WIKIDOT PROGRESS REPORT

To: J. Windholz
From: J. Lawrence, M. Furby, C. Smith & C. Ruthrauff
Subject: WikiDot Report 1: Homepage
Date: September 20, 2018

The purpose of this report is to present the progress made on the homepage of the Technical and Professional Writing I class at Shippensburg University.

Summary

The students of the Technical and Professional Writing I class was given a task to create a website to show current and future students what Technical and Professional writing is. The professor divided the class into certain groups to work on certain parts of the website.

Introduction

The given task for our group was to work on the homescreen of the WikiDot page for Ship Technical and Professional Writing Class. The group had to come up with ideas on how to appropriately create the main homepage of the website to make it compelling.

Results

When the class learned about what WikiDot is, everyone was almost in a state of shock; we had to learn how to code. When the professor suggested that if the WikiDot did not work out, then the class would result into using WordPress. The majority of the class wanted to do WordPress instead, however, the class lived up to the challenge. For the past three weeks, we struggled to proportion the background picture to make it fit the screen and not go off the front page; as well as giving style to the picture and the words on the page itself. Part of the reason this was a struggle for us is due to a lack of background in coding. It took a lot of tinkering and looking up different things about WikiDot coding. Once we became used to the system, the coding went smoother and we were able to get the home page how it looks now.

Conclusion

For the upcoming group working on the homepage of the WikiDot, there are somethings that they can keep in mind to change. First, there is the navigation taskbar (on the top of the page). One way to do so is to try and make the individual tabs into a drop down menu. That way it is easy to navigate throughout the webpage. Second, is to include more hyperlinks and maybe try to put them into the titles. For example, making the "Course Text" title an actual hyperlink instead of having the link at the bottom of the title. Lastly, the group could change the font color so it is easier to understand and read.

Date: September 20, 2018
To: J. Windholz
From: E. Bush, K. Keck, C. Fritz, J. Sharratt
Subject: Wiki Progress Report #1

Purpose:
This is a progress report on the contributions we made to the "Assignments and Grading" section of the course Wikidot.

Summary:
At the beginning of the semester the class was divided into groups, each assigned to create and edit specific sections of the course's wikidot page. The goal is to teach all students to work collaboratively and efficiently.
We were assigned to design a section for the class assignments, as well as a section on grading.

Introduction:
Dr. Windholz divided the whole class into four separate groups, each given a designated task to complete. Before each team had the opportunity to meet, the course wiki was blank and unedited.
To start, everyone in the class was required to create a wikidot account in order to make any changes to the class page.
Our group in particular was assigned to create two pages on the website: assignments and grading. Out of the four group members, two members had drafted the layouts for the assignments and grading sections, and the other two gave feedback and edited what needed to be fixed.
We have communicated in class and through email, discussing the additions we desired to add to the website.

Results of Work:
In this progress report, we present our completed composition of the work on the "Assignments and Grading" section of the course wiki.

Task 1. Create a wikidot.com account for each group member
On our own time, prior to class on September 6, each group member was required to create their own wikidot.com account. This step had to happen prior to anything else in order for our group to successfully make contributions to the course wiki. To do this we each followed the given link (http://shiptechwritingf18.wikidot.com//) to the wikidot home page. We then clicked on the "join this site" button at the top of the page, and were taken to an alternate page that requires a password. After typing in the password given "" we were granted access into the course and were taken back to the homepage. Once there, we clicked on the "sign in" button on the top right of the homepage and were taken to a separate page where we clicked on the button labeled "create an account." After following the prompts we were each successful in creating our wikidot accounts and joining the course.

Task 2. Acquire a basic understanding of wikidot.com by use of prior knowledge in the subject field and the given wikidot instructions

Em has prior knowledge pertaining to coding websites because of her previous major of Computer Science. Making websites, creating firewalls and coding entire wikis was a previous hobby of hers.

The wikidot website provides many different resources that were able to give us information on how to efficiently make changes to the site. There are two links that can be found on the homepage that aided to our understanding of what wikidot was and how we could manage it. The first link is labeled "About" and is where we found a short summary giving a brief overview of the class and a short explanation of what is given to us. We learned that a standard template is used to provide us with the basic pages and facilities to get started. More specifically, we were given:
- Twitter Bootstrap (formatted to look the same on any device)
- The homepage (designed as a cover)
- Top and Side navigation bars
- Categories on each page
- A standard HTML layout

The second link labeled "Help docs" when clicked, dropped down to give us nine different topics of links to click on that lead us to nine different information pages. These links are labeled: "User Guide", "First Time User", "Quick Reference", "Creating Pages", "Editing Pages", "Navigation Bars", "Using Modules", "Templates", and "CSS Themes." Each group member read the information given upon following these links and were able to get a better sense of what we were going to be doing as well as how to do it.

Task 3. Insert the basic information and requirements given to the class on the syllabus into the Grading and Assignments pages on the wikidot

Under the wikidot page labeled "Grading" we inserted the "Course Policies and Grading" section found in our syllabus exactly, down to the use of bolding and italicizing. No major changes were made to the information provided except that a table was inserted in place of the grading system and a hyperlink that leads to a grade calculator was provided. Under the section labeled "Grading Parameters" we designed an easier to understand grade explanation through use of bulleted lists.

The "Assignments" page on the course wiki was made very similarly to the "Grading" page in that most of the information was taken from the course syllabus. The formatting was modified slightly to bring attention to important titles and deadlines. It also gives a much more detailed description of the major assignments and what is being asked of the student. The exercises are provided the chapter, page numbers, and the sections of each type of assignment. For instance the "Reading" and "Exercises" can be found at the top portion of the page in bold with their deadlines italicized while the larger, more in depth, assignments are found closer to the bottom of the page.

Task 4. Assess how well we formatted our pages
We will research more ways to improve the format of our wikidot pages and, if necessary, use our findings in our next contribution to the course wiki.

Task 5. Analyze our contributions and create a recommendation report
The contributions made were effective in getting the information required onto the wiki in the appropriate sections. However, some advancements can and should be made pertaining to the format and overall look of the sections. For instance, more design elements can be implemented to draw attention to the different sections given in both the "Grading" and "Assignments" pages. With that, photos and other graphics should be added to the page to make it less formal. We also found the "Assignments" page to be slightly wordy, so if possible, simplifications should be made of the terms of the assignments.

Conclusion:
We have successfully completed Tasks 1-3 and 5, and have begun Task 4. We are on schedule to complete all Tasks by the second progress report deadline of September 20. We have a good understanding of what wikidot is, and how to use it, as well as the sites that can aid us if there is any confusion. We are currently researching new ways to improve our formatting of the wikidot and how to improve the overall appearance. We will hopefully be experts on wikidot by the final deadline of our wikidot progress report, November 29.

References:

ENG 238: *Technical and Professional Writing I course syllabus.*

Wikidot resources on the resource page of the website
  ● http://www.wikidot.com/doc-wiki-syntax:attachment

Markel, M. (Ed. 2). (2016). Practical Strategies for Technical Communication. *Bedford/St. Martin's.* Boston, NY.

Wiki Progress Report 1
From: Dylan Denlinger, Andrew Houpt, John McClernand
To: Dr. Windholz, Next Group Working on Forums
September 20th, 2018

Purpose:
Our group's report is to keep the audience updated with the progress we have made on Dr.Windholz's class *Wikidot* website. We are reporting on the progress of our section of the website, "FAQs and forums".

Introduction:
Our group has laid the foundation for what we want to accomplish in our section of the wiki page thus far. In our section, "FAQs and forums", we set out to build on Dr.Windholz's style of collaboration, and peer learning. We wanted to create a comfortable platform for students to ask any question they may have about technical writing, free of judgment. We did so by creating a forum called "open discussion", now hopefully students post questions and the thread proves effective. Our group wanted to offer as much helpful resources through our forum's page, so we created a "Links" thread and an "FAQs" thread. Our "Links" thread offers helpful webpages to offer tips on technical writing and various projects throughout the course. We hope the next group will be adding many more useful links as the course progresses. Our group's "FAQs" thread is designed to answer common questions of students regarding technical writing, and our course assignments. We hope the class works together to cover all concerns that students may have throughout the course.

Summary:
Throughout the course thus far we have established several useful pieces of information regarding technical professional writing. Within the discussion forums, three threads have been created which cover grounds of: what technical professional writing is and useful links. The first thread benefits anyone interested in exploring more about technical writing. The second thread now consists of several links which may be useful for anyone needing to produce a technical writing piece. Additionally, we created an FAQ page which includes information about the instructor of our technical writing course; Dr. Jordan Windholz. Here you can find an image of him and learn more about who he is.

Results of Work: Our work on the forum and discussion board has been advancing rapidly; from starting by creating two blank discussion threads to three nearly fully formed threads- the first of which provides links to external aids that students in the course may use (such as Roger's Rules of Order, online tech writing lessons, resume building tips, a compendium of common mistakes in the English language when writing, and advice on preparing for oral presentations). The second thread offers an open discussion forum for students to discuss and ask questions about the course and post helpful tips to the wiki, further aiding other students. The final thread in the forum provides technical writing students an FAQ, offering the definition of both technical and professional writing.

We also had the opportunity to troubleshoot an aspect of the wiki with our instructor; the forum would only allow users with a high karma score to embed links, preventing us from updating our "Links" thread. After speaking with our instructor and Googling the issue, we were able to resolve the issue by having the instructor access and alter karma settings, providing all users of the wiki the ability to embed links in forums.

We also updated our site FAQ (this FAQ is separate from the FAQ embedded in the forum discussion board thread). While we have updated this FAQ slightly, it is still incomplete. We intend for this frequently asked questions page to allow students taking the course to learn more about their instructor, Dr. Jordan Ryan Windholz, on a more professional level; we provided a link to his website that in turn links to his published poetry and some pedagogical coursework he has developed. We also included a picture from one of the sites he has been published on. This also provided us with the opportunity to understand how embedding images worked on the wiki, as well as format images alongside text.

This forum building has also made us more familiar with coding, although primarily only in a rudimentary manner. Knowing how to color change text, add links, insert tags for certain pages, and format photos will aid us in the future as we move onto other aspects of the wiki and hopefully learn more coding.

Conclusion:
Overall, a solid foundation of where the wiki is going has been established. Responsibilities and ideas are being communicated and set in place to maximize progress and efficiency and clarity. In addition to the foundational blocks of our team's collaborative structure coming into place, we are brainstorming further where exactly we would like the work to go next and hope the next group to work on FAQs and forums will be aided by our ideas.

Recommendations:
Discussion Forums: Future students assigned to the discussion forums portion of the wiki may wish to refer to various threads on our forums. A crucial part of successfully designing a functioning forum is learning how the coding structure works through wiki dot. Spending time outside of class performing trial and error tests will be very helpful when it comes to collaborating with other groups within the class. Additionally, having prior forum experience will be of significant use. Knowing the mechanics of how discussion forums traditionally look, and function will be extremely advantageous for this group. Asking classmates what kinds of topics they would like to see within the forums may be very helpful as well. Generating a sense of interest within the other groups and their goals, mindsets and plans creates a smoother collaborative effort between the entire class.

We also hope the next group working in the forums will provide more information on Dr. Windholz- mainly information that would be useful to the members of the class, such as his Shippensburg University email, faculty webpage, and office hours. It may also be possible for the next group, having more experience with *Wikidot* and coding, to format this page in a more professional manner.

The most important thing overall is spending time learning how *Wikidot* works. Students within the class can share information learned with those in their groups as well as other

groups entirely. This structure provides a large incentive of learning more about wiki dot. The more you know, the more other groups will know. This results in an overall higher quality project.

Date: 18 September 2018
To: Dr. Jordan Windholz
From: Christian Eby, Leah Carey, Catherine Shuff
Subject: Class Wiki Progress Report 1

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this progress report is to discuss what our team has accomplished in the course wiki and to detail our goals for the project's future.

Summary

The class ENG 238-01 began to make a course centric wiki at the beginning of the semester. There are four main areas of the site: The Homepage, FAQs and Forums, Assignments, and Resources. It is a student designed site, and each group of students will cycle through each of the categories listed above throughout the semester. The area of the course wiki that we have worked on is the "resource" section. In the Resource tab, students should be able to find links, information, and helpful tips for navigating the wiki, as well as the class. We have collected links of resources that will be useful for students, as in: learning how to code on the wiki site, where to buy the course text, and to access our course content on D2L. We will begin preparing for our next task, the wiki home page. Detailed information about the customization process will be discussed further in this memo.

Intro

The week of September 2, 2018, Dr. Jordan Windholz introduced our class to wikidot. Dr. Windholz informed us that over the course of the semester, groups of students would be working to transform the course wiki website into our own Technical Professional Writing I form of D2L. The task is to input information and guidelines to help the students in our class navigate ENG 238 with ease.

As of September 6, the Resource tab of the course wiki was nothing more than a heading. However, after Tuesday, September 18, our resource group has added multiple hyperlinks to aid our classmates on how to design webpages in wikidot and access the content of our class material on D2L. In the following sections, the resource group presents the results of our progress.

Results

Listed below are the tasks that we have implemented to ensure the Resource tab of the course wiki had a solid foundation.

1. Added hyperlink to view instructions from wikidot on how to properly use coding methods.
2. Added hyperlink to W3Schools for a dummies version of how to properly code.
3. Provided a direct hyperlink to ENG 238 course content tab in D2L.
4. Supplied students with a hyperlink to access the course text if not already obtained.
5. Determined how to change the color of the font.

6. Determined how to change the font size of headings and captions.
7. Determined how to rename the hyperlink.

Conclusion

As a group we discussed wikidot recommendations. We would like to propose the addition of a map of Shippensburg University campus to our page. On the map we thought it would be helpful if Horton Hall was circled, due to some college students not socialized with the whole campus. The map would be a great idea because if someone is lost looking for Dr. Windholz office, they can easily find it. Another recommendation we thought about is to create two parts of the resources page. Resources seems broad and the page could become overwhelming and cluttered. So, we would like to suggest that a class resources and campus resources page should be created. This would keep the page organized and easier to skim over. Other student groups should add images to make the page feel welcoming and inviting. We find our Wiki page to be appealing but we feel it would look more professional if we added discussed elements.

References

"In Line Formatting." *wikidot: your place on the web.* http://www.wikidot.com/doc-wiki-syntax: inline-formatting