J492 Syllabus

I. Course Description:
   a. Internet J492 explores and practices emerging electronic journalism and media skills that are applicable in a variety of workplace settings where communicating with specific audiences is the goal. The course includes both theory and application, leading to an internship project that produces a proposal, a design and a draft working version of a useful electronic communications tool for an IPFW department, division, office, or other campus or community organization.
   b. The course requires some familiarity with the Internet and with advanced features of Microsoft Word, but it does not require advanced technical skills.
   c. Students will be offered a variety of options and opportunities for projects within the IPFW community, or they may pursue similar opportunities within their church, workplace or civic community.

II. Goals: the goal of this course is to cause students to gain a measurable degree of proficiency in working “new media,” namely the read-write web, otherwise known as Web 2.0, in a manner that is consistent with modern business, journalistic and/or academic practices.

III. Outcomes: by the end of this course, students will be able to:
   a. evaluate content and trustworthiness of business, academic and journalism blogs and wikis
   b. Apply the concepts covered in this course to their own blogs and wikis
   c. Prepare a blog or wiki for a professional organization.

IV. Theory – among the issues considered will be:
   a. Impact of the Web on news gathering and dissemination and on marketing, business, entertainment and the global culture,
   b. Writing for the Web, including style, design and special considerations of hyperlinked text
   c. Organizational web pages, including not for profits such as Greenpeace and the Red Cross or free online newspapers such as the Onion or the New York Times and their impact on and competition with the for-profit media.
   d. Weblogs, including their emergence as a political force and as a communication and promotional tool
   e. Listservs and Discussion Forums, including their implementation and use as a brainstorming and planning tool
f. Online Journals and Newsletters, including information gathering, design and delivery
g. Online “communities,” including their creation, function, purpose and value as sources of information
h. Web-generated databases, including a brief introduction to computer-assisted reporting techniques
i. Photo-journalism on the web, including narrated slide shows, photogalleries and video libraries
j. The graphic orientation of the web, including the postmodern relationships of images and text
k. Legal and ethical issues of writing for the web and of using web sources

V. **Practicum:**
   a. after reviewing the above topics and working on small assignments that promote and measure understanding of the above issues, students will find, with the help of the instructor and DCS staff, opportunities for a meaningful major project as outlined in items I. a. and I. c. above.
   b. These projects will include those suggested by the issues covered in item II, ranging from a listserv that promotes discussion of specific issues within a department to an electronic photogallery that expresses the mission and accomplishments of a student group, school division, church or civic organization.

VI. **Texts**: a wide-variety and continually updated assortment of academic and issue oriented articles available from the Internet

VII. **Assessment** – students will be assessed by:
   a. Their successful completion of weekly writing assignments that measure their understanding of the material covered
   b. Their level of engagement with the proposal, design, and draft implementation of a communication weblog for a specific organization of the student’s own choice.

VIII. **Classroom discourse**: Students are expected to be polite, to respect diversity, and to value the learning that comes from hearing a different perspective from one’s own. All blog posts need to reflect these values. Blog posts that use profanity and/or that demean the backgrounds or opinions of others will receive a zero, and the writer will be referred to the Writing Program Director. You may disagree with me or with each other, but the disagreement must be respectful and civil.

IX. **Attendance**: We meet weekly in Breeze, time and date to be determined after class starts. The class sessions are generally short and meant to help you understand the upcoming assignments. After the live session, I will post the URL of the recorded session so that you may view the class recording to get full class participation credit.

X. **Late papers and assignments**: All assignments are due Sunday evenings at midnight. Late assignments lose 15 points.

XI. **Special needs**: The instructor will work in every way possible with special needs students, as long as that student or guardian has identified those needs adequately at the beginning of the semester.

XII. **Other services to students**:
   - CASA (Center for Academic Support and Advancement), KT G21, 260-481-6817
   - Writing Center, KT G25D, 260-481-6028
   - Dean of Students Office, Walb 111
   - Multicultural Services. 260-481-6608, Walb 118
   - Academic Counseling and Career Services (ACCS), KT 109, 260-481-6595
   - Center for Women and Returning Adults Walb G25, 260-481-6029
   - Services for Students with Disabilities, Walb 113, 260-481-6657
• **Registrar**, KT 107, 260-481-6815
• **Bursar**, KTG89, 260-481-6824

XIII. **Important dates:**

• Classes begin – Aug. 20
• Fall recess – Oct. 8, 9
• Last day to withdraw without an F - Oct. 26
• Thanksgiving break – Nov. 21-25
• Last week of classes and final exams – Dec. 10-16
• Grades posted to OASIS – Dec. 17

XIV. **ITS helpdesk:** 260-481-6030 e-mail: helpdesk@ipfw.edu

XV. **Technical Issues:**

This course is delivered via Blackboard/WebCT which works quite well as long as your computer is properly “tuned.” The most critical technical issue is that your popup blockers must be TURNED OFF.

Worth Weller

http://users.ipfw.edu/wellerw

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