



Title: **Changing Hearts and Minds: English and Digital Media Arts**

Length of Course: **Full Year (2 semesters; 3 trimesters; 4 quarters)**

Subject Area – Discipline: **English (“b”)**

UC Honors designation: **No**

CTE Sector: **Arts, Media, and Entertainment**

CTE Pathway: **Design, Visual, and Media Arts**

Grade/Level(s): **9-12**

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### **Course Overview:**

Changing Hearts and Minds is a year-long course that teaches students to act as purveyors of change in the world-at-large. Throughout the course students will analyze a variety of print and digital texts in order to identify and interpret an author’s, artist’s, and/or designer’s message, and to determine how a specific audience drives a creator’s decision-making process. Students will evaluate and successfully use visual design principles and elements to enhance, distribute and increase visibility of a message or cause. This process will lead students to use writing and the principles of design to create texts and visuals that tell stories and convey effective messages for the purposes of effecting change; this also leads students to be critical thinkers and active receivers of messages. Students will read fiction and nonfiction as sources of inspiration and discovery and then write to learn with an emphasis on how choices of diction and syntax shape a message. Throughout the course, students will use collaboration processes, oral communication, presentation and creative problem solving to strengthen and apply their knowledge of written and visual messaging.

### **Course Content:**

#### **Unit 1**

This unit will focus on developing a story surrounding a local nonprofit leader. Students will develop an understanding of how to create a narrative that illustrates human connectedness to passion and advocacy, while developing an understanding of effective writing. Students will then study multiple profiles of persons and/or organizations to understand how to convincingly represent and advocate for a

nonprofit cause. Students will then research, analyze, write, and lay out a 2-page magazine spread that illustrates an ability to make typographic choices, take or select photographs, and organize a presentation that supports a message about the leader being portrayed. Students will also discover differences between primary and secondary sources, review source documentation and citation, and learn about Creative Commons licensing and Fair Use principles. The work of Unit 1 is foundational for the remaining units.

Students will use a blog to log their process, curate their sources and findings, engage in industry commentary, and respond to fellow students' blogs. This will include instruction in blog design, page creation, and use of tags.

## Unit 1 - Key Assignments

### 1: Convincing Profile of Nonprofit Leader

#### **Part One**

Students will research and analyze profiles of figures from a local, national, and global perspective. Students will read for language usage and shifts in order to determine an author's attitude and purpose for writing. In addition, students will review rhetorical choices like organization and structure within the narrative to determine what creates a convincing profile.

Once a thorough analysis explaining the success or failures of the given profiles is complete, students then use this knowledge to develop their own written profile of a nonprofit founder, using convincing language and creating a narrative that smoothly transitions into defining the impetus for creating the nonprofit.

#### **Part Two**

Once writing is complete, students will learn about typographic choices, spacing, and layout design, and the effect these elements have on readers/viewers, to create a 2-page magazine spread of their own. In addition, students will develop an understanding of hierarchical elements and call-outs, and will incorporate visual illustrations such as a portrait, location shots, or other supportive imagery into the layout. Special attention will be paid to successful magazine profiles and how design elements support the message of the author and are complementary to the text's meaning. A written reflection will be included that contains a justification for design choices and how they complement the text's meaning. The final design will be posted to a digital portfolio to be maintained throughout the course.

### Suggested Profiles

Positive vs. Negative Profiles: *possible examples listed*

- Anna Deveare Smith, TED Talk, "Four American characters" (video, transcript) ([http://www.ted.com/talks/anna\\_deaveare\\_smith\\_s\\_american\\_character?language=en](http://www.ted.com/talks/anna_deaveare_smith_s_american_character?language=en))
- *New Yorker* Magazine Profiles Archive (<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/profiles>)
- *Fast Company*, "The Evolution of Steve Jobs" (<http://www.fastcompany.com/3042433/steve-jobs/the-real-legacy-of-steve-jobs>)
- Bill Cosby profiles:  
<http://www.biography.com/people/bill-cosby-9258468#in-recent-years>  
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/09/15/eternal-paternal>  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/05/-this-is-how-we-lost-to-the-white-man/306774/> (by Ta-Nehisi Coates)  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/11/the-cosby-show/382891/> (follow up by Ta-Nehisi Coates)
- Lance Armstrong profiles:  
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/07/15/the-long-ride>  
<http://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/its-not-about-the-bike> (2012)  
<http://www.newyorker.com/news/sporting-scene/what-lance-armstrong-did> (2013)

Malala Profiles: An International Figure:

BBC Profile: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-23241937>

Vanity Fair Profile:

<http://www.vanityfair.com/news/politics/2013/04/malala-yousafzai-pakistan-profile>

Malala's Story from Malala.org: <http://www.malala.org/>

Profiles of Local Public Figures: *To be determined by faculty*

## Unit 2

In this unit, the course will transition from understanding the language of argument developed during Unit 1 into analyzing the persuasive nature of a messaging and design campaign. From this analysis, students will create their own messaging and design campaign using research from case studies and organizing findings in a clear format.

After completing the magazine spread on the nonprofit leader in Unit 1, students will research and evaluate nonprofit marketing case studies, including logos and marketing materials used by other nonprofit organizations. The students will research and compare various advertising appeals, researching such techniques as testimonials, glittering generalities, plain folks, etc., to determine how to reach the intended audiences. Students will research failed logo designs, etc. in order to avoid making

similar mistakes. Students will also analyze and evaluate for the rhetorical appeals (*pathos, logos, ethos*).

Furthermore, students will read *1984* (Orwell) and discuss questions of how language is used and manipulated, how rhetorical appeals are used and misused, and how ethics play a role in language and design. Students will write an analytical essay about *1984*.

## **Unit 2 - Key Assignments**

### **1: Branding Case Studies**

After completing a textual analysis of case studies (see examples below) within the nonprofit sector, students will create a complex chart of marketing and design data from the case studies. The chart will include a history of logos, logo redesigns, logo failures, color-schemes, objectives, messaging and an explanation of effectiveness that includes statistics to illustrate success or failure. In the course of their analysis, students will research and compare various advertising appeals, investigating such techniques as testimonials, glittering generalities, plain folks, etc., to determine how to reach the intended audiences. Students will also analyze and evaluate for the rhetorical appeals (*pathos, logos, ethos*).

### **2: Essay-- *1984* and "Politics and the English Language"**

Students read Orwell's *1984* and upon completion will then read Orwell's essay, "Politics and the English Language" and craft a paper in which they interpret the novel through the lens of Orwell's essay claims. In their papers, students are also required to draw connections between Orwell's essay to language usage in contemporary media. Essays will also include identification of successful textual messaging found in their Branding Case Studies analysis, thus developing an understanding of how text and visual language create a successful messaging schema (or unsuccessful as some cases may be), the knowledge of which will be integrated within the messaging for the upcoming assignment Marketing Campaign Proposal.

### **3: Marketing Campaign Proposal for Nonprofit Organization**

Students will collaborate on a proposal using the same presentation model as assignment 1 (above), for a rebranding catered to the nonprofit organization chosen in Unit 1.

Based on the information gathered in the above project, the students will develop a written proposal for improving the image and effectiveness of their nonprofit agency's identity that will include a basic logo design. By identifying a target audience and

defining goals (purpose) that include increasing market visibility, students will make appropriate rhetorical decisions to create a successful persuasive message (e.g. appeals to *logos*, *pathos*, *ethos*). Students will present to their targeted audience (appropriate members of the nonprofit) in Unit 3.

#### Case Studies (examples)

- 911 Memorial & Museum Case Study:  
<http://landor.com/#!/work/case-studies/911-memorial-museum/>
- Creating a Marketing Action Plan:  
<https://www.sba.gov/blogs/creating-marketing-action-plan>
- Logo Creation:  
<http://justcreative.com/2009/02/04/the-logo-design-process-from-start-to-finish/>
- The Role of Brand in the Nonprofit Sector:  
[http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the\\_role\\_of\\_brand\\_in\\_the\\_nonprofit\\_sector](http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_role_of_brand_in_the_nonprofit_sector)
- Creating a More Compelling Brand for an Educational Organization:  
<http://www.redroostergroup.com/2013/12/24/creating-a-more-compelling-story-for-an-educational-organization/>
- LIVESTRONG Rebranding Case Study:  
<http://www.aiga.org/case-study-livestrong-branding/>

#### Unit 3

This unit will include the capstone project of the first semester. In this unit students will complete a comprehensive print campaign based on their proposal from Unit 2, for the nonprofit organization chosen in Unit 1. Student teams will ultimately present a final proposal of their marketing campaign to the actual target audience--members of the nonprofit organization. Campaigns are a means of increasing the visibility of a brand, as this course creates students acting as purveyors of change, the marketing campaign will be developed for the brand that is the nonprofit from Unit 1 and Unit 2.

Until now students have continuously investigated language, both textual and visual, and within this unit students will practice these skills by designing successful campaigns that are carefully researched, well thought-out and focused on details and execution. The capstone offers a format that utilizes messaging, audience analysis, and most importantly improves visibility of the chosen nonprofit within a given market. The Marketing Campaign capstone requirement places an emphasis on the ability to create comprehensive visual design that supports a developed message, in addition the campaign functions across multiple digital mediums.

#### Unit 3 - Key Assignment

#### Marketing Campaign Feedback, Revision, Launch with Real Audience

Following the completion of Assignment 2 in Unit 2 students will read each other's campaign materials and analyze both text and visuals for purpose, audience, and effect. Using a critical friends protocol (see NSRF website for information: <http://www.nsrffharmony.org/free-resources/protocols/a-z>), student teams will present to other teams or to the assembled class, and will work through the feedback-and-revision process. In addition, student teams will regularly update their blog-log, begun in Unit 2, to document their creation and revision processes, as well as to comment and reflect upon industry trends, controversies, and developments.

In finalizing the redesign, students will integrate feedback on the logo for the nonprofit, and integrate the digital logo into a proposed rebranding strategy, demonstrating an understanding of industry-standard graphic design software. Following the style, message, and design of the logo, students will then incorporate the logo with typographic elements for a promotional piece (example: poster or billboard), an outreach email component, and social media call-to-action plans. The outreach email and social media call-to-action shall provide the reader with an organized, well-reasoned argument with supporting evidence on why the reader should get involved. Students should use a specific rhetorical device to support their claims and motivate the reader to action. All elements of the nonprofit redesign will be presented as a digital portfolio depicting the digital designs, and including the text component of the proposal addressing the problems and solutions for the chosen nonprofit. As supportive documentation, students will incorporate into their blog site a page devoted to industry studies and commentary (from their research in Unit 2), as well as a works-cited page identifying resources that informed their design and messaging decisions.

#### **Unit 4**

In the previous unit students focused on how media and print campaigns can raise awareness of an issue. In this unit, students focus on how fiction and visual photographic representation can lead to social awareness and public action. Students will read *The Grapes of Wrath*, by John Steinbeck, in order to identify and interpret how an underrepresented issue can be publicized through fictional means; they will analyze Steinbeck's rhetorical choices and use of diction in order to determine the novel's central messages. Students will produce this analysis in the form of a physical or digital museum exhibit or website.

Furthermore, students will research notable professional photographers and produce jigsawed presentations about the photographer's work and legacy. Students will read, analyze, and discuss how causes are presented and reported in the media, and how geographical or cultural bias can influence that presentation.

Subsequently, students will choose the *issue* or *cause* from the previous unit's nonprofit as the subject of a photo essay. Students will research the issue/cause from a global and regional perspective, write about it, and present a photo essay to the class. Students will produce and select their own photographs, use primary and secondary sources, review and use source documentation and citation, and learn about Creative

Commons and Fair Use licensing in order to create an annotated bibliography.

## **Unit 4 - Key Assignments**

### **1: "Ripping a Reader's Nerves to Rags"**

In reference to his novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, John Steinbeck once said, "I've done my damndest to rip a reader's nerves to rags, I don't want him satisfied." For this project, students will assume the role of a museum curator to create an exhibit (physical or digital) or a website which will focus on a social issue portrayed in both the novel and in Dust Bowl and Great Depression-era photographs by such photographers as Dorothea Lange, Ansel Adams, and Margaret Bourke-White. Each student will develop a "nerve-ripping" thesis or claim about the chosen issue, and then use excerpts from the novel, photographs, and/or realia as evidence to support the assertion. For each piece of evidence, the student must provide a written analysis about how it supports the thesis or claim. Students must cite all sources (written and visual) in an annotated bibliography.

(Quote from "Grapes of Wrath, a Classic for Today?" *BBC News*. BBC, 14 Apr. 2009. Web. 26 Mar. 2015.)

### **2: Presentation--Public Action Resulting from Visual Documentation**

Using Jacob Riis's 1890 documentary book, *How the Other Half Lives*, students will document how his photographs and text worked together to show the general public the poor housing conditions in New York's Lower East Side. Particular attention will be focused on the subsequent specific public actions taken to reform New York City's building codes to allow more light and better sanitation. Students will also document the work of Lewis Hine, a photographer working for the National Child Labor Committee, whose 5100 photographs and captions of children from 4 to 15 in various factories helped pass the current Child Labor Laws in the states, also researching how Hine managed to work under very difficult circumstances given the technology of the day (1900 to 1929) to create a series of photographs strong enough to change public perception and increased the clamour for public action.

This research and documentation will lead to student jigsaw presentations about each of the two photographers, including biography, the work, the publication and dissemination of the work, technologies used, cultural context, resulting public policies and legislation, etc.

### **3: Photo Essay**

Building on the prior assignment, students will develop their own photo essay raising awareness about their underrepresented issue or cause.

Photo essays are a way of creating a stronger argument or description of a narrative through the combined use of argumentative or descriptive writing presented alongside

supporting imagery. Famously persuasive photo essays have illustrated World Wars, genocides, protests and cultural upheaval. Students will draw knowledge from the structure of successfully informed photo essays to assist in their own persuasive arguments or supporting narrative regarding an underrepresented cause. An effective photo essay for reference is Eugene Smith's *Minimata: The Story of the Poisoning of the City*. Specific ELA skills developed for this assignment include students identifying an audience, researching statistics and then writing findings into narrative arguments, as well as identifying causal elements to encourage change through the narrative effort.

(For further information on photo essays, consult <http://digital-photography-school.com/5-photo-essay-tips/> or [http://education.nationalgeographic.com/media/file/GAW\\_photo\\_9-12edited922.pdf](http://education.nationalgeographic.com/media/file/GAW_photo_9-12edited922.pdf).)

## **Unit 5**

For this unit students will investigate how an author brings to life a societal issue in order to prepare students to write their own original short screenplays about their chosen societal issue/cause. Students will explore a selection of societal issues by analyzing a variety of plays or screenplays, such as *Angels in America* (Kushner), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Hansberry), *August: Osage County* (Letts), *Doubt* (Shanley), *Fences* (Wilson), *Inherit the Wind* (Lawrence, Lee), *Miss Evers' Boys* (Bernstein).

Students will then view a film that addresses a social issue and be introduced to the scripting and storyboarding processes as well as the aesthetics of narrative filmmaking. They will analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama. They will also analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

As a final project for the unit, students will work in small groups to produce a short script and a photo storyboard about the social cause or issue they chose in Unit 4. They will analyze the impact of a director's aesthetic choices regarding how messages are sent and received in narrative filmmaking.

## **Unit 5 - Key Assignments**

### **1: Literary Analysis and Narrative License**

Students will produce an essay in which they discuss one of the playwright's (see overview for list of suggested plays) use of narrative license with regard to the issue at hand. They must address questions about such issues as responsibility and ethics, accuracy, bias and authorial intent, social/historical context of both setting and publication, etc.

### **2: Screenplay and Photo Storyboard**

Building on their understanding of narrative, students will learn about visual storytelling techniques associated with narrative filmmaking. The concept of "theme" in film and

television writing is introduced as well as the three act story telling structure. Students will read a portion of Blake Snyder's book, *Save the Cat: The Last Book on Screenwriting You'll Ever Need*, in which narrative themes are defined as the message or moral of the story that the main character lacks in the beginning and discovers in the end. Students will have to consider both narrative techniques (such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters), as well as consider whether they have presented the issue in an ethical, accurate manner.

Students select a narrative theme and construct a short two page original screenplay that sends a message about their chosen cause/issue from Unit 4. Using the screenplay as a guide, students will demonstrate their understanding of visual storytelling by producing a series of photographs storyboarding their screenplay. Students will employ the conventions of film criticism by participating in peer critique and feedback activities. In writing, students reflect on their feedback and strategize next steps. Students present their final storyboards to their teachers, peers, and potentially to authentic audience members in a formal presentation. Lastly, students will write an evaluation that reflects on the successful and/or unsuccessful elements of the storyboard and screenplay presentation. The production process, the success of the narrative theme in the final product and the effect of their visual choices on the reception of the message should all be addressed in the written summary as a way of identifying concept changes prior to entering Unit 6.

## Unit 6

For the capstone project of the second semester, students will produce a short nonfiction documentary about their cause or issue chosen in Unit 4. The unit will begin with an examination of the stages of film production: pre-production, production, post-production, and presentation. Students will learn filming and editing techniques in short practice assignments including storyboarding each assignment.

Students will view portions of the Ken Burns documentary *Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson* as a model for their own documentaries in content and style. Students should view additional documentaries such as the Lee Hirsch's documentary *Bully*, the Michael Moore documentary *Fahrenheit 911*, and episodes from the Morgan Spurlock documentary series *Inside Man* to add depth and breadth to their understanding. Students will discuss and write a rhetorical analysis about documentary storytelling in preparation for creating their own documentary. Students will read one nonfiction work along similar themes/topics, such as *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (Skloot), *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (Alexander), *Race Matters* (West), *Nickel and Dimed* or *Bait and Switch* (Ehrenreich), *The Price of Inequality* (Stiglitz). Students develop written communication skills by outlining and writing narration for their documentary video. As students move into the production of the documentary, students are introduced to the roles of a film production crew: producer, director, director of photography, sound operator, lighting technician (gaffer) and editor.

## Unit 6 - Key Assignments

### 1: Compare/Contrast Essay

Students will write an essay that compares and contrasts how social issues are represented in documentaries and in fictional storytelling (both in print and on film). Students will compare techniques and methods of both genres and examine their effectiveness in persuading action or influencing opinion.

### Assignment 2: Create Documentary Supporting a Cause

Students will work in small groups to plan and create a short persuasive documentary video that demonstrates a mastery of technical skill in video editing and visual storytelling techniques. During the production process, students' in-progress documentaries will be screened for their peers and teachers. Students will employ the conventions of film criticism by providing constructive criticism for their peers in a structured feedback activity post screening, making time to model film criticism as a genre if necessary. Students will then reflect on their feedback and strategize next steps. Display of their finished work will be in a film festival style exhibition for their classmates and an authentic audience. Students complete a final written reflection about their creative process, their chosen issue and the effect of their documentary's visuals on the reception of the message.

## Course Materials:

### Unit 1

#### Suggested Profiles

Positive vs. Negative Profiles: *possible examples listed*

- Anna Devere Smith, TED Talk, "Four American characters" (video, transcript) ([http://www.ted.com/talks/anna\\_devere\\_smith\\_s\\_american\\_character?language=en](http://www.ted.com/talks/anna_devere_smith_s_american_character?language=en))
- *New Yorker* Magazine Profiles Archive (<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/profiles>)
- *Fast Company*, "The Evolution of Steve Jobs" (<http://www.fastcompany.com/3042433/steve-jobs/the-real-legacy-of-steve-jobs>)
- Bill Cosby profiles:  
<http://www.biography.com/people/bill-cosby-9258468#in-recent-years>  
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/09/15/eternal-paternal>  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/05/-this-is-how-we-lost-to-the-white-man/306774/> (by Ta-Nehisi Coates)

<http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/11/the-cosby-show/382891/> (follow up by Ta-Nehisi Coates)

- Lance Armstrong profiles:  
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/07/15/the-long-ride>  
<http://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/its-not-about-the-bike> (2012)  
<http://www.newyorker.com/news/sporting-scene/what-lance-armstrong-did> (2013)
- Malala Profiles: An International Figure:  
BBC Profile: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-23241937>  
Vanity Fair Profile:  
<http://www.vanityfair.com/news/politics/2013/04/malala-yousafzai-pakistan-profile>  
Malala's Story from Malala.org: <http://www.malala.org/>
- Profiles of Local Public Figures: *To be determined by faculty*

## Unit 2

1984, "Politics and the English Language" (George Orwell)

### Case Studies:

#### 911 Memorial & Museum:

<http://landor.com/#!/work/case-studies/911-memorial-museum/>

#### Creating a Marketing Action Plan:

<https://www.sba.gov/blogs/creating-marketing-action-plan>

#### Logo Creation:

<http://justcreative.com/2009/02/04/the-logo-design-process-from-start-to-finish/>

#### The Role of Brand in the Nonprofit Sector:

[http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the\\_role\\_of\\_brand\\_in\\_the\\_nonprofit\\_sector](http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_role_of_brand_in_the_nonprofit_sector)

#### Creating a More Compelling Brand for an Educational Organization:

<http://www.redroostergroup.com/2013/12/24/creating-a-more-compelling-story-for-an-educational-organization/>

#### LIVESTRONG Rebranding Case Study:

<http://www.aiga.org/case-study-livestrong-branding/>

## Unit 3

no texts required

## Unit 4

*The Grapes of Wrath* (John Steinbeck), *How the Other Half Lives* (Jacob Riis)

### Suggested reading:

*Understanding Media, The Medium is the Message* (Marshall McLuhan)

## Unit 5

### Suggested plays:

*Angels in America* (Kushner), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Hansberry), *August: Osage County* (Letts), *Doubt* (Shanley), *Fences* (Wilson), *Inherit the Wind* (Lawrence, Lee), *Miss Evers' Boys* (Bernstein)

## **Unit 6**

*Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson* (Ken Burns)

Suggested additional documentaries:

*Bully* (Lee Hirsch), *Fahrenheit 9/11* (Michael Moore), *Inside Man* (Morgan Spurlock)

Suggested reading:

*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (Skloot), *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (Alexander), *Race Matters* (West), *Nickel and Dimed or Bait and Switch* (Ehrenreich), *The Price of Inequality* (Stiglitz)