 & 11/9	Canva Tutorial and In-Class Drafting	Response 10 due before class on 11/9.
Week 14: 11/14 & 11/16	Thanksgiving	No class
Week 15: 11/28 & 11/30	Review of Drafts with Partner/ Transmittal Letter, Course Recap, and Course Reflection	Revise your materials, finish the transmittal letter, and write your course reflection.
Finals Week 12/4—12/8	Revised Materials & Transmittal Letter Due 12/7 Course Reflection Due 12/7	