Syllabus: LTEC/CECS 6200
Message Design in Education
University of North Texas
Fall 2008, 08/25/2008 – 12/12/2008

Hybrid Course ● Matthews Hall 310 ● Thursdays, 5:30pm – 8:20pm ● 3 credits

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Office Hours:
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• By appointment
• Email any time and expect a response within 48 hours

Class Meeting Dates ........................................................................................................... 1
Course Description and Objectives ............................................................................................ 2
Course Platform and Basic Technical Requirements ................................................................. 2
Course Outline – Weekly Schedule ........................................................................................... 2
Readings and Resources .............................................................................................................. 4
Criteria for Assessment .............................................................................................................. 6
Special Notes and Policies .......................................................................................................... 9

Class Meeting Dates

1. Thursday, Aug. 28, 5:30-8:20pm (Introduction)
2. Thursday, Sept. 18, 5:30-8:20pm
3. Thursday, Oct. 16, 5:30-8:20pm (Mid-term paper/proposal presentation; Mid-term paper/proposal due by 11:59pm on Monday, Oct. 13)
4. Thursday, Nov. 6, 5:30-8:20pm
5. Thursday, Dec. 4, 5:30-8:20pm (Final Paper Presentation; Final Paper due by 11:59pm on Monday, Dec. 1)

Note: The proposals/papers for the course are recommended to submit to
   b. the ISTE NECC conference
      http://center.uoregon.edu/ISTE/NECC2009/program/themes.php by October 8, 2008, or
   c. other conference of interest
Course Description and Objectives

Catalog Description: Principles linking instructional conditions and learning outcomes. Relationship between learning theory and instructional practices in technology delivered instruction. Topics include motivation, perception, cognition, and attitude change.
Prerequisite(s): CECS 5200 and 5210

Course Objectives: The purpose of this course is to:
• understand the principles linking instructional conditions and learning outcomes
• develop a good understanding and critical thinking skills for message design to achieve instructional purposes
• understand the relationships between media, message design and learning outcomes
• develop research and writing skills as potential teacher researchers in the field

Course Platform and Basic Technical Requirements

This class will be mostly web-based, although 2 face-to-face meetings are highly recommended. The class will be composed of online readings, discussions, activities, assignments, and projects. There will be a mid-term essay paper and a final project. The final project can be done individually or collaboratively with one or two colleagues in the class.

The course will use Moodle (http://moodle.lt.unt.edu/) as a main platform. However, we will explore and experiment with as many other technology media as possible.

Course Outline -- Weekly Schedule

[Note: Subject to change based on students’ feedback]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units / Aspects</th>
<th>F2F Meetings &amp; Online Discussions (15+20=35 pts)</th>
<th>Topics &amp; Discussions</th>
<th>Readings and Resources</th>
<th>Activities and Assignments (30+30+5+5=70 pts)</th>
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</thead>
</table>
*Exploration and discussion: what is message design? What is included in message design? How do we know that the design helps learning?
*Research: what do we want to inquire? |

http://moodle.lt.unt.edu/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Discussion Type</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
<th>Assignment/Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 (Sept. 15-21)</td>
<td>Face-to-Face Meeting on Sept. 18</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*Experiment *Peer feedback (5 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 (Oct. 6-12)</td>
<td>Online Discussions Facilitator: Tebring</td>
<td>Oral vs. Written</td>
<td>*Ong, W. *Written and spoken: <a href="http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/word.html">http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/word.html</a></td>
<td>Mid-term paper/proposal due by 11:59pm on Monday, Oct. 13 (10 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 (Oct. 13-19)</td>
<td>Face-to-Face Meeting on Oct. 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Experiment *Peer feedback, revise, and submit the proposal to SITE conference by Oct. 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 (Oct. 20-26)</td>
<td>Online Discussions Facilitator: Said</td>
<td>Text vs. Images</td>
<td>*Textual analysis: <a href="http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/textan.html">http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/textan.html</a> *Visual image: <a href="http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/image.html">http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/image.html</a></td>
<td>Mid-term course feedback Due by Monday, Oct. 20 (5 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Meeting Details</td>
<td>Resource</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 (Oct. 27 – Nov. 2)</td>
<td>Online Discussions</td>
<td>Facilitator: Peemasak</td>
<td>Print vs. Digital</td>
<td>The futurist: <a href="http://www.wfs.org">http://www.wfs.org</a></td>
<td>Message design (deciding if qualitative or quantitative and designing instruments) (5 pts)</td>
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<td>11 (Nov. 3-9)</td>
<td>Face-to-Face Meeting on Nov. 6</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Experiments with classmates on research design (5 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 (Nov. 10-16)</td>
<td>Online Discussions</td>
<td>Facilitator: Buncha</td>
<td>Self-selected Readings</td>
<td>Peer feedback (5 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 (Nov. 17-23)</td>
<td>Online Discussions</td>
<td>Facilitator: Lin</td>
<td>Self-selected Readings</td>
<td>Full paper draft (5 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 24-30</td>
<td>Happy Thanksgiving Holiday!</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 (Dec. 1-7)</td>
<td>Face-to-Face Meeting on Dec. 4</td>
<td>Final Paper Presentation</td>
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<td>Final Paper due by 11:59pm on Monday, Dec. 1 (10 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 (Dec. 8-12)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Exam Week</td>
<td></td>
<td>If interested, revise paper to improve grade Due by Dec. 12 (to allow timely grade submission)</td>
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**Readings and Resources**

[note: All readings will be downloadable through a hyperlink or provided as a PDF file within Moodle course site]

**Required**


• Textual analysis: [http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/textan.html](http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/textan.html)
• Visual image: [http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/image.html](http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/image.html)
• Written and spoken: [http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/word.html](http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/word.html)

**Recommended:**


• Media influence: [http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/influ.html](http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/sections/influ.html) [This site lists some most important media theorists. I would encourage that you browse through each theorist and get a sense where they stand in terms of new media and technology.]
  • Daniel Chandler. Technological or Media Determinism. [http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/tecdet/tecdet.html](http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/tecdet/tecdet.html) [This article presents a good overview of various media arguments]
  • Roderick Munday: Marshall McLuhan declared that “the medium is the message.” What did he mean and does this notion have any value? [http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/ram0202.html](http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/ram0202.html)
• Daniela Lesley Evans: A Critical Examination of Claims Concerning The ‘Impact’ of Print http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/dle9701.html
• Instructional design models: http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~mryder/itc_data/idmodels.html [This site has a comprehensive list of instructional design models over the years. It also provides comparisons and contrast of the models. You should, however, use the site only as a reference. It is necessary to read some scholarly and original papers to have a good understanding of each model]
• CSCL: http://www.edb.utexas.edu/csclstudent/Dhsiao/theories.html
• Instructional condition: http://itec.sfsu.edu/social/ConditionsAll.cfm

Online learning environments to be examined:
• Wikipedia: http://www.wikipedia.org/
• Blogger: https://www.blogger.com/start
• Delicio: http://del.icio.us/
• MySpace: http://www.myspace.com/
• Flickr: http://flickr.com/
• YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/
• Second Life: http://secondlife.com/

Criteria for Assessment

Grading:
1. 20 points: Online participation (weekly discussion participation + one time facilitation for a week/topic)
2. 15 points: In-class participation
3. 30 points: Mid-term paper
4. 30 points: Final paper
5. 5 points: Course feedback
6. 5 points (extra): Permission for instructor to use class activities as a message design study

Grade Points:
• A = 90 and above
• B = 80 and above
• C = 70 and above
• D = 60 and above
• F = 59 and less
• Incomplete: Only given to those who encounter an emergency during the last 2-3 weeks of the semester. Please refer to the university policy for Incompletes.

Grading Policies:
All assignments are due on the date specified in the syllabus. 5 points will be subtracted for each day the assignment is late. If an assignment is later than one week, and prior arrangements have not been made, the assignment will not be accepted. **NOTE:** If you are overwhelmed or feeling behind, please contact me before the assignment is due to discuss options.

All students are expected to meet graduate standards by obtaining a "B" average on all assignments. This graduate standard indicates that the work was well done, complete, met stated criteria, represents a strong professional effort, and was turned in on time. Students seeking an "A" will need to demonstrate superior performance through critical thinking, exemplary products, positive and supportive interactions with colleagues and sustained active participation across course activities.

Any assignment that receives less than an 80% may be reworked and resubmitted. In order to gain additional points, participants must indicate what they would like to improve upon and how they plan to do so. Participants will then have one week following receipt of your assignment grade to make revisions.

**Reading and Class Discussions:**

**Activities and goals:** reading, participating and facilitating the discussions, making connections between the reading and practice, contributing original ideas, incorporating and responding to the other colleagues' perspectives.

I would like to mention that participating in online asynchronous discussions is in themselves message design in education. Not to mention asynchronous discussions are very important part of distance learning, more and more schools and teachers have incorporated discussion forums (and blogs and wikis) in their regular classroom teaching. Literature has indicated various benefits of communicating and having students communicate through asynchronous communication tools effectively. With this in mind, we have dual goals here: one is to have conversations about message design in education; another is to experience asynchronous written communication in a recursive manner.

Although we are not in a traditional classroom setting, I expect that all participants in this course progress at a similar pace (i.e., following the weekly schedule and assignments). I think this way, you won’t feel lost due to too much work at once, and that the whole class will benefit from more focused and synergistic discussions around the weekly topics.

I expect approximately two to three substantive, but succinct, postings from every participant on the discussion forum every two weeks. You should feel free to post your original comments or respond to the other colleagues. By substantive postings, I mean that you will need to back up your posting with your research and reading, together with your creative and spontaneous thoughts, whether you respond to a colleague or post an independent thought around the discussed topic. I don’t encourage a simple phrase such as “I agree” or “That’s wonderful” although I recognize the value of such a response. It can be frustrating to read
through a series of postings that offer little information. Instead, please try to build on the conversation and introduce new ideas: cite specific points or reasons for your opinion or ask questions to clarify your understanding of what was said or to get other’s ideas, for instance.

Meanwhile I recommend that you not post a long essay under the discussion threads, because few people will have time to read long essays in an online discussion format. For the post on the discussion forum, one to three paragraphs, or 100 to 250 words could be reasonable lengths.

Please do not underestimate your own ability to encourage and motivate others in this course to learn and discover, neither should you underestimate the valuable experience you may obtain from dialoguing with your colleagues in this course. One of the greatest advantages of the online learning is the greater and equal opportunity for all participants to learn from each other by respecting and challenging their comments and inquiries.

The following are some /moves (adapted from Stephen Brookfield’s "Discussion as a way of teaching") which I expect us to try out while responding to each other’s postings:

- Ask a question or make a comment that shows you are interested in what another person says
- Ask a question or make a comment that encourages another person to elaborate on something that they have already said
- Make a comment that underscores the link between two people’s contributions
- Make a specific comment indicating how you found another person’s ideas interesting/useful.
- Contribute something that builds on, or springs from, what someone else has said. Be explicit about the way you are building on the other person’s thoughts
- Make a comment that at least partly paraphrases a point that someone has already made
- Make a summary observation that takes into account several people’s contributions & that touches on a recurring theme in the discussion
- Ask a cause and effect question – for example, “can you explain why you think it’s true that if these things are in place such and such a thing will occur?”
- Find a way to express appreciation for the enlightenment you have gained from the discussion. Be specific about what it was that helped you understand something better
- Disagree with someone in a respectful and constructive way

I will participate in the discussions as a regular participant. As instructor of the course, I may not respond to matters of opinion or discussion until others have had a chance to voice their thoughts. I may also occasionally play devil’s advocate, to draw out other views that may not be expressed on the discussion board, or to ask you to defend one particular viewpoint. The
idea is to have everyone think reflectively and critically about the issues at hand and be able to express the ideas rather than reach the “correct” answer for these discussions.

Special Notes and Policies

**University use of electronic mail:** A University-assigned student email account shall be an official University means of communication with all students. Students are responsible for all information sent to them via their University assigned email account. If a student chooses to forward their University email account, he or she is responsible for all information, including attachments, sent to any other email account.

**Students with Disabilities:** University of North Texas complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. The university will adhere to all applicable Federal, State, and Local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford an equal educational opportunity. Students with special needs should make arrangements with the instructor to require accommodations. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the faculty member outside of class to make any arrangements involving special accommodations and/or Department ADA representatives. You may schedule an appointment by calling 940-565-2057.

**Plagiarism:** Under all circumstances, you are bound by the UNT policies on academic dishonesty and cheating. Any materials you have used or adapted must be fully credited and the original author and location fully cited. Any verified act of plagiarism, no matter how seemingly small or inconsequential, will result in an F in the course and sanctions by the University.