

Dr. Bill Wolff

WRITING, RESEARCH, AND TECHNOLOGY, Fall 2011, WA 01301 3, 41924

Syllabus

Course Location: Education Hall 2110

Office Location: Education Hall 3075

Contact: wolffw@rowan.edu, @billwolff

Course Web Sites: <http://williamwolff.org/courses/wrt-fall-2011/>

Course Hours: T/H 3:15 pm – 4:30pm

Office Hours: T/TH 1:30 – 3:00 or by appt

Office Phone: email or tweet

Course Description

You will come away from this section of Writing, Research, and Technology with an understanding of the process and what it means rhetorically to create and publish that ultimate object (or, as we will see, technology) that all writers strive to publish: a book. You will conceive, compose, design, layout, proof, and publish a book via the print-on-demand publishing service, Blurb.

Through our readings and projects you will learn about the history of book publishing (dating back to ancient China); about the different parts of books; about fonts and their meanings; how books are selected for print, printed, distributed, and sold; about layout out books to make them visually appealing; and you will make draft of your book using paper, glue, and string. You will also learn about the complexities of copyright and the burgeoning composing method of remix. You will think visually and textually, as your books will have visual and textual components. You will interview people (online or in person) at various stages of the book publishing process, from authors to the managers of bookstores. While doing all this you will be Tumbling and Tweeting, and as a result sharing your ideas and what you learn with whomever is fortunate enough to find you and your writings.

Your books will be designed with the goal of raising money for a particular charity, and you will work with that charity to ensure that they know about the book and approve of you using their name. The books will be published and vetted by a non-profit press, Composing with Images Press. This press publishes on-demand photo and art books that bring together image and text to engage creative, social, and cultural issues within a particular theme. All proceeds are donated to charity. Your books will be the first in their Student Books Series.

And through all of the course activities you will come to realize that contemporary technologies provide writers of all genres of books with significant and important opportunities to compose, create, and publish in exciting ways for older and newer media.

Course Strands

In this course all work will be dedicated to students developing their skills in the following Course Strands:

Book Composition

Students will develop their ability to design and compose sophisticated and aesthetically appealing books. These designs will be informed by various rhetorical theories.

Research

Students will expand their research skills by engaging in primary and secondary research, including learning various interview techniques.

Critical Thinking, Writing, and Reading

Students will develop their ability to analyze the texts they read and then filter that information in terms of the theories and other texts being read.

Technology

Students will learn how to use various online tools and technology-related skills which can help them develop their abilities in the other course objectives.

Collaboration

Students will develop the ability to work collaboratively in various online and in class activities and projects.

Required Texts and Materials

Lupton, E. (2010). *Thinking with Type, 2nd revised and expanded edition: A Critical Guide for Designers, Writers, Editors, & Students*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

Proof and final versions of the books you create using Blurb.com.

- Blurb's free BookSmart software, which can be downloaded at <http://www.blurb.com/create/book/download>
- USB flash drive with no less than 4GB of memory
- Various online readings and other materials as needed
- Computer with Internet access
- Microsoft Word or any of many online alternatives (papers must be turned in .doc, .docx, or .rtf; no other formats will be accepted)—see <http://j.mp/4LnxAW>
- Rowan email address

If you have a laptop, I encourage you to bring it to class.

Office Hours

Office hours are designed for you, giving you a more private environment in which we may talk about your work, your performance in class, etc. If you are unable to see me during my office hours, do not hesitate to make an appointment to see me at a different time. Office hours this semester are T/TH 2:00 – 3:30.

Contacting Each Other

There will be times during the semester when I will need to contact the class and you will need to contact me. I will contact you via your Rowan email account, so please be sure that you are checking it regularly and/or forwarding it to the email service you use most regularly. I am in my office only during office hours and the brief times before and after class. As a result, calling me in my office will not get you an immediate response.

I strongly suggest you contact me via Twitter (@billwolff) and/or email. Email, however, tends to be seen as an informal medium. This, however, should not always be the case. All emails that I send to you will have a meaningful subject line and a proper salutation (“Hi Class,” or “Hi

Jane,” etc.). The first sentence will notify you of the purpose of the email, and then will get to the heart of the matter. It will end with a formal closing (“Thanks, BW”). I expect the same from any email you send. Twitter is less formal, so feel free to just tweet me questions. Please add the course hashtag (#wrtf11) to all course related tweets.

I’ll get back to your tweets and emails as soon as possible—usually within a day. If I don’t get back within a day, it may be that I did not see your tweet or email for one reason or another, such as an email going in my spam folder. Send me a polite reminder and/or ask me in class if I got it, and I’ll get back immediately.

Students with Disabilities

Your academic success is important. If you have a documented disability that may have an impact upon your work in this class, please contact me. Students must provide documentation of their disability to the Academic Success Center in order to receive official University services and accommodations. The Academic Success Center can be reached at 856.256.4234. The Center is located on the 3rd Floor of Savitz Hall. The staff is available to answer questions regarding accommodations or assist you in your pursuit of accommodations. We look forward to working with you to meet your learning goals.

Attendance

You are expected to attend class every day. You cannot pass this class if you miss more than the maximum number of permissible absences, **including excused and unexcused absences**. For our section of Writing, Research, and Technology, which meets twice a week, the **maximum number of permissible absences is 6**. Lateness is .5 of an absence. You are late if you arrive after the sign-in sheet has made it around the room.

Excused Absences

You will be permitted to make up missed work for **excused absences only**. These include:

- religious observances
- official University activities
- illness
- death of a family member or loved one
- inclement weather

You must provide verifiable documentation. Consult with your instructor for what is considered acceptable. In the case of religious observances or official University activities, you must inform your instructor **in advance** of your absence for it to be excused.

In the case of illness, death of a family member or loved one, or inclement weather, you must inform your instructor as soon as possible after the fact. If the events described above lead to your exceeding the maximum absence limit, you will be referred to the Dean of Students for a hardship withdrawal from the class.

Unexcused absences will be treated using the following scale:

2 or fewer	no penalty
3 absences	-1/3 final grade (a B would become a B-)
4 absences	-2/3 final grade (a B would become a C+)

5 absences
6 absences

-1 final grade (a B would become a C)
-1 1/3 final grade (a B would become a C-)

If you have 7 or more **unexcused absences** you will receive an F for the course.

Grading

Final grades will be calculated in the following way:

Book Final Print and Reflections	25%
Book Proof and Reflection	20%
Handmade Book and Reflection	15%
Tumbling (includes reading responses)	20%
Interview and reflection	10%
Online and in person communication and collaboration (including Twitter)	10%
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100%

Grades will be determined on the following scale:

A+ 100; A 96	B- 82	D+ 69
A- 92	C+ 79	D 66
B+ 89	C 76	D- 62
B 86	C- 72	F 59 and below

Detailed criteria will be provided for each assignment. Missing assignments will receive a 0. **All major assignments (including rough drafts) must be completed to pass the course.**

Late major assignments will be deduction have a grade for every class period it is late. For every 3 late non-major assignments, your final grade will be lowered by one full letter grade.

If you are having trouble getting a project completed on time (for whatever reason) please let me know about your delays as soon as possible. It is better to complete an assignment late then to not complete it at all, and I am more than happy to work with you so you can compete the best project you can.

I will never mark down or refuse to accept a project because of trouble using computer technology. The software and applications we use are a means to complete the work, not the work itself. They are also often new and still have bugs. I am aware of this and know what can happen. If you run into trouble, let me know as soon as possible so I can help you work through it. There is no reason to sit for hours getting more and more frustrated. Send me an email with as detailed a description of your problem as possible and we'll figure out what is going on.