

Date: 9 October 2018

To: Dr. Windholz

From: Christian Eby, Catherine Shuff, Leah Carey

Subject: Class Wiki Progress Report 2

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this progress report is to discuss what our group accomplished in the course wiki that the previous group tasked to us.

Summary

This is the second progress report that we have to submit for our class wiki. We were originally assigned to the Resource tab of the course wiki, however, these past two weeks our group was assigned to the Homepage. There was a group before our group that worked on the homepage. This group developed the homepage into something that they believed to be appealing to the user that would be viewing our course website. They tasked us with completing designs that they wanted to accomplish but didn't have time to complete. The previous group wanted us to: add drop down bars to the top navigation panel, add hyperlinks to the text instead of a hyperlink under the text, and to change the font colors to be more appealing.

Introduction

Our group began working on the homepage of our class wiki in late September. The homepage is meant to introduce visitors to the wiki, giving them a quick look into what the course is about, as well as being an easy way to navigate throughout the site. Our group's first supplement to the site was the 'resource' area, so moving from that environment to the homepage, which should include more graphics and small groupings of information, was a difficult transition. Our group wanted to work on what was already on the homepage, rather than starting fresh. The course wiki is a collaborative class project, where each group cycles through the different aspects of the site. Now that each group has moved onto their second task, it is becoming pertinent to work with what others have already made.

Results

Our group changed many features to the homepage. The homepage that we began working on had elements that we chose to eliminate due to them being tacky. The first homepage group divided the page into different sections with hyperlinks to the Course Text and Resources tab, the tab on Class Grading, and the Frequently Asked Questions tab. Previously, these three areas of the site were previewed on the homepage with a hyperlink under the text directing the user to the intended page. The original home page featured a large picture as the background, a feature that our group found distracting. The picture has not been deleted, but made smaller and positioned towards the top of the page to catch the attention of the audience. Our group has added

hyperlinks, embedded to the text, so that visitors of the site can navigate quickly and easily around the wiki. Also, our group tried to insert drop down menus to the top navigation, however, we failed in creating drop down links for every title. Unfortunately, the top navigation bar is not as functional as we had planned. The issue is we can't find the ending code to break off the drop down menu feature. In unison with not finding the ending code, the titles that used to be part of the top navigation bar are no longer. Our group was not able to figure out at this time how to reset the titles to the top navigation.

Conclusion

As a group we discussed some changes we believe should be made to the page. Our main suggestion is finding a way to make the dashboard on the homepage, a drop-down feature. We find that this would make our site more creative and unique. However, the group after us should try to help figure out how to code the drop down function properly. Our other suggestion is to create a more detailed Table of Content section to make accessing pages within the course wiki easier. By doing this, confusion would be eliminated and would allow the various pages to be accessed quickly.

WIKIDOT PROGRESS REPORT #2

To: J. Windholz

From: J. Lawrence, M. Furby, C. Smith & C. Ruthrauff

Subject: WikiDot Report 2: FAQ and Forums

Date: October 11, 2018

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to present the progress made on the FAQ and Discussion Forums pages 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 help redesign and recreate a certain portion of a website to show current and future students what Technical and Professional writing is. Previously, our group worked on the homepage of the website though our current job is to work on the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) and Forums page. The overall purpose of the FAQ and Forums page is to provide information on some of the more commonly asked questions.

Introduction:

The group's new task was to work on FAQ and Forums pages of the WikiDot website for Ship Technical and Professional Writing Class. The group came together and gave ideas on how to complete our new task. Given that the previous group did a lot of work, we decided to expand on that previous work. Using the prior knowledge our group learned from working on the homepage, we were able to make some changes to improve the FAQ and Forums page's look. We learned how to make links into words and phrases to create a professional look and add an element of ease in helping people find what they are looking for .

It was difficult for us to figure out a way to design the new page. With time and dedication, we came up with some good ideas that would make the page look organized and compact. During this time, it was challenging to come up with ideas on how we were going to present the page. However, we were able to analyze the decisions made by the previous group, and apply them to the foundation of our rendition of the page. By doing this we came up with a solution that brought the page together.

Results of Work:

When we looked over the previous groups report for FAQ and forums. They wanted us to mainly focus on Dr. Jordan Windholz contact information. As you can see on the WikiDot, we have attached a link to his webpage and his Shippensburg University home page that has his primary contact information (i.e email, office room, office hours, etc.). We tried to help make the page look

cleaner, but in this process we broke the FAQ page into questions and each question has a link attached to it for the person to have a better understanding. Also, as a group we made the font larger and we highlighted the links in a blue font to keep it with the color scheme of the overall webpage. We also added a brief description of introducing everyone to the FAQ and Forum page. A graphic was added as well, that was found on google images.

In the Discussion Forms page we got rid of some of the open topic discussions because we felt that these were more frequently asked questions. During our whole process of trying to better the two pages we moved a lot of the information around so it fits on the page better. The only problem we faced with the discussion forms page was that if we would edit it, there was a message that popped up that said we could potentially lose all of our information. In the future, if the next group could possibly work around that it would be beneficial for the page itself.

Conclusion:

Overall, this project is trying to figure out and understand coding. Most of the time we had to use the effect of trial and error. Something for the next group to work on is to clean up the discussion forums page. The page is very choppy and not eye appealing. If the next group is more gifted in coding they will have an easier time in understanding how to change the format and make it look more presentable.

Date: October 11, 2018

To: J. Windholz

From: E. Bush, K. Keck, C. Fritz, J. Sharratt

Subject: Wiki Progress Report #2

Purpose:

This is a progress report on the contributions we made to the “Course Texts and Resources” section of the course Wikidot.

Summary:

After the class had created a section of the wiki page a few weeks prior, it was time to rotate tasks amongst each group. This means we were to edit a particular section that a different group had already made adjustments to. Our task was to edit the “Course Texts and Resources” page on the website, making any changes we thought were necessary.

Introduction:

After bringing the class’s wiki page to life, Dr. Windholz wanted each group to edit a second time. We were to look over a completed area of the website and decide if any changes were needed for improvement.

Our group in particular was assigned to edit the “Course Texts and Resources” page. We concluded that more resources were needed in order to make the page more helpful and effective for a student. This included inserting guidelines for assignments, helpful examples, a map of Shippensburg’s campus, and links that would allow the student access to Dr. Windholz’s lectures and course drop boxes.

We had a majority of our discussions during class time, verbally brainstorming any ideas we had with each other. Our progress report features detailed explanations on how we made these changes.

Results of Work:

In this progress report, we present our completed composition of the work on the “Course Texts and Resources” section of the course wiki.

Task 1. View and discuss the progress report from the previous group

Together as a group, we opened up the progress report completed by the group who had previously worked on the “Course Texts and Resources” page of the wiki. We looked at what they had accomplished and more importantly, scrutinized their recommendations. This was where we started to throw out ideas of what we should accomplish for this section of the wiki.

The previous groups progress report recommended the addition of a map of Shippensburg University. On this map they thought it would be beneficial to have Horton Hall circled or outlined in some way, to make it easier to see. Our group agreed that this recommendation was useful and would be a beneficial addition to this section of the wiki.

The second recommendation made by the previous group was that we should split up the resources page into two parts: class resources and campus resources. Our group agreed that this would allow for a more organized appearance of the page.

The last recommendation given by the previous group was broad in that it stated for a more professional appearance of the overall section. They suggested we insert images to make the page appeal more to the reader. Our group also liked this suggestion, and with that agreed to include a more appealing and professional color scheme to the page.

Task 2: Discuss our individual ideas and tasks

After getting a good idea of how the previous group envisioned the “Course Texts and Resources” section of the wiki to look, we began throwing out individual ideas that we had for the page. Em suggested that we include Wikidot tutorials from YouTube explaining how to properly use and setup a Wikidot, as well as include links to the D2L exercise guidelines and the assignment drop boxes. Kady suggested making changes to the header labeled “Our Class Syllabus” to make it sound more professional. She also proposed that the inclusion of the links regarding how to compose a wiki progress report and the class lectures would be resourceful. JJ suggested that we should include a second book link from Chegg since it is half the price to rent. He also proposed the idea to insert a new section to the “Course Texts and Resources” page that included links for examples of memos and job-applications.

Since Em has prior knowledge with wiki and coding, she volunteered to be in charge of making the majority of the changes to the Wikidot. The rest of the group was responsible for suggesting specific ideas and keeping track of the changes being made. Casey was responsible for writing up the purpose, results of work, conclusion, and references portion of the progress report. Kady had the responsibility of writing up the summary and introduction.

Task 3: Insert the previously discussed links into the wiki

Em coded in the Wikidot tutorial, which she found on YouTube, the D2L exercise guidelines, and the link to the drop boxes for the assignments. She did this by using the website’s edit function for the page along with the handy Wizard Link Tool. The tool gives you two open lines. The first asks for the URL link to be pasted into it. The second line asks for a name to be publicly displayed for people to read. This allowed for a more professional and easy to follow appearance of the page.

After observing how Em coded in her links, Kady was able to code in the links regarding how to compose a wiki progress report and the class lectures. She did this in a trial and error fashion and eventually was able to understand and do it properly. Kady then changed the header “Our Class Syllabus” to “D2L Content” since the subheadings contained more information than just the class syllabus.

JJ found the second edition of the course textbook “Practical Strategies for Technical Communication” on Chegg and added in the hyperlink onto the wiki. He then added in another major heading labeled “Writing Examples” and scanned the textbook for specific examples he thought would be useful to a student taking this course. He found a memo example on page 254 and a job-application letter example on page 287. To be able to add them to the course wiki he had to first create a new page on Wikidot for each of them. From there, he had to upload both picture files to the designated pages which he then connected to the links labeled “Memo Example” and “Job-Application Letter Example.” These links can be found under the “Writing Examples” heading.

Task 4: Insert a map of Shippensburg University’s campus with Horton Hall circled

Casey googled “A map of Shippensburg University’s campus” and found an image that included the majority of the campus as well as Horton Hall. She then downloaded the image and added it into the wiki. From there Em was able to resize the map of the campus to make it larger and easier to view. She did this by using the button labeled “file” to edit the size settings for the image by selecting the size we wanted on the page. After successfully altering the size of the map, Em used the computer application “Microsoft Paint” to add a light pink heart around Horton Hall. This made the building easier for the student to identify when trying to find the location of Dr. Windholz’s office.

It is important to note that figuring out how to resize the map was a problem that was resolved through the use of trial and error. Em simply hit all the edit buttons on the page until the file button allowed her to successfully resize the image.

Task 5: Give the page a color scheme that will allow for a more professional appearance

Successful addition of the Shippensburg University map made for an easy color scheme choice for our page. The entire group agreed to use the University's colors to section up the page. Red was used for the four main headings of the page which were labeled: “Issues with coding?”, “D2L Course Content”, “In case you still need a book...”, “Writing Examples”, and “Map of Campus.” The subheadings, the links, were already assigned the blue color by the default setting of the website.

Task 6: Assess how well we formatted our pages

The formatting of our page appears professional and easy to follow. A map was inserted for a better visualization of the campus and more specifically the location of Dr. Windholz office.

Task 7: Analyze our contributions and create a recommendation report

The contributions made to the “Course Texts and Resources” section of the course wiki were effective in following the recommendations given by the previous group. We successfully inserted a map of the university’s campus as well as gave the page a proper color scheme for a more professional appearance. We were also successful in adding in links that we thought would be beneficial for the student to have, such as a link to the course exercises page, the D2L drop boxes and helpful examples. One thing we were not able to accomplish during the given time frame was separate the page into two different sections for course resources and campus resources. This would be a great addition to the page and would allow a student, not only new to the class but also new to the campus, to gain a better understanding of where they can go with specific questions they have.

Contributions made to other sections of the wiki during this time:

Em helped Leah fix the top bar of the website by finding the beginnings and ends of the code to allow for a separation of the consolidated top bar. There is still a lot of work to be done, thus the process is still ongoing.

Conclusion:

We have successfully completed all 7 of our tasks, while Em aided another group in the process. We have a good understanding of how to work together to complete the given tasks, insert links into the wiki, provide a color scheme, insert images, and provide an overall professional appearance to the page. We are still researching different coding techniques that will allow us to be able to make more formatting changes. We hope to have figured these out by the deadline of our next progress report.

References:

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

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

To: Dr. Windholz; Next Group Working on Assignments and Grading
From: Dylan Denlinger, Andrew Jay Houpt, John McClernand
Subject: Wiki Progress Report 2
October 9th, 2018

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to detail the changes our group has made assignments and grading aspect of our classes Wikidot site. The graphics and web page designs we added were to help translate the information displayed to be more clear and comprehensive. We initially noticed about our assignment and grading pages was how overwhelming the text heavy pages were to the reader. We set out to fix the cluttered information by organizing the assignments into collapsible sections. This improved the spatial aspect of our assignment information freeing up plenty of space on the page. Also we noticed on the grading page how information heavy it was so we created graphics to support the text and give the reader more entertainment.

Summary:

The assignments section of the wiki does an exceptional job of conveying essential information regarding course projects and exercise deadlines. Utilizing sources such as Pixabay, our group was able to add useful graphics which further strengthen the text as they work together to demonstrate the information being conveyed. The graphics that we added to the page include a book with glasses, books, and a cell phone. We felt that this image correctly displayed what a typical college student's work environment might look like. We also added a wizard cat to our grading page, to add a bit of levity to our site.

When we were given this section of the project, it was already packed full of valuable information which was pulled directly from the course syllabus. Because of this, there was little information for us to add or expand on. Through proofreading, several grammatical errors were located and corrected to further promote clarity, conciseness and comprehension.

Introduction:

The main focus for our group this time was to increase professionalism, navigation, clarity, and comprehensiveness on our wiki pages. With all of the text heavy information already laid out on our assignment and grading pages, our job was to make the web pages quick and easier for the reader. Our graphics were added to the grading page to create a complementary relationship between the text and pictures. We wanted our web pages navigate the reader from where they are, to where they want to go. Then once the reader is there, give them what they need to now, in the most concise and understandable fashion.

Results of Work:

The extensive work done by the previous group on "assignments and grading" gave us an easy to mold foundation for expanding and refining both the assignments and grading pages of the classes Wikidot. Prior to our work on these pages, the assignments section lacked any graphics and was verbose in its description. The grading section also had numerous grammatical and technical errors. We have added a tasteful meme to the

grading page (alongside a graphic of a graded paper) and we have inserted a picture of books next to the reading section on the assignments page. We wish to add more graphics but lack the room to do so without sacrificing the format of the text.

Rather than pare down the assignments section, as it seemed to be so overly descriptive as to prevent a misunderstanding if a student were to read it, we searched online and found how to create collapsible sub menus within pages. This feature is prominently used on Wikipedia mobile; this format was used for reference. We agreed that separating the assignment subcategories into “readings”, “exercises”, “projects”, and “final project” made logical sense and would be a more concise listing of assignments due. In retaining the descriptions but developing collapsible drop-down tabs, we are now able to provide a comprehensive and detailed list for students to use, but now may also maintain it within a compact and easily navigable space. This perhaps our greatest advancement in our Wikidot work thus far. It is likely that we can apply this feature to future topics we work upon, as can other groups.

The grading section was already in excellent form, and our revisions primarily focused on editing improper grammar and adjusting formatting to create a more uniform space. We also had to adjust the formatting on the course grading breakdown to allow graphics to appear alongside it. Much of the revising and corrections occurred under the “Grading Parameters” section, as it had odd and disjointed grammar. The parameters were undefined and quite similar to each other across separate grade levels (i.e. A, B, C, D, F). The grading calculator was retained, as it provides a useful source for students and is also located in the discussion forums, giving students two locations on the site to access this tool.

Conclusion:

Future students who will participate in designing a course wiki should keep in mind the components of clear, concise writing within the assignments section. Throughout our course already, several students have been referring to the course wiki page to ensure they are on track to meet their assignment and project deadlines. This is a vital aspect, mainly because of the collaborative and professional environment of the course. While there are lecture days, the course is heavily oriented toward sharpening future work force skills in a professional environment. Deadlines are extremely important and must be followed and kept in an efficient, timely fashion. Because of this class layout, the ability to refer to the course wiki for all assignment information proves to be a useful tool that students can refer to regularly. Anticipating the heavy use of this, it is imperative that the information provided under this section be direct, clear and concise. The reader needs to know exactly when assignments are due and feel they can rely on the information to be true and accurate. We suggest to the next group that they continue improving the grading section of the wiki, as we did not create drop down topics for each section. It is also entirely possible that the next group may find our graphics not to their liking and wish to change them; this is acceptable as creating a website is a transformative process with many contributors working to creating an appropriate middle ground. We also hope the next two groups will spend time refining our assignment drop down tabs, as we only just discovered how to make use of them and would like to see them developed in a more professional manner. It

encouraging to see that the website has not failed, as our instructor had worried it might, but is morphing into a source that is of great benefit to students of the course.