**Detailed Schedule**

## WEEK 1: INTRODUCTIONS

**Thurs, Jan. 7**

- What is a public? What is an "issue of public importance"? How are you already "in public," and what public issues are you already engaged in? We'll consider concerns of public importance you have some level of contact with through existing communities you participate in, where you live, that you've encountered as a student at Pitt, that you engage with through your major or career aspirations, through family members and friends, etc.

*After class I will send everyone invitations to be administrators on the class blog. To accept the invitation you'll have to do two things: 1) Register for an account on WordPress.com with your Pitt email address using the following link: https://wordpress.com/start/account/user. You must use this link if you just want a username and not (yet) a blog of your own. 2) Follow the link in the email you receive to accept the invitation.*

## WEEK 2: "MY STORY" BRAINSTORMING & BLOG PREPARATIONS

*Reminder! Commonplace Log participation is due the evening prior to class. So long as I see your contribution by the time I wake up in the morning (around 7am) I will count your contribution as on-time.*

**Tues, Jan 12:**

- **Read:** Spend at least one hour looking around the Internet for blogs related to two to three issues of public importance you genuinely care about.
- **Post to the Commonplace Log (CPL) by Monday evening:** From one of the blogs you discovered, post a substantial passage (a full paragraph or two short ones) or a feature/example (an image by screenshot, if you like) along with the hyperlink for the source that feels representative of the what it is "to blog" as you are coming to understand it, and that seems interesting to you personally (perhaps because of the content, but think also about methods and media). *Represent the example in full (don't just provide the link and tell us where to look).* Offer a few sentences of reflection on what this example revealed to you about blogs as a mode of public writing. What are blogs, and what do they allow writers to do?
- **In-Class:** Be prepared to discuss your CPL contribution as an extended introduction to yourself in-class. What does this example tell you about blogs and blogging? What does your choice of this example tell *the rest of us* about *you*? We'll also talk about the "My Story"/Topic Proposal project.

**Thurs, Jan 14:**

- **Read:** Bowdon & Scott's "A Rhetorical Toolbox for Technical and Professional Communication" (PDF on Courseweb).

- **Write:** Your contributor bio for the blog. Submit it to the discussion board thread called "Contributor Bios" with a photo (it need not be of your face). Roughly 200 to 300 words.
- **Post to the CPL by Wednesday evening** one passage from Bowdon & Scott that feels particularly meaningful to your purposes of designing the class blog and/or your "My Story" projects. In  your reflective sentences, tell us why. Remember, too, to connect and dialogue with what others have contributed already in the thread.

*Discussion forum threads for blog planning open on Courseweb after class on Thursday. Bloggers. Group 1 blogs (all), group 2a designs/generates other content, and the remaining group 2 members comment. Here are your blogging groups:*

- *Group 1a: Aliyah, Kayla, Max*
- *Group 1b: Abbot, Severin, Chris, Tara*
- *Group 1c: Amber, Anna, Vikas*
- *Group 2a: Bobby, Maizee, Allison, Jenna*
- *Group 2b: Sam, Elena, Krystina, Shariq*
- *Group 2c: Dylan, Stephanie, Sara*

## WEEK 3: THE THIRST PROJECT & BLOGGING, ROUND 1

*The brainstorming stage ends by Sunday at the latest, at which point the concept/theme for this round should have been chosen and a sense of what needs to be done for the design/other content should be decided.*

### Tues, Jan 19

- **Blog Preparation by Monday evening at 10pm:** Bloggers and designers pitch micro-drafts to the discussion board on Courseweb by Monday evening. These need not be full drafts, but should articulate how you, individually, will contribute to the week's theme and/or the design/other content for the blog. **Up until class time Tuesday**, commenters respond to micro-drafts with feedback to help content creators finalize their content. We'll spend some time in class debriefing about the discussion and finalizing decisions, as needed.
- **Read:** Spend *at least* an hour reading about the Thirst Project, a clean water initiative and well-building non-profit with a clear target audience: high school and college-aged people (Pitt has a group) with a clear issue of public importance: communities without access to clean water. Spend most of your time on the website, but also take a look at Maxwell's Twitter and LinkedIn profile, his TedXYouth@Hollywood talk, and other media linked to from these profiles. Google the organization to find out other media related to the organization.
- **Post to the CPL by Monday evening** a substantial excerpt from any media authored by the Thirst Project or Maxwell himself that gives you inspiration for your "My Story" project and your own public persona. As always, post the excerpt/example and a few sentences of reflection.
- **Write:** Be working on your "My Story"/Topic Proposal drafts.

### Thurs, Jan 21

- **Blog goes live by Wednesday evening at 10pm:** All posts, design decisions, and other content must be posted. Commenters respond to two posts by the start of class.

- **Read:** The blog. Also, Mehreen Kasana's "Feminisms and the Social Media Sphere" (PDF).
- **Post to the CPL by Wednesday evening** any passage from Kasana that was striking to you. Reflect on why and in relation to the work you all just started on your own blog.
- **In-class:** About half of class will be dedicated to an after-blog workshop. Our designers/other content creators will offer the informal tutorials on how they did what they did on WordPress, and I'll facilitate a discussion based on examples/excerpts from this round of blogging that will help you think about what you might do in the next round.

## WEEK 4: RHETORIC (TAKE 2) & "MY STORY" PROJECT/TOPIC PROPOSALS

**Tues, Jan 26:**

- **Read:** Grabill, "The Work of Rhetoric in the Common Places: An Essay on Rhetorical Methodology," (PDF)  *Note! This article is short but will likely feel a bit difficult, so take your time with it. It will ask you to rethink rhetoric as posed by Bowdon & Scott, so be attentive to that shift.*
- **Post to the CPL by Monday evening** a substantial passage that you felt traction with in terms of what Grabill is trying to say about his "rhetorical methodology." Offer a few sentences of reflection on why the passage seemed significant to what we're doing, either as related to your "My Story" projects, or toward your understanding of rhetoric (or, ideally, both of these things). Latch on where you can, and help each other out.
- **Write:** Continue to work on your "My Story" projects/topic proposals. Drafts are due for workshop Wednesday night.
- **In-Class:** Grabill says: "Politics–and rhetoric–is a process of collecting. To do rhetoric is to associate. Rhetoric makes things… it exceeds the capacity of the individual" (265). Consider what your "My Story" project and the subsequent work you'll do can *make* in light of Grabill's approach to rhetorical methodology. Remembering that your "My Story" is only one part of the beginning of this "knowledge work," freewrite about the work you want to do with your chosen issue of public importance from the terms Grabill offers on pg. 258: Detection, Rendering, Assembly, Calculation, and Communication. Begin by describing what you think Grabill means in your own words, and then attempt to flesh out each aspect for your own project(s). Take your time — you'll have 30 minutes.

## Thurs, Jan 28 *"My Story" Project Workshop*

- *Drafts due by Wednesday evening!*
- **In-Class:** Workshop.

*Discussion forum threads for blog planning open on Courseweb after class on Thursday. Group 2 blogs (all), group 1a designs and generates other content, and the remainin group 1 members comment.*

## WEEK 5: DOING RHETORIC (case studies) & BLOGGING, ROUND 2

*The brainstorming stage ends by Sunday at the latest, at which point the concept/theme for this round should have been chosen and a sense of what needs to be done for the design/other content should be decided.*

**Tues, Feb 2**

- *My Story" Projects due, including reflective cover letters, by class time.*
- **Blog Preparation by Monday evening at 10pm:** Bloggers and designers pitch micro-drafts to the discussion board on Courseweb. **Up until class time Tuesday,** commenters respond to micro-drafts with feedback to help content creators finalize their content.
- **Read:** Spend at least an hour searching the Internet for White Papers dedicated to some aspect of your issue of public importance (the issue itself, another related issue, a case example from another community, etc.).
- **Post to the CPL by Monday evening** an excerpt from a White Paper (with the link) and a few sentences of reflection on what seem to be the conventional features of the genre. Be prepared to discuss your examples in class.
- **In-class:** We'll discuss the examples you looked through and talk about your own White Paper projects. *Note! It will be to your benefit to start researching your topic in more depth immediately!*

## Thurs, Feb 4

- **Blog goes live Wednesday evening at 10pm:** All posts, design decisions, and other content must be posted. Commenters, read and comment on *two* posts by the start of class.
- **Read:** Case examples from Jessica Farris, policy and advocacy counsel for the ACLU of Southern California. "Making Smart Decisions About Surveillance: A Guide for Communities" (PDF), drone paper delivery on ACLU of SoCal's YouTube Channel. Remember to read with purpose — for your sense of the genre, the rhetorical moves the authors are making, and any other details that will be useful for your execution of the genre (unless, of course, the topic is relevant to your interests).
- **By Wednesday evening, post to the CPL** an excerpt from the White Paper or an example (include timestamp) from the video that taught you something "surprising" (unexpected, interesting, confusing) about the white paper genre.
- **In-class:** Designers give informal tutorials on what they created/designed on WordPress, and we'll do an after-blog workshop as usual.

## WEEK 6: WHITE PAPER WORKSHOPS

### Tues, Feb. 9 *White Paper Workshop #1*

- **Read:** Drucker, "Diagrammatic Writing" (PDF)
- **Write:** Bring *three* hardcopies of one full page (single-spaced) of your White Paper draft to class without any kind of formatting (no paragraphs or margins, nothing beyond the 12-point font you typed it in).

### Thurs, Feb 11 *White Paper Workshop #2*

- *Full drafts of your White Papers due by Wednesday evening!*
- **In-class:** Workshop.

*Discussion forum threads for blog planning open on Courseweb after class on Thursday. Group 1 blogs, group 2b designs and generates other content, and the remaining group 2 members comment.*

## WEEK 7: VISUAL ARGUMENTS & BLOGGING, ROUND 3

*The brainstorming stage ends by Sunday at the latest, at which point the concept/theme for this round should have been chosen and a sense of what needs to be done for the design/other content should be decided.*

**Tues, Feb 16**

- *White Papers due, including reflective cover letters, by class time.*
- **Blog Preparation by Monday evening at 10pm:** Bloggers and designers pitch micro-drafts to the discussion board on Courseweb. **Up until class time Tuesday,** commenters respond to micro-drafts with feedback to help content creators finalize their content.
- **Read/Make/Explore:** "Ending the Infographic Plague" by Megan McCardle and examples from Daily Infographic. Spend at least an hour playing with infographic making using Canva, a free graphic maker platform using data you gathered from your White Paper.
- **Post to the CPL by Monday evening** one infographic example that seems enticing/exciting and one that seems deceptive (in light of McCardle). Reflect on what feels powerful about visual arguments in graphical forms, and what feels… not so much.
- **In-Class:** We'll discuss the visual argument assignment and several case examples.

**Thurs, Feb 18**

- **Blog goes live by Wednesday evening at 10pm:** All posts, design decisions, and other content must be posted. **By the start of class** commenters respond to two posts.
- **Read:** "Composing for Recomposition: Rhetorical Velocity and Delivery" by Ridolfo & DeVoss.
- **Post to the CPL by Wednesday evening** one substantial passage from Ridolfo & DeVoss and try to connect their theories to any example of a kind of *visual* text (other than infographics) composed with recomposition in mind. If you can, provide a hyperlink to that text. Offer a few lines of reflection about the connection you're reading between Ridolfo & DeVoss's text and your example.
- **In-Class:** Designers give informal tutorials on what they created/designed on WordPress, and we'll do an after-blog workshop as usual.

*At this point you should begin to consider who you would like to interview for your profile pieces, which we'll focus on after spring break. Logistics can be difficult, so it will be to your benefit to at least schedule your interviews with your subject (and plan for a back-up!) as soon as possible. Interviews should occur (in person or over video chat or email) by March 20th at the latest. Ideally you will also want time to ask some follow-up questions, as needed.*

**WEEK 8: VISUAL ARGUMENT WORKSHOP & INTERVIEW PLANNING**

**Tues, Feb 23**

- **Read/Watch:** Case examples, video projects, & social media campaigns and interviews. Video: "Road Warriors 360" by Jeff Read, "Message to the World," by Louis Cole, "I Cycled 3500 Miles Across America!" by JP Schultz. Web/Media Campaign: The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty, and the Google Image result showing some of the circulated images from the campaign, and a more recent interview about the campaign. More Instagram pages for non-profits: ASPCA, Edutopia, and FeedingAmerica.

- **Post to the CPL by Monday evening:** Either from these examples or from another campaign you're aware of, share an example that has been helpful to you thinking either of your visual arguments and their eventual release on your final websites (and social media, if you like). Reflect on what seems to circulate well and why, and how you'll take these realizations into consideration in your revisions and finalizing your visual argument projects.

**Thurs, Feb 25** _**Visual Argument workshop.**_

- _Full drafts due to Courseweb by Wednesday evening._
- **Read:** "Tips for Interviewing," and "How to Write a Profile Feature Article" Spend at least one additional hour looking around the web for interviews and profile pieces related to people involved in your issue. Consider not only text-based interviews but those captured in podcasts as well.
- ~~**Post to the CPL by Wednesday evening** a substantial excerpt and link from an interview you encountered that offers you help with interview questions that solicit good, in-depth answers. Spend your reflection time drafting a handful (four to six) of the interview questions you will want to ask your interviewee, as inspired by any of the texts you've encountered (either ones I assigned you or others you found). As always provide hyperlinks wherever possible.~~ **Nevermind about the CPL! Just focus on your drafts. We'll get to brainstorming questions in class.**
- **In-class:** We'll spend half of class with visual arguments and half on interviewing, preparing for your upcoming interviews.

_Discussion forum threads for blog planning open on Courseweb after class on Thursday. Group 2 blogs, group 1b designs, and the remaining members of group 1 comment._

## WEEK 9: INQUIRY AS SOCIAL ACTION & BLOGGING, ROUND 4

_The brainstorming stage ends by Sunday at the latest, at which point the concept/theme for this round should have been chosen and a sense of what needs to be done for the design/other content should be decided._

**Tues, March 1**

- _Visual Arguments due, including reflective cover letters, by class time._
- **Blog Preparation by Monday evening at 10pm:** Bloggers and designers pitch micro-drafts to the discussion board on Courseweb. **Up until class time Tuesday,** commenters respond to micro-drafts with feedback to help content creators finalize their content.
- **Read:** Rice, "Inquiry as Social Action." Stop half-way through page 179 (before the Models section). We'll read the second half for Tuesday.
- **Post to the CPL by Monday evening** one substantial passage from Rice where you feel like you're getting some traction, and in your reflection seek to re-describe, extend, or complicate the position she presents in the passage you chose.

**Thurs, March 3**

- **Blog goes live by Wednesday evening at 10pm:** All posts, design decisions, and other content must be posted. **By the start of class** commenters respond to two posts.
- **Read:** The rest of Rice's piece.

- **Post to the CPL by Monday evening** a passage that makes you rethink or reevaluate something from your independent projects, in terms of moving forward toward your rationale, profile piece, and final site.
- **In-Class:** Design tutorials and blog workshop.

*Make sure that you've at least scheduled or completed the interview (for in-person conversation, video chat, or email) with the subject of your profile piece by this point. The interview must be completed by March 20, at the latest!*

**SPRING BREAK, March 6-13**

**WEEK 10: PROJECT RATIONALES**

**Tues, March 15** *Project Rationale Workshop #1*

- **Write:** Bring in three hardcopies of the first page of your project rationale.
- **CPL by Monday evening:** Read back on our CPL forum to earlier weeks. See if you can identify how and when your perspectives on rhetorical action changed, evolved, or regressed. The rationale is your time to revitalize your commitment to this issue of public importance. Repost a passage or example from previous forum threads (either one you posted, or one someone else did) that you feel as though you're addressing in some way through the opening gesture of your project rationale.

**Thurs, March 17** *Project Rationale Workshop #2*

- *Full drafts due to Courseweb by Wednesday evening.*
- **In-class:** Workshop

*Discussion forum threads for blog planning open on Courseweb after class on Thursday. Group 1 blogs, group 2c designs, and the remaining members of group 2 comment.*

**WEEK 11: PROFILES & BLOGGING, ROUND 5**

*The brainstorming stage ends by Sunday at the latest, at which point the concept/theme for this round should have been chosen and a sense of what needs to be done for the design/other content should be decided.*

**Tues, March 22**

- *Project Rationales due, including reflective cover letters, by class time.*
- **Blog Preparation by Monday evening at 10pm:** Bloggers and designers pitch micro-drafts to the discussion board on Courseweb. **Up until class time Tuesday:** commenters respond to micro-drafts with feedback to help content creators finalize their content.
- **Read:** "Our Demand is Simple: Stop Killing Us," by Jay King Caspian, profile piece on Johnetta Elzie and DeRay Mckesson.
- **Post to the CPL by Monday evening:** A passage that helps you understand the journalistic option for the profile piece, and reflections on how you would incorporate similar moves in your own pieces, if you take the journalistic approach.

- **In-Class:** Zuckerberg interview, Internet.org.

**Thurs, March 24** ***Guest Speaker: Peggy Paul Casella of Thursday Night Pizza***

**Blog goes live by Wednesday evening at 10pm:** All posts, design decisions, and other content must be posted. **By the start of class** commenters respond to two posts.

**Read:** We'll be speaking in class over Skype with Peggy Paul Casella (for about 45 minutes of class), freelance writer and cookbook editor, and author of the blog Thursday Night Pizza. She also works as a produce peddler and writer for Fair Food in Philadelphia, a local and organic non-profit organization "Dedicated to bringing locally grown food to the marketplace and to promoting a humane, sustainable agriculture system for the Greater Philadelphia region." Please read/listen to the following in preparation for our chat.

- Peggy's Pizza Blog: http://www.thursdaynightpizza.com/, and the related Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/thursdaynightpizza?fref=ts

- Peggy's Professional Website: http://www.peggy-paul.com/

- Twitter: https://twitter.com/thursnightpizza

- A local Philadelphia food podcast (Peg's part is about 2/3 of the way through), "Local Mouthful:" http://www.podcastchart.com/podcasts/local-mouthful/episodes/episode-101-turkey-burgers-dry-july-and-peggy-paul-casella-on-homemade-pizza

- Newsletters for Fair Food Philly: Countdown to the Brewer's Plate,  A Fail Safe Template for Winter Soups, and Natural Remedies for Cold-Weather Ailments
- A few samples from her monthly column at GRID Magazine (a Philly-based print mag focused on sustainability): Add Flavor to Your Food, Get to the Root of the Season, and Robust Winter Vegetables

- **Read also:** "Ten Hurdles to Narrative Journalism," by Bob Baker. I doubt we'll get to discuss it, but it's full of practical advice for your profile pieces.
- **Post to the CPL by Wednesday evening:** Striking examples from Peggy's work, with at least two questions you'd like to ask her during our chat.
- **In-class:** Designers give informal tutorials on what they created/designed on WordPress, and we'll do an after-blog workshop.

## WEEK 12: PROFILES WORKSHOPS

**Tues, March 29**

- **Read:** Read Tidwell, "Making It Look Good," and "Organizing the Page" (PDFs)
- **Make:** a new site on WordPress dedicated to your issue of public importance. Choose your theme and start putting the skeleton of your profile piece together, with media pieces apart from the text you intend to use. Save this as a drafted page or post so you do not publish it pre-

emptively. Keep in mind that many features are pre-determined by WordPress, but many you can manipulate.

- **Post to your CPL by Monday evening** a passage from Tidwell that was either a good reminder you'd forgotten, or a tip for web writing that you hadn't yet considered even in your time writing for the blog so far this term that you'll consider as you move into your own website.

**Thurs, March 31**

- *Full drafts of profile pieces due to Coursweb by Wednesday evening.*
- **In-class:** Workshop. Remember that you're "releasing" these pieces on a start at your final websites. Make sure to turn in your link with your interviewee consent form *not* a Word document with your profile piece draft written out. Even in the draft phase we want to see the piece in place.

*Discussion forum threads for blog planning open on Courseweb after class on Thursday.* **Final blogging session!** *Group 2 blogs, group 1c designs, and the remaining members of group 1 comment.*

## WEEK 13: COMPOSING FOR THE WEB & BLOGGING, ROUND 6

**Tues, April 5**

- *Profile Pieces due, including reflective cover letters, by class time.*
- **Blog Preparation by Monday evening at 10pm:** Bloggers and designers pitch micro-drafts to the discussion board on Courseweb. **Up until class time Tuesday:** commenters respond to micro-drafts with feedback to help content creators finalize their content.
- **Read:** Return to read through all of the posts on the blog that you were not a commenter for, remembering what was done each round and thinking about final moves you think the group should make to finalize and polish the site this week.
- **CPL by Monday evening:** Post to the CPL a passage from the blog from one of your peers' posts or comments that really had an impact on you (for whatever reason) that helps you to think about what you want to do in your blog/website for your final project. Reflect thoughtfully (remembering that you're citing a peer now) on how and why this is the case, as derived from the example you cite.
- **In-Class:** Blog-in-review discussion.

**Thurs, April 7: No Class. I will be at a conference.**

- *Work on your final websites.*
- **Blog goes live by Wednesday evening at 10pm:** All posts, design decisions, and other content must be posted. **By 11am** commenters respond to two posts.

## WEEKS 14 & 15: INFORMAL PRESENTATIONS/WORKSHOPS

- In the last weeks of term we'll have each member of class offer brief tours of their final website-in-progress and solicit their peers for help with any remaining concerns or questions.

To prepare for your presentations, map out as much of your website as you can put together in the time you have. Obviously people who present earlier will have less completed than those who present later. Come prepared to explain your rhetorical situation and how you've chosen to respond to it through your website, and give a tour of what you've done and what you plan to do. Prepare in advance two or three questions or concerns you want to solicit your peers for feedback (do no just ask, "what do you think?"). Take advantage of your peers' experiences to solicit feedback especially when you feel stuck or unsure. Don't worry if the site is still a bit messy — that means you're still in problem-solving mode and can ask for our help! *Each person will have about 10 – 15 minutes total. Plan about half of the time for the tour and half the time for soliciting feedback.*

**Schedule:**

- April 12: Shar, Chris, Amber, Sam, and Anna
- April 14: Maizee, Allison, Abbot, Aliyah and Stephanie
- April 19: Severin, Elena, Kayla, Sara, and Dylan
- April 21: Bobby, Max, Vikas, Jenna, and Tara

**FINALS WEEK**

- *Final Websites Due Friday, April 29th at 5pm. Turning in your reflective introduction to Courseweb is your signal to me that your project is ready for evaluation. Please remember to include the link to your site along with your reflective intro/ cover letter.*