

WRA 225 INTRODUCTION TO MULTIMEDIA WRITING



Casey Miles
caseynmiles@gmail.com
@soulsiles
161 Bessey Hall

Office Hours:
Mondays & Wednesdays
11:45- 12:30pm

COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES

This course is an introduction to digital video production for Professional Writing students. You will learn how to use your rhetorical skills as you move through the decision-making process of making videos. More specifically, you will learn to:

- Build and maintain relationships with one another, the larger #MSUPW community, and the community members and organizations you engage with, and perhaps make videos for, in your work this semester.
- Develop video production skills that expand and enhance your understanding of professional writing.
- Consider different rhetorical and storytelling conventions of three different videomaking genres - video resumes, promotional videos, and documentaries.
- Work through each stage - preproduction, production, postproduction, and distribution - of the videomaking process.
- Use videomaking equipment and editing software, and think critically about these tools and interfaces.
- Think rhetorically about the relationship between video production and the organizations you will represent in this class, and in current or future internships and jobs after you graduate.
- Consider principles of Fair Use, how and when to use Creative Commons sound and images, and recognize and address ethical concerns during the videomaking and distribution processes.
- Use social media to promote and distribute your work.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND TEXTS - There is no textbook for this course. All course materials will be available via D2L. Instead of a textbook, you will need to purchase a 1 terabyte Mac-compatible external hard drive for this course. You are, of course, welcome to purchase a hard drive with more storage, but do not purchase one with less. The cost for 1 TB hard drives vary from \$55-90 depending on model and where you purchase them. You will need to have the hard drive by the beginning of week 3.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

P1: Video Resume (20%)

For this assignment you will make a 1-2 minute video following video resume conventions. You will choose between the general video resume genre and a video resume targeted at a particular employer. You will work on your own with the help of a partner who will film you—and you will film them—with WRAC cameras and mics. You will learn how to use iMovie to edit your video. If you have a MacBook Pro, iMovie is available on your computer and you should use it for editing. Otherwise, you can use the Macs in our classroom to edit.

P2: Promotional Video (25%)

Working in pairs, you will make a 2-4 minute promotional video for MSU, a local organization, company, legislation or movement of your choice. You will use cameras and mics provided by WRAC and will edit using Final Cut Pro X, available on our Bessey 317 computers. This project will introduce you to B-roll, titles, and a soundtrack.

P3: Documentary (30%)

In groups of 3-4 students, you will make a 5-9 minute documentary about a topic of your choice. You will use cameras and mics provided by WRAC and you'll edit the work using Final Cut Pro X, available on our 317 Bessey computers. The project will include multiple setups, B-roll, titles, and a soundtrack, as well as a distribution plan.

Participation and Low-stakes Work (25 points)

Your participation in this course matters, both to the community we create together and to your grade. See more about what I consider Participation to be in the Policies & Procedures section below. You are also responsible for weekly viewings and readings, and responses to these materials. I expect you to critically engage in your responses – ask questions, make connections, have opinions. You are encouraged to experiment and play with various multimedia in your responses. This could be video, audio, graphics, photography, poetry, fiber arts (knitting, cross-stitch, etc), collage, code, etc. Your goal here is to understand your choice of modes as rhetorical, meaning the mode is appropriate to the response.

GRADING SCALE

Percentage	Grade
100-94	4.0
93-87	3.5
86-82	3.0
81-77	2.5
76-72	2.0
71-67	1.5
66-62	1.0
61-below	0.0

GRADING – Points for each project will be assigned, generally, on the following criteria (but specific criteria will be discussed for each project):

Exemplary: An exemplary project reveals an astute and consistently effective understanding of rhetorical principles, an exceptional range of micro- to macro-level detail, and very few minor editorial problems. It may indicate students' willingness to take risks, to push themselves beyond safe or obvious responses to an assignment. This kind of exemplary work could be used as a model for classmates to emulate. It may even be worthy of publication. If it's a collaborative project, group partners identified a student's contributions as outstanding. Perhaps the student took a leadership role.

Good: A good project reveals a generally commendable understanding of rhetorical principles, a generally effective range of micro- to macro-level detail, and several minor editorial problems. Although good work is more than just acceptable, it may indicate that a student took a relatively safe or obvious approach to an assignment. Good work is less likely to be considered a model for others. If it's a collaborative project, group partners identified a student's contributions as generally strong. Partners indicate that the student's contributions were an important part of the project.

Acceptable: An acceptable project reveals a basic, serviceable understanding of rhetorical principles, and just enough micro- to macro-level detail. Or an acceptable project may be inconsistent, offering appropriate detail in some places but not others. A few major editorial adjustments may be needed. An acceptable project meets minimum assignment requirements. If it's a collaborative project, group partners identified a student's contributions as unexceptional. Partners may indicate that the student only did what was asked but did not take any initiative. Partners may indicate that the student's contributions had to be revised somewhat.

Poor: A poor project indicates a significant misunderstanding of rhetorical principles. Micro- to macro-level details are frequently inadequate or inconsistent. Excessive errors weaken the writer's credibility. Inconsistencies and lack of detail may indicate that an assignment was thrown together at the last minute. If it's a collaborative project, group partners identified a student's contributions as minimal or weak. Partners may indicate that the student did not do everything he or she promised. Partners may indicate that the student often missed meetings without attempting to catch up.

Unacceptable: An unacceptable project is often incomplete. Significant portions of the project may have been left undone. Or perhaps portions of the project were copied from other sources without attribution or revision. (See the section on "Academic Honesty.")

WORK SUBMISSION – All coursework will be submitted through Google Classroom by the due date specified for each assignment. Late work will be deducted half the eligible points for each day it's late (unless other arrangements have been made). In a media-rich program like Professional Writing, you are highly encouraged to develop data backup habits now because "computer crashes" are not acceptable excuses for late or incomplete work. Check out your AFS space (afs.msu.edu) or a cloud service like Dropbox (dropbox.com).

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE – This class involves lots of collaboration and discussion, therefore your attendance and preparation for each class is mandatory. For every absence beyond 2 your low-stakes and participation grade will be deducted by 1 point. For example, if you miss 3 classes your max low-stakes and participation grade is 24.

If you must be absent, send me an email and let me know; and if you're working in a group you must also let your group members know. Further, it is your responsibility to find out that day's activities. Your first stop should be our shared Google Drive, where I will upload each day's slides after class; your second stop is your peers.

Finally, being late and/or leaving early is unprofessional. You must be on time to fully participate in this class. Every late arrival or leaving early will be considered an absence.

CLASS PARTICIPATION – To be successful in this class you must participate, in fact, the success of this class relies on your participation. Peer review, class discussion, tweeting, paying attention in class, coming prepared, engaging course material in responses - these are the myriad of ways to participate in this course. That said, what I mean by participation is active engagement in the community of this class.

COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY – In this class we will be reading, viewing, writing about, and discussing controversial topics. I expect you to treat one another and me with respect and maturity. There may be disagreements among us as we come to this class with a wide range of experiences and histories. I welcome our differences. But, **I will absolutely not tolerate any form of racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, or body discrimination.**

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY – Your work submitted for this class is generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees are required to report suspected child abuse/neglect and allegations of sexual assault to the appropriate campus authorities when they become aware of such matters in the course of their employment. Sexual assault survivors are encouraged to meet with the Sexual Assault Program at the MSU Counseling Center for confidential counseling and advocacy services.

ACCESSIBILITY – MSU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at (517) 884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc). Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

COMMUNICATION – Outside the classroom, you will primarily communicate with me via email. I will make every effort to respond within 48 hours. If you have not received a response from me after 48 hours, please email me again. I also encourage you to see me

during office hours – Mondays and Wednesdays right after class (11:45-12:30pm). And if you are ever unclear about an assignment, a policy, a task, please ask.

ACADEMIC HONESTY – I take academic honesty seriously. Plagiarism, of any sort, will not be accepted and/or tolerated in this class. If plagiarism is evident and/or suspected, I will pursue it in accordance with the WRAC Department Guidelines and University Policy.

Michigan State University has adopted the following statement about academic honesty:

General Student Regulations

1.00 PROTECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES

The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

1.01 claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own.

1.02 procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.

1.03 complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.

1.04 allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.

1.05 alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.

Procedures for responding to cases of academic honesty and possible repercussions are outlined in Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide. They can also be found on the web at: msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html. Note that the new procedures require instances of academic dishonesty be reported through the registrar's office and forwarded to the Dean of the College in which the student's major resides.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY – As members of a learning community, students are expected to respect the intellectual property of course instructors. All course materials presented to students are the copyrighted property of the course instructor and are subject to the following conditions of use:

1. You may record lectures or any other classroom activities and use the recordings only for your own course-related purposes.
2. You may share the recordings with other students enrolled in the class. But sharing is limited to using the recordings only for course-related purposes.
3. You may NOT post the recordings or other course materials online or distribute them to anyone not enrolled in the class without advance written permission from me and, if applicable, any students whose voice, image, or intellectual property is included in the recordings.
4. Any student violating the conditions described above may face academic disciplinary sanctions.

RESOURCES

Writers' Bloc (MSU PW student org) - facebook.com/msuwb and [@MSUwritersbloc](https://twitter.com/MSUwritersbloc)

Creativity Exploratory - ce.cal.msu.edu

The Writing Center - writing.msu.edu

The Purdue OWL - owl.english.purdue.edu

Counseling Services - counseling.msu.edu

LGBT Resource Center - lbgtrc.msu.edu

Women's Resource Center - wrc.msu.edu

Sexual Assault Program - endrape.msu.edu, 24-hour crisis line (517) 372-6666

Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities - rcpd.msu.edu

Office of Support Services - oss.msu.edu

6 CENTRAL CONCEPTS OF PW

1

Professional writers build and maintain relationships. Forget writing for a moment. Although things like word choice, visual rhetoric, proper punctuation, and effective use of digital media are important, these abilities amount to nothing if a professional writer cannot use them to facilitate relationships between organizations and their publics, writers and publishers, experts and lay people, and so on.

2

Because professional writers build and maintain relationships, **their social abilities and curiosity are just as important as their ability to construct coherent prose or communicate in multiple media.** Good professional writers must know how to pose good questions, to listen actively, and at times to observe others' actions. They must know how to seek information and become versatile in determining where that information might be found

3

Professional writers write, edit, and design on behalf of others. Some writers (such as novelists and poets) attach their names to their work. Professional writers usually leave their names unattached because they produce and maintain an organization's communications. They are essentially stewards of an organization's rhetorical resources. This means that professional writers must learn to compose texts that others can use and reuse.

4

"Writing" involves more than words. According to Elizabeth Hill Boone, writing is "the communication of relatively specific ideas in a conventional manner by means of permanent marks. A school crossing sign is writing because it communicates a relatively specific idea (Caution: School children may be in the area) conveyed in a conventional manner (the color and shape of the sign plus the silhouettes of children). A digital video is also writing because it communicates audio and images through semi-permanent marks (bits).

5

Economic and cultural changes have made professional writing a viable major. Although some PW majors still pursue traditional careers—such as editing & publishing—economic and cultural developments have created many new opportunities, such as social media strategist, web developer, and user experience designer. The changes that have made these careers possible are sometimes referred to as the rise of an information economy or the transition to a post-industrial society. In such a society, information is extremely valuable, which creates a need for people who know how to make information useable for others.

6

Professional writing is the name of a college major, not the name of a career. Professional writing is a term that lives only in the university. In this class, we'll use "professional writing" and "professional writers" as macro-level terms that refer to many types of careers in writing, editing, and design. One of your tasks this semester will be to identify your own professional values and interests, and to make plans for pursuing them.