

## **PRWR 637: Creating Online Help**

Spring 2015, Section 101

Towson University

Course Syllabus

### **Contact Information**

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Angeli, EMT-B

Office: LA 4358

Phone: 410-704-2858

Email (the best way to contact me): eangeli@towson.edu

Skype: elizabethangeli

Twitter: @lizangeli – tweet me content related to class; use #tutechwriting

Office hours: M 3:45-4:45pm; TR 9:30-10:30am, 2-3pm; by appointment\*

\*I hold office hours both in person and via Skype (<http://skype.com>).

Email or call me to set up a meeting.

### **General Course Description**

User-centered design and development of online help. Rhetorical theory and empirical research supporting best-practice guidelines. Hands-on hypertext projects. Students may retake this course only once without the express permission of the Academic Standards Committee.

### **Purpose and Topics**

The purpose of this course is to transfer theoretical knowledge, build the analytical skills, and develop the hands-on know-how to design and produce usable and useful online help and documentation. You will learn by doing and reading—but mostly by doing. The course also will expose you to the myriad forms of online help, including written text, images, and video.

Among the topics covered in the course are:

- Types of online user assistance
- Evolution of online user assistance, content management systems
- User-experience design process for documentation
- User and task analysis
- Authorial personas and audience personas
- Information architecture
- Testing, reviewing, and editing online documentation
- Fundamentals of HTML and online help tools

### **Course Goals**

In completing course requirements, students will be able to do the following:

- Summarize the basic principles of designing, composing, and delivering online information to meet the needs of specific audiences.
- Apply best-practices heuristics to critique an online help or Web-based

- documentation system
- Make recommendations for redesigning the organization and interface as well as restructuring and rewriting content to make the site more effective in attracting target audiences and meeting their information needs.
- Use help authoring software to design and develop an HTML help system or website.
- Demonstrate an effective process in developing online information products, one that starts with a customer needs assessment and proceeds in an orderly and recursive fashion.
- Utilize user and task analysis, content development, information design, writing, selection and manipulation of graphics, indexing and linking, editing, and usability testing.
- Describe innovative technologies in electronic communication and discuss their current and anticipated roles in the production of online information systems.

These learning outcomes incorporate all four of the learning outcomes established by the Towson University English Department, which are as follows:

#### *Read*

Interpret written materials flexibly: understand that although multiple meanings are possible, textual evidence needs to support individual interpretations of the literature being read as well as the implications drawn from it.

#### *Write*

Write in a variety of forms (e.g. expository, argumentative, imaginative, business/technical) as appropriate to audience, purpose, and occasion, using evidence to support interpretations.

#### *Research*

Use research skills that include understanding of methods, technology, and conventions.

#### *Reflect*

Be reflective and lifelong learners.

#### *Information Literacy and Technological Competence*

Use software as appropriate to writing and research.

#### *Global Awareness*

Engaging intellectually in the experiences and views of people with different cultural backgrounds and beliefs.

### **Required and Recommended Books and Software**

#### *Required Books*

The required books are available from the campus bookstore and Amazon.com. We will be using these books frequently throughout the course; they may even find permanent homes on your bookshelves. The texts should serve as reference material for you throughout your career.

Krug, S. (2006). *Don't make me think: A common sense approach to usability* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Berkley, CA: New Riders.

Redish, J. (2012). *Letting go of the Words: Writing web content that works* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Morgan Kaufmann.

I will post additional required and recommended readings on Blackboard, either as hyperlinks or as downloadable electronic files (PDFs, PPTs,).

#### *Recommended Texts*

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Hackos, J. T., & Redish, J. C. (1998). *User and task analysis for interface design*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Houser, R. (1997). What is the value of audience to technical communicators?: A survey of audience research. International Professional Communication Conference '97 Proceedings: *Crossroads in Communication*. Available online at <http://www.userfirst.net/presentations/audience.htm>

Morian, M., & Swarts, J. (2012). YouTutorial: A framework for assessing online instructional video. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 21, 6-24.

Righi, C., & James, J. (2007). *User-centered design stories: Real-world UCD case studies*. New York: Morgan Kaufman.

Stolley, K. (2011). *How to design and write web pages today*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group.

The University of Chicago Press. (2010). *The Chicago manual of style: The essential guide for writers, editors, and publishers* (16<sup>th</sup> ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Williams, R. (2008). *The non-designer's design book: Design and typographic principles for the visual novice* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Berkeley, CA: Peachpit Press.

#### *Required Software and Computer Accessories*

You must have ready, convenient access to the following:

- Microsoft Word. Any Towson student can purchase Microsoft Word, or the Office suite, at a regular academic discount from the University Union Bookstore.
- Instructables pro account for the duration of this course (Instructables has been kind enough to offer the class free pro membership for a year. Details to follow.)

- MadCap Flare (available through the VPN)
- Microphone (internal or external); camera optional
- Screencast software: Quicktime (<http://tinyurl.com/8vts>), Screencast-o-Matic (<http://tinyurl.com/22kowz>) [do not use Jing]

If you do not have access to any of the above items, contact me ASAP.

### Required Requisite Computer Technology Access and Knowledge

This course is delivered through Blackboard and Towson email. Students must have routine, ready access to computer technology and the requisite knowledge enabling them, at a minimum, to perform all of the following tasks efficiently:

- Send and receive Towson email. At a minimum, you must check your Towson email account daily.
- Create a folder for this course so that you may archive all messages you receive and send. You must keep copies of all class-related emails from me or classmates. Saving emails ensures you have proof of sending emails, submitting work, etc.
- Download and open PDF, Word, PowerPoint, and Internet files.
- Use Microsoft Word to produce well-formatted, easy-to-read documents fulfilling the requirements of written assignments; use Word's track changes feature.
- Use Blackboard to
  - read, download, and print pages and documents post messages to discussion boards, including messages with attached files;
  - submit assignments; and
  - upload files.

If you do not have the above knowledge or skills, please let me know immediately.

I have found that students who have an open and willing attitude to learning new technology find the learning experience more enjoyable. Take a positive approach to the new technologies you will be learning throughout the semester.

### Required File Naming Convention

People in a professional setting share a massive amount of information. To help ensure that no one's work will become lost over the course of the semester, you must the following naming convention for saving and submitting the work you complete:  
lastname\_prwr637s15\_assignmentname.docx

For example, my file for the doc design assignment would look like this  
angeli\_prwr637s15\_docdesign.docx

Any file not submitted in this form will not be counted, must be resubmitted, and will be considered late.

## Required Time Commitment

You plan on average to spend at least 6 to 9 hours a week to keep up and perform reasonably well. As in any new work routine, you may need more hours during the initial weeks as you learn to carry out the assignments in a way that balances efficiency (time required) and effectiveness (extent of coverage, depth of comprehension). You may need more time in some weeks to work on your major course project.

## My Responsibilities as Instructor

Throughout the course, I will do the following:

- Establish and explain course objectives, assignments, evaluation criteria, and schedule to ensure student comprehension
- Lead and moderate discussions, encouraging students to express their opinions
- Publish and maintain Blackboard site containing the course syllabus, the course schedule, an updated weekly agenda, explanations of assignments, a discussion board, and readings
- Maintain a regular schedule of office hours reserved for consultation with students and make myself accessible through email and Skype
- Review and comment on plans and drafts related to the project assignment (late assignments will not receive comments)
- Return graded evaluations of graded assignments within two weeks of when they are handed in
- Reply to emails within 24 hours Monday through Friday and within 36 hours Saturday and Sunday

## Your Responsibilities as a Student

To receive a credit-earning grade in this course, you are expected to do the following:

- Abide by the course policies
- Participate actively and cooperatively in discussions and group work
- Appropriately apply prerequisite knowledge, including:
  - citing and formatting papers following APA or CMS style;
  - using proper grammar and style;
  - revising writing; and
  - creating Microsoft Word documents.
- Ask questions regarding assignments, deadlines, concepts, etc.
- Post thoughtful, carefully written and edited analytical responses to prompts for every assigned online discussion
- Hand in carefully written and edited project documents that fulfill the purpose and scope detailed in the instructions for the assignment
- Demonstrate professional standards for reliability, communication, pro-active problem solving, critical analysis, and cooperation in working on group and individual projects

## Grading

The following chart outlines grade ranges and points. I will distribute grading criteria for assignments and projects on Blackboard.

<i>Percentage Range</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Quality Points</i>
100-93	A	4.00
92-90	A-	3.67
89-83	B+	3.33
82-75	B	3.00
74-50	C	2.00
0-49	F	0.00

The numerical course grade is determined by component grades given during the semester for the following activities and deliverables.

### **Class Discussion, Article Discussion, and Assignments 45%**

Each week you will contribute to class discussion and most weeks you will submit assignments. These assignments include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Composing an introductory memo
- Creating reader personas
- Completion of and review of sample instructions
- Writing instructions in various platforms
- Practicing writing HTML code

Assignments will be worth either five or three points. See the rubrics at the end of the syllabus for complete grading information.

As part of your discussion grade, you will lead class discussion once. We will read some scholarly articles from the technical communication and online help fields. These readings give you the opportunity to explore and enact research from the field's leading thinkers. You will lead a discussion about how you see the article expand your approach to online help creation. To accomplish this goal, you should do the following:

- Summarize your chosen reading
- Provide your impressions of the work and how it compares and contrasts to other course material
- Discuss the value of the work for the class and point out any contradictions or problems you notice
- Share any questions you still have about the reading<sup>1</sup>

Leading a class discussion will help you delve into your chosen reading and practice presenting your ideas to your peers.

### **Contributions to "Online Help Hall of Fame" 15%**

#### *Posting and Presenting Examples of Effective Online Help*

Each week, one student is responsible for posting and presenting an example of effective and ineffective online help. We will create a rubric together the first three weeks of the semester to determine what constitutes "effective" and "ineffective."

<sup>1</sup> Assignment adapted from Dr. Allen Brizee's technical writing class at Loyola University Maryland.

When it is your turn to post, evaluate your two examples using the rubric that we create as a class. Then, provide a brief justification, ~300 words for each example, based on readings and class discussion to support your evaluation. You should rely heavily on readings and class discussion to support your assessment; do not rely on your opinion alone. Posts are due by the start of class and are worth five points.

Sign up for a week on the Google doc at the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/n3mrz63>. Once everyone signs up, I will create a discussion board. You will post your examples to the discussion board by creating a new thread. You will present your entries at the start of class on the day that your entry is due.

### *Responding to Examples in Class*

Students not posting will offer feedback during the student's presentation. In this in-class discussion, thoughtfully respond to the student's selection and analysis. Do you agree with the student's justification? Why or why not? Can you provide additional justification as to why these examples are effective or ineffective?

### **Contributions to the MadCap Flare Repository 5%**

Post at least two MadCap Flare resources by the end of Week 7. Do not duplicate entries. When posting your resources, provide a brief description including the source's topic, purpose, and intended audience. You will create a thread for your posts in the "MadCap Flare Repository" discussion board. Each source is worth three points. See my post on the discussion board as an example.

### **Online Instructions Portfolio, Usability Report 35%**

Throughout the semester, you will create different versions of the same set of instructions; we will use Instructables and Flare. Different parts of your portfolio will be due throughout the semester. You will revise your instructions before turning in your final portfolio, which includes the following:

- Instructables (pictures, text, video [if you choose])
- Screencast of Flare project
- Brief usability report

The portfolio will be worth 100 points and is due at the end of the semester.

### **Additional Notes on Grading**

The numerical course grade is determined by component grades given during the semester for the following activities and deliverables. In general, the grades mean the following:

A range: Exceptional work. Work needs little to no revision and would be completely acceptable for its rhetorical situation. Student attended most, if not all, classes; was always prepared for class; and consistently and effectively participated in class discussions. Student clearly demonstrates characteristics and skills needed in the technical writing field.

- B range:** Above average work. Work needs some revision and is mostly acceptable for its rhetorical situation. Student attended most, if not all, classes; was mostly prepared for class; and participated effectively in class discussions. Student demonstrates most characteristics and skills needed in the technical writing field.
- C range:** Average work. Work needs revision and may or may not be acceptable for its rhetorical situation. Student may or may not have attended all classes; was not consistently prepared for class; and participated minimally or ineffectively in class discussions. Student may demonstrate characteristics and skills needed in the technical writing field but needs to improve.
- F:** Unacceptable work. Work would not be acceptable for its rhetorical situation. Student missed many classes, was not prepared, and did not participate. Student does not demonstrate characteristics and skills needed in the technical writing field.

The following items will count against your final grade:

- being absent
- delivering late or perfunctory contributions to online discussions
- routinely participating in discussions in a passive, pro-forma way
- failing to complete or doing rushed, unprofessional work.

This class requires a willingness to engage in hands-on learning and, to some extent, take risks with technology; as such, part of your final grade will account for your effort put into the course.

We will use two different rubrics this semester, both of which you can see on Blackboard and at the end of this syllabus: the “Five-point Rubric” and the “Three-point Rubric.” I will use the five-point rubric for assignments and discussion posts worth five points, such as your contribution to the “Online Help Hall of Fame.” I will use the three-point rubric for assignments worth three points. For these assignments, you will be assessed mostly on the level of completion your assignment reaches rather than your content/analysis, such as the introduction memo and your links to “MadCap Flare Repository.”

Regardless of rubrics, you should consider every piece of writing as piece “web ready.” What does that mean? Well, because this course teaches you how to create online help, you need to develop an approach and habits for web writing. You need to consider your content, tone, organization, attention to detail and coding, and grammar, always asking yourself, “Do I address my intended audience’s needs, values, and attitudes? Will any reader who comes across my writing understand my main idea?”

When grading your five-point discussions and assignments, I will ask myself, “Is this piece of writing ready to be live on the Internet right now?” As such, each assignment will be graded on a five-point scale: 5 (accept as is), 4 (accept with revisions), 3 (revise and resubmit), 2 (needs significant revisions), and 1 (reject). Please see Blackboard for the complete rubric.

Please note that you do not need to revise and resubmit an assignment that earns a 4, 3, 2, or 1. These numbers indicate ways you can improve your work. Moreover, these grades are not meant to punish you; rather, they indicate where you might need additional assistance. The concepts you will learn this semester need to develop over time. It's challenging to produce web-ready, exceptional work when you're learning a new technology or coding language. Remember that part of your final grade accounts for your effort.

### **Deadlines for Assignments and Penalties for Missing Them**

Most assignments are due by Sundays at midnight unless otherwise noted. If you are commenting on a "Hall of Fame" post, you must post your comment by Sunday at midnight. Remember that you need to reply to six of your colleagues throughout the semester.

All assignments are due on the due date. I will post deadlines for all assignments well in advance. Late posts will receive zero credit and no feedback unless you have received an extension. If a serious and unavoidable problem arises, however, you should contact me in writing prior to the deadline to determine whether or not an extension for the work will or will not be granted.

### **Absences**

This class is a community of learners. It is vital that you do your share of community building. You will learn from one another. Given the importance of student-student and student-teacher interaction in this course, there are penalties for missing class.

#### *What Counts as an Absence?*

You are absent if you miss a class or arrive/leave more than 30 minutes into class. Don't miss class unless you have no choice. Missing class will affect your course grade.

From the Towson student handbook:

"Should the student be absent from a significant portion of the course, the instructor will make the decision about whether the student can meet the learning objectives and course requirements in order to pass the course and communicate this to the student in a timely manner.

If a student expects a period of prolonged absence, he or she must submit a plan for completion of missed experiences including time frame for the approval of the faculty. This plan is to be submitted prior to the expected prolonged absence.

Students are expected to adhere to all university attendance policies. Students who are absent from class are responsible for any missed work.

Absences due to illness, bereavement, or athletic events require documentation in order to be considered for an excused absence. Absences due to religious holidays are excused on the holiday date(s). Absences due to travel associated with observance of religious holidays are unexcused."

You can miss one class without penalties. Do your best to be present each week in case you need to miss class unexpectedly. Email or call me if you must miss class.

### *Penalties for Absences*

At the end of the course, I add up the absences to see if a course grade penalty applies. If you have more than one absence that does not fall within the parameters of the handbook guidelines, the following penalties apply:

- Two absences lowers a final grade by half a letter grade.
- Three absences lowers a final grade by a whole grade.
- Four or more absences results in an F for the course.

### Code of Conduct

Students are expected to govern their online and face-to-face communication and interaction to the norms of courteous and respectful behavior that are a hallmark of community life at Towson University. Unfortunately, online communication often disinhibits people, leading a few to say things in writing that most educated adults would consider unprofessional or seriously offensive.

You should not post to Blackboard or write in an email to me or any fellow student anything that you would consider inappropriate to say out loud in a whole-class discussion. I will caution and counsel violators of these norms in private. Repeated serious violations will be reported to the Graduate Studies Committee, as stipulated in the Graduate School catalog.

### Academic Integrity

You will be held to the traditional standards for academic honesty, which are codified for Towson University students in the Student Academic Integrity Policy (<http://tinyurl.com/bkdjndg>). Violating this policy is likely to have grave consequences for your grade in the course and could even lead, in severe cases, to dismissal from the university.

Students caught cheating will immediately receive a grade of F on the assignment and may result in a grade of F in the course, depending on the severity of the situation. I will report the incident to the Office of Judicial Affairs. For definitions of cheating, see Appendix F of the Undergraduate Catalog, particularly the sections on plagiarism and cheating, sections V.A. and V.C.

To ensure you do not plagiarize, we will use APA or CMS citation style. Consult APA or CMS citation rules online (Purdue OWL: APA [<http://tinyurl.com/qy22v>], APA Style Blog [<http://blog.apastyle.org/>], Purdue OWL: CMS [<http://tinyurl.com/9bbav4p>]). You may also buy the APA Manual, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (<http://tinyurl.com/7lbtsv2>) or the CMS, 16<sup>th</sup> edition (<http://tinyurl.com/byskp9l>).

## Students Needing Accommodation for a Disability

Students needing accommodation due to a disability should contact me. You will need a statement from Disability Support Services authorizing your accommodation. You may contact Towson's Disability Support Services (<http://tinyurl.com/a49wp8r>) at 410-704-2638.

## Bibliography

In addition to the required and recommended books, you will be reading, in whole or in part, the works listed below. Electronic copies are provided on Blackboard. Please know that we may be reading additional texts to the ones listed below; I will keep you posted.

Fisher, J. (1999). Technical communicators and online help: The developers' and users' perspectives. *Technical Communication*, 46(3), 360-365.

Gregory, J. (2004). Writing for the Web versus writing for print: Are they really so different? *Technical Communication*, 51(2), 276-285.

InfoPros. (2008). Why online help? Benefits and Implementation Options. Colorado Springs, CO: InfoPros.

Lockett Zuback, C. (2003). The return to content in help design. *Intercom*, January 2003, 8-12.

Novick, D. J., & Ward, K. (2006). What users say they want in documentation. Proceedings from: *SIGDOC'06*. Myrtle Beach, SC.

Swarts, J. (2012). New modes of help: Best practices for instructional video. *Technical Communication*, 59(3), 195-206.

Wright, M. G. (2002). Designing a table of contents. *Intercom*, November 2002, 18- 21.

## Course Schedule\*

Please use this schedule for long-range planning. I will post a weekly schedule every Friday by 9am.

Week, Topic	Readings	Deliverables
1: 1/26 Intro to the Course, "Help," and Each Other	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Syllabus</li> <li>2. Fisher, "Technical Communicators and Online Help" (PDF)</li> <li>3. InfoPros, "Why Online Help?" (PDF)</li> </ol>	
2: 2/2 Intro to Instructables, Flare, Online Help	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corbin, "Design Aspects for Online Help," <a href="http://tinyurl.com/acmzzob">http://tinyurl.com/acmzzob</a></li> <li>2. "About Instructables": <a href="http://www.instructables.com/about/">http://www.instructables.com/about/</a></li> <li>3. "An Introduction to MadCap Flare": <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jA_JI6t-nmE">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jA_JI6t-nmE</a></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Post, print introduction memo.</li> <li>2. Check out Hall of Fame rubric.</li> </ol>
3: 2/9 Content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Redish: Ch. 1</li> <li>2. Krug: Ch. 2</li> <li>3. Lockett Zuback, "The Return to Content in Help Design"</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find online instructions on Instructables you can complete at home. Post the URL, complete the instructions (take pictures or video), post a review about the experience.</li> <li>2. Add to HoF Rubric.</li> </ol>
4: 2/16 Audience Analysis, Reader Personas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Redish: Ch. 2</li> <li>2. Novick and Ward, "What Users Say They Want in Documentation" (PDF)</li> <li>3. DeVore, "Online Help Documentation – 5 Keys to Making It Work," <a href="http://tinyurl.com/aybpk3d">http://tinyurl.com/aybpk3d</a></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decide on the instructions you'll use for your portfolio.</li> <li>2. Compose three reader personas.</li> <li>3. Begin writing your instructions in Word.</li> <li>4. First HOF due.</li> </ol>
5: 2/23 Organization, Navigation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Redish: Ch. 5, 6, and 8</li> <li>2. Gregory, "Writing for the Web Versus for Print" (PDF)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find similar instructions online in a variety of formats, noting similarities in the instructions'</li> </ol>

		<p>organization and navigation.</p> <p>2. Post your Instructables; save as draft. Add me as a collaborator.</p>
6: 3/2 Design, Using Images	<p>1. Creative Commons:  <a href="http://creativecommons.org/about">http://creativecommons.org/about</a>  <a href="http://creativecommons.org/licenses/">http://creativecommons.org/licenses/</a>  <a href="http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/">http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/</a></p> <p>2. TBD</p>	1. Add images to your Instructables, paying attention to how you label your images.
7: 3/9 Usability	<p>1. Krug: Ch. 1 and 9</p> <p>2. Cathedral of the Incarnation Usability Draft</p>	<p>1. Compose a protocol you'd like participants to complete.</p> <p>2. Make a list of potential usability participants.</p>
8: Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break
9: 3/23 Video Instructions	<p>1. In-person or Skype Conference</p> <p>2. Swarts, "New Modes of Help"</p>	1. Bring questions to your conference.
10: 3/30 Single-sourcing, MadCap Flare	1. MadCap tutorial	
11: 4/6 Styles, XML	<p>1. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cvtj8pr">"Templates for Online Help Projects"</a> (<a href="http://tinyurl.com/cvtj8pr">http://tinyurl.com/cvtj8pr</a>)</p> <p>2. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cxacsfa">"Style Basics in Word"</a> (<a href="http://tinyurl.com/cxacsfa">http://tinyurl.com/cxacsfa</a>)</p> <p>3. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/lhcf">"HTML Tutorial"</a> (<a href="http://tinyurl.com/lhcf">http://tinyurl.com/lhcf</a>)</p> <p>4. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/lpcyy">"JavaScript Tutorial"</a> (<a href="http://tinyurl.com/lpcyy">http://tinyurl.com/lpcyy</a>)</p> <p>5. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/4s6ny">"XML Tutorial"</a> (<a href="http://tinyurl.com/4s6ny">http://tinyurl.com/4s6ny</a>)</p>	1. Not to be turned in: Import Word doc instructions into Flare
12: 4/13 Chunking Information, TOCs	<p>1. Poulsen, "Three Core Topic Types" (Readings)</p> <p>2. Wright, "Designing a Table of Contents" (Readings)</p> <p>3. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/bpyx7pa">Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 in Flare's "Table of Contents Guide"</a> (<a href="http://tinyurl.com/bpyx7pa">http://tinyurl.com/bpyx7pa</a>)</p>	<p>1. Create TOC for your Flare project</p> <p>2. Post a screenshot of your TOC in Flare</p>
13: 4/20 Indexes, Revising Content	<p>1. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/4tqko27">"How to Create a Usable Index"</a> McGhie podcast (<a href="http://tinyurl.com/4tqko27">http://tinyurl.com/4tqko27</a>)</p> <p>2. <a href="#">Chapters 1, 2, and 3 in Flare's "Indexing Guide"</a></p>	<p>1. Create Index for your Flare project</p> <p>2. Post a screenshot of your Index in Flare</p>

	( <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cxdw46c">http://tinyurl.com/cxdw46c</a> ) 3. Redish: Ch. 9, 10, and 11	
14: 4/27 FAQs, Screencasting	1. Noedlner, " <a href="http://tinyurl.com/bq8wokm">FAQs on the Web</a> " ( <a href="http://tinyurl.com/bq8wokm">http://tinyurl.com/bq8wokm</a> ) 2. Moreo et al., "FAQtory" (PDF) 3. Rauch, " <a href="http://tinyurl.com/buejjpp">Successful Strategies for Continuous Improvement</a> " ( <a href="http://tinyurl.com/buejjpp">http://tinyurl.com/buejjpp</a> ) 4. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c8jjbuc">Screencast-o-matic</a> ( <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c8jjbuc">http://tinyurl.com/c8jjbuc</a> ); CIAT Screencast-o-matic Instructions (Readings) OR <a href="http://tinyurl.com/337pm">QuickTime</a> ( <a href="http://tinyurl.com/337pm">http://tinyurl.com/337pm</a> ); " <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cmqqpzo">Capture Video with QuickTime Screen Recording</a> " ( <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cmqqpzo">http://tinyurl.com/cmqqpzo</a> )	1. Post a sample screencast (using either screencast-o-matic or QuickTime)
15: 5/4 Flare Output/Targets, Screencaptures	1. Ellison, " <a href="http://tinyurl.com/yc6gxd">Generating Quality Output from MadCap Flare or Blaze</a> " ( <a href="http://tinyurl.com/yc6gxd">http://tinyurl.com/yc6gxd</a> ) 2. " <a href="http://tinyurl.com/d367c8u">MadCap Flare Demo Projects</a> " ( <a href="http://tinyurl.com/d367c8u">http://tinyurl.com/d367c8u</a> ) 3. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cfcf4z3">Ch. 1, 2, 3, and 6 in Flare's "Target Guides"</a> (skim ch. 4, 5, and 7-10 as needed) ( <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cfcf4z3">http://tinyurl.com/cfcf4z3</a> ) 4. Gellevij and van der Meij, "Empirical Proof for Presenting Screen Captures in Software Documentation" (PDF)	1. Peer review usability reports
16: 5/11 TBD	TBD	TBD
Finals Week 5/18, 5:15-7:15pm	Portfolio due	Upload as one discussion post: 1. A single PDF with: Completed instructable as PDF, usability report (include instructable URL) 2. ~90-second screencast tour of MadCap Flare workspace (do not post it as a .swf [Flash] file)

\*Subject to change. I will notify you in class and through email and Blackboard of all changes.

## Blackboard Rubrics

### Five-point Rubric

Name	Five-point Rubric
Description	Your work will be graded according to this question: "Is this piece of writing ready to be published on the Internet?" As such, I will be assessing your work as a web editor would assess your writing. Because this course teaches you about creating online help, this rubric is intended to help you develop the mindset, habits, and skills you'll need to write on the web.

Criteria	Levels of Achievement				
	Accept as is	Accept with revisions	Revise and resubmit	Needs serious revisions	Reject
Content, Organization, Grammar	<p><b>5 Points</b>                      Exceptional work. Assignment/discussion demonstrates author fully, clearly understood and addressed requirements, producing exceptional work. If required, the author incorporates readings, demonstrating the student's complete, exceptional understanding of the topics. Student demonstrates critical thinking. Student clearly, fully responds to the audience's needs, values, and expectations. Tone, style, and formatting is appropriate for its intended audience. Contains no distracting grammar and/or mechanics errors.</p>	<p><b>4 Points</b>                      Above average. Assignment/discussion demonstrates author understood and addressed requirements, producing above average work. If required, the author incorporates readings, demonstrating the student's above average understanding of the topics. Student responds to the audience's needs, values, and expectations. Tone, style, and formatting is mostly appropriate for its intended audience. Contains some distracting grammar and/or mechanics errors.</p>	<p><b>3 Points</b>                      Average. Assignment/discussion demonstrates author understood and addressed requirements, producing average work. If required, the author incorporates readings, demonstrating the student's basic understanding of the topics. Student mostly responds to the audience's needs, values, and expectations. Tone, style, and formatting may or may not be appropriate for its intended audience. Contains multiple, repeated grammar and/or mechanics errors.</p>	<p><b>2 Points</b>                      Below average. Assignment/discussion demonstrates author may not have understood and/or addressed requirements. If required, the author does not incorporate readings. If the author incorporated readings, the writing indicates the author may not have understood basic concepts in the readings. Student does not respond to the audience's needs, values, and expectations. Tone, style, and formatting is not appropriate for its intended audience. Contains grammar and/or mechanics error that impede the audience's ability to understand the writing.</p>	<p><b>1 Points</b>                      Well below average. Assignment does not meet requirements. Indicates author did not understand readings/assignment requirement/audience needs, values, and expectations. Tone, style, and formatting indicate author did not understand the audience's needs. Contains grammar and/or mechanics errors that result in unintelligible writing.</p>

### Three-point Rubric

Name	Three-point Rubric
Description	Assignments will be assessed based on their level of completion.

Criteria	Levels of Achievement		
	Fully Completed	Mostly Completed	Missing Required Information
Content, Organization, Grammar	<p><b>3 Points</b>                      Assignment contains all of the required components and fully, thoroughly addresses the requirements. Student fully and completely explains him/herself and does not leave reader with questions. The post is clearly written with little to no grammar errors.</p>	<p><b>2 Points</b>                      Assignment is missing a few required components as listed in "Fully Completed" column. Assignment is mostly complete and mostly answers reader's questions. Assignment may contain distracting grammar errors.</p>	<p><b>1 Points</b>                      Assignment is missing over 50% of the required components and/or assignment indicates student did not understand the assignment. May contain evidence of rushed, unprofessional work.</p>