



### Description

Professional Writing in Digital Environments will teach students how to write online multimodal content. Perhaps more importantly, it will also help students understand how information flows, and ceases to flow, through organizations. Students will learn to think systematically about organizations. The class will walk through obtaining access to organizations, conducting interviews and field research, and collecting, coding, analyzing and visualizing data.

### Required Texts

Spinuzzi, Clay. *Topsight: A Guide to Studying Diagnosing, and Fixing Information Flow in Organizations*. Austin: Clay Spinuzzi, 2013. Print.

“Research and Citation Resources.” *Purdue Online Writing Lab*. Purdue U, Web. 27 Nov. 2015. <<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>>.

“Professional, Technical Writing.” *Purdue Online Writing Lab*. Purdue U, Web. 30 Nov. 2015. <<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/4/16/>>.

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Good Business: Leadership, Flow and the Making of Meaning*. New York: Simon & Schuster Audio, 2003. Audible file.

Johnson, Steven, and Eric Singer. *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation*. New York: Penguin Audio, 2010. Audible file.

Other readings as assigned on the schedule.

## **Required Accounts, Software, Websites**

[SoundCloud.com](https://soundcloud.com)

[YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

[Canvas](https://www.canvas.com)

[Zotero](https://www.zotero.org), [NoodleTools](https://www.noodletools.com), [Mendeley](https://www.mendeley.com), [EndNote Basic](https://www.endnote.com), [Flow](https://www.flow.com) or some other citation manager

[Audacity](https://www.audacity.com) (or audio editing software of your choice)

Screen capture software

## **Required Hardware**

Headphones

[Some kind of audio recording device](#)

## **Assignments**

In this course, you have a responsibility to participate in collaborative course activities and your own independent research. You are required to:

1. Participate in the development of a YouTube channel of case studies of organizational information flow. (20%)
2. Develop your own research project. Each student will create a case study the examines organizational information flow. You will:
  1. Write a research proposal for the study of an organization. (10 %)
  2. Write 3 professional letters to organizations requesting access and pitching your study to stakeholders. (10%)
  3. Conduct your study and write up a report of your study. (30%)
  4. Make a video reporting the findings of your study. (10 %)
  5. Present your final project to the class. (10 %)

## Schedule

Date	Due	Assigned	In-Class Topics	In-Class Activity
1/19	Syllabus		Flow	Discuss flow, go over syllabus.
1/21	Chapter 1 of <a href="#">Topsight</a>		Topsight	Discuss topsight, go over major deadlines and assignments.
1/26	Chapters 2-5 of <a href="#">Topsight</a>	Research proposal (due date: 2/11)	Planning a study	Go over scope and description of case studies.
1/28	Chapters 6-10 of <a href="#">Topsight</a>		Conducting a study, interviewing	Go over <a href="#">interviewing tools and technologies</a> .
2/2	Chapter 11-13 of <a href="#">Topsight</a>	Write 3 pitch letters to organizations (due date: 2/18)	Dealing with data	Discuss triangulating, coding, and reporting data.
2/4	Chapter 14-17 of <a href="#">Topsight</a>		Analyzing data	Discuss analytical models, audio/video recording workshop.
2/9	Chapter 18-21 of <a href="#">Topsight</a>		Visualizing data	Discuss data visualization techniques. Piktochart workshop.
2/11	Chapter 22-25 of <a href="#">Topsight</a> , Research proposal	Report of your study (due date: 4/14)	Reporting data	Discuss writing reports and multimodal presentations.
2/16	List of organizations for pitch letters, " <a href="#">How to Pitch a Brilliant Idea</a> "		Pitching your project	Discuss pitch letters and " <a href="#">How to Pitch a Brilliant Idea</a> "
2/18	3 pitch letters to organizations	Video of your study (due date: 4/21)	Representing your study in video.	Watch examples of case study videos.

2/23	Chapter 1 of <a href="#">Good Business</a>		Flow and growth	Discuss <a href="#">Good Business</a> , Video capture workshop.
2/25	<a href="#">How to Give a Killer Presentation</a> , <a href="#">Pecha Kucha FAQs</a>	Presentations (due date: 5/3)	Constructed ethos	Discuss presentation techniques, watch Pecha Kucha, Presentation workshop
3/1	Chapter 2 of <a href="#">Good Business</a>		Flow and organization	Discuss organizational flow, audio editing workshop
3/3	Audio file to transcribe		Transcription	Transcribing workshop
3/8	Chapter 3 of <a href="#">Good Business</a>		Flow, the self, and ethos	Discuss the interlocking roles of trust, clarity, ethos in organizational communication
3/10	Bring case study data		Efficiency and productivity	Case study work day
3/15	Spring Break			
3/17				
3/22	Chapter 4 of <a href="#">Good Business</a>		Changes in business	Discuss how technology is changing how we do business
3/24	Nothing due		Adjacent possibilities	Discuss adjacency and pivoting
3/29	Chapters 1-2 of <a href="#">Where Good Ideas Come From</a>		Collaboration, incubation	Discuss how ideas incubate
3/31	Nothing due		Liquid networks, information flows, pattern recognition	Watch Steven Johnson's " <a href="#">Where Good Ideas Come From</a> " TED talk. Discuss information liquidity.

4/5	Chapters 3-4 of <a href="#">Where Good Ideas Come From</a>		The slow hunch	Watch “ <a href="#">Where Good Ideas Come From</a> ” video. Discuss slow hunches.
4/7	Nothing due		Serendipity	Discuss information ecologies, exaptation, and innovation
4/12	Chapters 5-6 of <a href="#">Where Good Ideas Come From</a>		Failure, errors	Discuss communication failures in organizations
4/14	Report of your study		Exaptation	Discuss exaptation, Video workshop
4/19	Chapter 7 of <a href="#">Where Good Ideas Come From</a>		Platforms	Discuss platforms, Video workshop
4/21	Video of your study		Video codecs	Discuss codecs, troubleshoot videos
4/26	Nothing due		Video codecs	Discuss codecs, troubleshoot videos
4/28	Draft of your presentation		Finishing touches, practice	Troubleshoot presentations
5/3	Presentations			Presentations
5/5	Presentations			Presentations

## Course Policies

### Attendance and Grading

Attendance in this course is required at the departmental level. According to the department: “You are expected to attend class, to arrive on time, to have prepared assigned reading and writing, and to participate in all in-class editing, revising, and discussion sessions. **Should you miss the equivalent of five TTH or MW class sessions or seven MWF sessions this semester, excused or not, you will fail the course.**” Appeals concerning this policy must be made directly to the department Associate Chair. Late work will be penalized at the rate of one letter grade for every two weeks it is late.

### Excused Absences and Religious Holy Days

University policy requires that you notify the instructor of a scheduled absence at least 14 days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project to observe a religious holy day, you have two weeks after the holy day to make up the work.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

The department's policy on academic dishonesty is as follows: "Turning in work that is not your own, or any other form of scholastic dishonesty, will result in a major course penalty, possibly failure of the course. This standard applies to all drafts and assignments, and a report of the incident will be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Students and filed in your permanent UT record. Under certain circumstances, the Dean of Students will initiate proceedings to expel you from the University. So, take care to read and understand the [Statement on Scholastic Responsibility](#)." You may also read the library's website to help you "[Avoid Plagiarism](#)."

Plus/minus grades will be assigned for the final grade. Grades are assigned according to the scale below.

<b>%</b>	<b>Letter grade</b>
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
<60	F

### **Accommodations & Documented Disability Statement**

"The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-6441 TTY."