

Core Course Review Documentation

Foundational Component Area: COMMUNICATION

Component Area Option? No

Yes – Cultural & Global Understanding

Yes – Undergraduate Inquiry & Creativity

Proposed Course: Web Site Design

Credit Hours: 3

Proposed by: Mitzi Lewis

Date: February 15, 2013

Please document how the proposed course meets each of the following requirements. (You may provide a written explanation or copy and paste the appropriate information from the syllabus.)

Content: *Courses in this category focus on developing ideas and expressing them clearly, considering the effect of the message, fostering understanding, and building the skills needed to communicate persuasively.*

This course is an introduction to basic web site design for beginners. No previous knowledge of web site design is presumed. Fundamental design, usability, and accessibility principles will be introduced, explained, and learned through hands-on activities. With design, it is often best to learn through doing. The variety of exercises and projects in this course will provide a well-rounded introduction to fundamentals of web site design. To become proficient, you will need to practice, practice, practice. Some practice is built into the class, but the rest is up to you.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Critically evaluate web sites
- Create a plan for an effective website
- Use typeface effectively
- Use white space effectively
- Use colors effectively
- Use graphic elements effectively
- Adapt visual elements to the audience
- Use technology tools to create communication pieces
- Define copyright
- Identify materials that are protected by copyright
- State when copyright protection starts and how long it lasts for
- Explain copyright ownership and the rights of the owner
- Recognize legitimate ways of using copyright material
- Explain methods of protecting intellectual property
- Learn how to be comfortable on the Web and how to teach yourself and others new skills beyond this class

SKILLS: *Courses involve the command of oral, aural, written, and visual literacy skills that enable people to exchange messages appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.*

Students will learn through class participation and discussions, creative projects, critiques, homework assignments and quizzes. Students' knowledge and skills increase from each successive assignment, so their final creative project will demonstrate what they have learned during the course.

Web Site Design students are introduced to:

- Critical evaluation of published web sites
- The planning principles used to logically design and build a web site
- Appropriate use of the visual elements of white space, graphics, color, and type to communicate through web sites
- Appropriate use of aural elements such as music, conversation and sound effects to communicate through web sites
- Appropriate use of writing to communicate through web sites
- Copyright laws governing web site development and ownership
- Appropriate and legal use of others' intellectual property in web sites
- The technical tools used to create communication pieces specifically for the web

And they are enabled to:

- Critically analyze and deconstruct web sites, both verbally and in writing
- Use the principles of effective communication to plan a web site for an audience
- Construct messages for the web using visual, written and aural communication tools
- Identify, explain, use and legally protect copyrighted material for use on the web
- Use teamwork to develop an assessment tool for web site analysis

Learning Activities:

- Active participation in class discussions about lecture information
- Homework assignments designed to reinforce lecture information
- Critique sessions about their work and others' work
- Small individual and team creative projects
- A final creative project that, when completed, should demonstrate all the principles introduced throughout the semester

ASSESSMENT OF CORE OBJECTIVES: *Assessments should be authentic, intentional and direct. The following four Core Objectives must be addressed in each course approved to fulfill this category requirement:*

Critical Thinking Skills - *to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information*

Critiques, both oral and written, are a vital part of learning. Students can learn a lot from reviewing the work of others and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. Critiques also provide the opportunity to put concepts to words, and to help students learn how to speak intelligently and knowledgeably. Students critique published work and each other's work.

This provides them with fresh insights and perspectives. Student critiques will be assessed using line 4 of the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric.

Sample assignment:

Create a web site evaluation tool

1. Pair up and discuss specific traits that could be used to evaluate sites.
2. Join another pair and review your lists. Synthesize the lists to 4 – 7 general traits that could be used to evaluate most any web site. As much as possible, make each trait discrete and clear. Combine similar traits and eliminate redundant, obtuse, or invalid traits.
3. After reaching consensus on the traits, decide on a numeric scale to use for judging how well a website rates for each of the traits.
4. Brainstorm a list of descriptors that define major point values on the numeric scale. What does a high score look like? A low score?
Sketch the evaluation tool.
Have each person use your group's tool to evaluate www.cheese.com. Do this independently – no collaboration or discussion.
5. After everyone is done, compare scores for each major trait with your group members.
If someone in the group rated a trait radically different from the rest, ask them to explain why. Can the group persuade the radical, or the radical persuade the group? Is a compromise necessary? Try to reach a consensus score for each trait. Does the tool need to be changed somehow to make it more useful?
6. Create a wiki page in the [WebEval](#) folder and put your evaluation tool on the page using [How to Create a Wiki Page instructions](#). Decide on a spokesperson. Have the spokesperson share the rest of the class how well your group's evaluation tool worked when applied to cheese.com.

Adapted from material created by University of Washington with support from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation

Communication Skills - *to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication*

Communication skills are developed throughout the course. Students will produce a final project that incorporates these skills. Written communication will be assessed with line one of the AAC&U Written Communication Value Rubric.

Sample assignment:

Create an online portfolio

The purpose of this assignment is to use the skills you have learned throughout the semester to build an online portfolio to showcase yourself on the internet. You can show this website to future employers and colleges. Your portfolio will include:

1. A home page or introduction page that introduces the site and your work.
2. A brief biography of yourself including the site purpose
3. A contact page that will give your audience a way to connect with you
4. A resume in two formats: one that can be viewed online and one in PDF format for downloading
5. A page of work and/or activity examples
6. Clear navigation
7. Photos that are prepared for the web
8. Skillful use of text, color, typography, and CRAP (the design principles of contrast, repetition, alignment, and proximity)
9. Content that reflects you professionally
10. "Wow!" factor: Will a potential employer be impressed? Is it original?

Adapted from material created by Dr. Serena Carpenter

Teamwork - *to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal*

Students work in teams on tasks throughout the course. A sample assignment would be a reflection about their contributions to the team's functioning, specifically addressing the effort they put into the team's work, the way in which they interacted with other team members, and the quality and quantity of their contributions. The course instructor would then assess each team member's teamwork value using line one of the AAC&U Teamwork Value Rubric.

Personal Responsibility - *to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making*

As part of the copyright unit, students learn what copyright is, how to identify materials protected by copyright, explain copyright ownership and the rights of the owner, recognize legitimate ways of using copyrighted material, and explain methods of protecting intellectual property. A sample assignment would be the completion of a case study that requires them to apply this knowledge to a specific example by answering questions and justifying their responses. This student work will be assessed using line 3 of the AAC&U Ethical Reasoning Value Rubric.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Provide any additional information supporting course inclusion in the core (optional).

This course is currently offered as an upper-level course. Paperwork to change the course to MCOM 2833 has been submitted to the Academic Council. While the course introduces students to content management systems, which are used at most new organizations, the final project of the class has evolved to an online portfolio. Therefore, the course prerequisite requirement is being removed. In this day and age, it is important to make web site design skills accessible to a broader range of students.

PLEASE ATTACH THE FOLLOWING

1. Syllabus
2. Assessment for Critical Thinking Skills
3. Assessment for Communication Skills
4. Assessment for Teamwork
5. Assessment for Personal Responsibility

Web Site Design

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(NOTE: For all e-mail correspondence, please make the subject line look like this: WEB SITE DESIGN: Subject of Message. If you send an email to me, treat it as a professional means of communication. This means it should include a salutation, correct punctuation, and a proper closing.)

Office Hours
M 10-11, 2-3:30
T 9-11
W 10-11, 2-3:30
Th 9-11
F 10-11
and by appointment

Office hours can be used as a time to address problems, clarify ideas, request additional readings or materials, and review work in progress. If you are stuck, don't stay that way. Come see me.

Course Objectives

This course is an introduction to basic web site design for beginners. No previous knowledge of web site design is presumed. Fundamental design, usability, and accessibility principles will be introduced, explained, and learned through hands-on activities. With design, it is often best to learn through doing. The variety of exercises and projects in this course will provide a well-rounded introduction to fundamentals of web site design. To become proficient, you will need to practice, practice, practice. Some practice is built into the class, but the rest is up to you.

Prerequisites: (1) News Writing and Reporting I and (2) Electronic News Gathering

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Use typeface effectively
- Use white space effectively
- Use colors effectively
- Use graphic elements effectively
- Adapt visual elements to the audience
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- Define copyright
- Identify materials that are protected by copyright
- State when copyright protection starts and how long it lasts for
- Explain copyright ownership and the rights of the owner
- Recognize legitimate ways of using copyright material
- Explain methods of protecting intellectual property
- Critically evaluate web sites
- Learn how to be comfortable on the Web and how to teach yourself and others new skills beyond this class

Required Materials – Paper, Electronic, and Intellectual

- Required textbook: *Build Your Own Web Site The Right Way Using HTML & CSS* (3rd ed.) by Ian Lloyd
- Recommended textbooks (good to have but not required):
 - *The WordPress Anthology* by Mick Olinik & Raena Jackson Armitage
 - *Don't Make Me Think* by Steve Krug
 - *The Principles of Beautiful Web Design* by Jason Beard
 - *User-Centered Website Development* by Daniel McCracken & Rosalee Wolfe
- You will be required to purchase a domain name (about \$15) and web hosting service for four months (about \$36)
- USB flash drive

Bring this to class each day. You'll be saving your work to this drive and to a second backup, not the lab computer hard drive. You are responsible for saving your work. Deadlines will not be extended due to loss of data. Always maintain at least two copies of important files on two separate volumes. You may want to look into cloud storage options (see the course wiki "Cloud Storage" page for more details).
- E-mail account
- Internet access
- Persistence, Patience, Optimism, and an Active Mind: Most of our work during the semester will take place in the computer lab. This room is equipped with 21 computers, a flatbed scanner, and several printers. The lab was set up as a place for creating complex digital image and multimedia projects and performing online operations. But computers are fairly elaborate machines, which means that there are many ways in which they can break down. In this course, we will be placing heavy demands on the lab's hardware and software – as well as on our network capabilities – so be prepared for many strange and wondrous things. We will be discussing basic trouble-shooting techniques in class as issues arise. In many cases, however, you will need to be your own technological problem-solver – identifying problems and figuring out ways they can temporarily or permanently be solved. *Techno-whining will not be tolerated.*

Teaching and Learning Philosophy

1. *Students' responsibility*: Take responsibility for your own learning and take advantage of in- and out-of-classroom opportunities
2. *Professor's (facilitator's) responsibility*: Provide students with meaningful learning opportunities in the classroom and through assignments

Grading

Final grades will be based on class participation and attendance, projects, critiques, and homework and quizzes. As this is a project-based class, there will not be any mid-term or final exams. You will bring an increased level of knowledge and skills to each successive project, so your final project will, in essence, be a demonstration of what you have learned during the course of the semester.

Class participation and attendance (also called professionalism): 10%
Projects: 60%
Homework and Quizzes: 30%

Class participation and attendance

Because abundant lecturing tends to be counterproductive for both you and me, I try to include activities that are more interesting than straight lecture, such as discussions, presentations, guest speakers, etc. The success of this format depends on your willingness to **ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE** in class discussions and other activities.

Attendance and participation are critical to your success. Another way to describe this is professionalism. Professionalism means that you're here, ready to engage in new opportunities. You are expected to arrive on time, be prepared, actively participate, and stay for the full class period. If you miss class, you miss the chance to participate in your education and the education of others in class. If you miss class you get a "zero" for that day's participation.

If you must miss class, please let me know **BEFORE** the class period that you will miss. You may call my office and leave me a voice mail or you may notify me by e-mail. An absence may be excused at my discretion in accordance with university policy if you provide documentation of the reason for your absence. Plan carefully regarding appointments and/or work schedules to avoid missing class. Any personal emergencies that arise will be dealt with on an individual basis. Do not assume you will be allowed to make up assignments missed during an unexcused absence. **IF YOU MISS CLASS, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU MISSED.**

Your class participation and attendance grade is made up of (a) your coming to class, (b) your input during class discussions, (c) your completion of in-class assignments. In class assignments will help you immediately apply concepts covered in class. If you miss a class you get a "zero" for that day's in-class assignments. If you miss more than two classes, or if you are habitually late or leave early, your final grade may be lowered by 1/3 letter grade for each instance beyond two absences. Three tardies = one absence. Five minutes or more late = one tardy. Twenty minutes or more late = one absence. Leaving before class is dismissed = one absence. If you have difficulty with the attendance and participation (professionalism) requirement, you may be dropped from the class.

I reserve the right to determine what, exactly, constitutes an excused absence or when a late arrival is excusable.

Some additional guidelines:

- You are responsible for all material presented in every class period, whether present or not.
- If you miss a class period you should obtain the material presented from another classmate. (I will not repeat lecture material that was missed. Handouts are available from my office – it is your responsibility to come get them.)

Projects

There will be several projects for the course, including the following:

- Web page created with HTML and CSS
- Web site created with HTML and CSS
- Web site created using WordPress

Further details will be given as the semester progresses.

Homework and Quizzes

You will be asked to complete regular short assignments to reinforce skills you are learning in class.

We will have unannounced quizzes only if attendance is poor or if I sense that you are not keeping up with your assignments. If we have unannounced quizzes, they will be given at the beginning of class. If you are late, you will receive a score of zero unless your late arrival is excused.

Please note that the number of quizzes and assignments is not set in stone. This means that it is impossible at the outset of the semester to determine how much each individual quiz or assignment will be worth.

More about Grading

- In the professional world, if you can't show up on time and make your deadlines, you won't keep your job. Assignments must be completed on time in the format specified.
- Reading assignments are to be completed by the day they are assigned.
- Projects and homework are due at the beginning of class on the due date.
- Spelling and grammar count, in your assignments and your e-mails. Grades will be reduced for spelling and grammar errors.
- If you know you will be absent when an assignment is due, arrange to complete and hand in the assignment early.
- You are responsible for keeping all handouts and graded assignments.
- If my recorded grade differs from yours, the only way to get your grade changed is to show the grade marked (or the grade sheet I completed) on the assignment.

Grading is on a straight scale (no curve):

A = 90-100% B = 80-89% C = 70-79% D = 60-69% F < 60%

Remember that attendance is required and missing class can result in a grade reduction, a failing grade, or being dropped from class.

Critiques

Critiques are a vital part of learning. You can learn a lot from reviewing the work of others and evaluating their strengths and weaknesses. Critiques also provide the opportunity to put concepts to words, and to help you learn how to speak intelligently and knowledgeably (a necessary skill

for survival in the workplace!). We will critique published work and each other's work. This will provide you with fresh insights and perspectives.

Portfolio Requirement

Please note that all mass communication majors are required to submit a portfolio as part of their Internship course (Internship is a prerequisite to Senior Production). This requirement is a part of MSU's reaccreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and is non-negotiable. Through the portfolio, students are required to demonstrate communication competence through the written word and visual communication; two examples of each competency are required.

As you go through this and other classes, you are responsible for saving course work that could be included in your portfolio.

Please see me, your adviser, the department chair or any mass communication faculty member for handouts with more information ("Mass Communication Portfolio Competencies" and "Mass Communication Portfolio FAQ"). These handouts are also available on our department web page: <http://finearts.mwsu.edu/masscomm/>.

Policies: Classroom/Conduct/Academic Dishonesty

- No cell phones, headphones, music, computer games, nor texting/IMing/e-mail/camera devices of any description are to be used during class: ZERO TOLERANCE. This means all aforementioned devices (and presently unknown versions of such) are to be turned off and out of your sight and mine. This policy is based on my view that these things are distracting, hence counterproductive to the learning goals in this course. Violation of this policy will be considered a conduct issue and an extremely bad plan. If your phone rings during class I reserve the right to answer it. If you feel compelled to send a text during class, I reserve the right to complete the text before sending it.
- Eating and drinking are not allowed by the computers because we are working with expensive equipment that can very easily be damaged by food or drink. Food and drink may be left on the bookcase by the door. Any misuse or abuse of equipment will result in expulsion from the lab for the semester and/or assessment of replacement/repair costs.
- Students are expected to adhere to the Standards of Conduct as published in the Student Handbook. Students should refer to the current MSU student handbook and activities calendar for University policies and Student Honor Creed on academic dishonesty, class attendance, student's rights, and activities.
 - a. The main statement from the MSU Student Honor Creed should be a guiding principal for you: "As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else to do so."
 - b. I reserve the right to drop any student with an F if he/she engages in any form of academic dishonesty. I further reserve the right to recommend other sanctions as may be appropriate. Students are also encouraged to consult the following sources for additional discussion of students' rights and responsibilities regarding cheating, attendance and general conduct:
 - i. The MSU Student Honor Creed

- ii. 2012-2014 MSU Undergraduate Catalog
- iii. 2012-2013 MSU Student Handbook
- c. In addition, the university requires faculty to provide this statement to all students: “By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The “limited right” shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student’s work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and educational purposes.”
 - On the Internet, plagiarism is especially easy. DO NOT give in to the temptation to copy-and-paste other people’s work! YOUR WORK MUST BE YOUR OWN. If you plagiarize as a professional and get found out, you will damage if not destroy your own reputation and do great harm to the reputation of any organization you work for. In this class, plagiarism will have dire consequences.

Privacy

Federal privacy law prohibits me from releasing information about students to certain parties outside of the university without the signed consent of the student. Thus, in almost all cases I will not discuss your academic progress or other matters with your parents. Please do not have them call me. Regardless of these important legal considerations, it is my general policy to communicate with the students, not their parents, even when a student has signed a consent form. College students are adults and are expected to behave accordingly.

Social Justice

Social justice is one of Midwestern State University’s stated core values, and I consider the classroom to be a place where students will be treated with respect as human beings, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Moreover, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided the students can agree to disagree. It is my expectation that ALL students be able to consider the classroom a safe environment.

Special Accommodations

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information that needs sharing, or if you need special accommodations in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

Suggestions

- Attend class regularly.
- Remember I am available to help you. Ask for help immediately if you don’t understand something. Waiting to “get it later” doesn’t always work and could get you into trouble.
- Back up your work. Have two backups.
- Consider saving your work under different names literally each time you work on a project. It just takes one click and could save you lots of time and frustration.
- Expect the unexpected.

- Try to do work for this class ahead of time. This will give you some cushion in case you have problems.
- Sometimes things will go smoothly, other times they won't – the important thing is to have fun and practice thinking and working with both sides of our brains.
- This is **your** class; we can do (or try) almost anything you want; be creative!

Final Caveat: I reserve the right to change any part of this syllabus for any reason. This includes changing or deleting assignments. Sufficient notice will be given to you if changes to the syllabus are necessary.

By accepting this syllabus and staying enrolled in this course, you are indicating that you understand and accept the terms of this syllabus.

Thanks to Naoma Clark and Jim Serno who allowed me to adapt some of their classroom policies.

TEAMWORK VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



Definition

Teamwork is behaviors under the control of individual team members (effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions.)

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4	Milestones		Benchmark 1
		3	2	
Contributes to Team Meetings	Helps the team move forward by articulating the merits of alternative ideas or proposals.	Offers alternative solutions or courses of action that build on the ideas of others.	Offers new suggestions to advance the work of the group.	Shares ideas but does not advance the work of the group.
Facilitates the Contributions of Team Members	Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by both constructively building upon or synthesizing the contributions of others as well as noticing when someone is not participating and inviting them to engage.	Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by constructively building upon or synthesizing the contributions of others.	Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by restating the views of other team members and/or asking questions for clarification.	Engages team members by taking turns and listening to others without interrupting.
Individual Contributions Outside of Team Meetings	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project. Proactively helps other team members complete their assigned tasks to a similar level of excellence.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished advances the project.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline.
Fosters Constructive Team Climate	Supports a constructive team climate by doing all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication. • Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work. • Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it. • Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members. 	Supports a constructive team climate by doing any three of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication. • Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work. • Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it. • Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members. 	Supports a constructive team climate by doing any two of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication. • Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work. • Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it. • Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members. 	Supports a constructive team climate by doing any one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication. • Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work. • Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it. • Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members.
Responds to Conflict	Addresses destructive conflict directly and constructively, helping to manage/resolve it in a way that strengthens overall team cohesiveness and future effectiveness.	Identifies and acknowledges conflict and stays engaged with it.	Redirecting focus toward common ground, toward task at hand (away from conflict).	Passively accepts alternate viewpoints/ideas/opinions.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact value@aacu.org



Definition

Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum.

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4	Milestones 3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Context of and Purpose for Writing <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in particular forms and/or academic fields (please see glossary).</i>	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices	Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or writing task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.
Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.