



ENG 3790 Assignment | Chapter Study Notes

In ENG 3790, the breadth, depth, and usefulness of your knowledge of Information Architecture will be tested by final examination. The final exam will be a take-home exam worth 15% of your final grade. To prepare you for this challenge, and to help you build a strong foundation in information architecture, you will be responsible for taking detailed, composed notes on 10 chapters of Rosenfeld, Morville, and Arango. You will use these notes as part of the basis for your preparation to pass the final exam.

Directions

For this series of assignments, you will take detailed, structured, and analytical notes of the major concepts and practices introduced in your course text. Your notes should be generated through a process of close reading, note-taking, and revision. While the content and structure of your notes is dependent on your own learning process, your notes are expected to be substantial, meta-analytical, and probing of larger issues and questions raised in the text. While there is no word, or page, count associated with these notes, I expect that you would have four to six pages of designed and formatted notes for each chapter of the book.

Grading

This assignment is worth 20% of your final grade. Furthermore, your success on this assignment will largely determine your ability to pass the final exam. As I evaluate your work, I will be looking for these qualities:

Objective
Notes capture the important concepts and practices of the text chapter.
Notes are complete.
Notes are logically organized, designed, and formatted appropriately.
Notes go beyond restating the text information (e.g., they provide analysis)



ENG 3790 Assignment | IA Extended Summary

Each student in ENG 3790, is responsible for contributing an in-depth and designed extended summary corresponding to an "information architecture book." The purpose of this exercise is two-fold:

- 1) To contribute to a document that will usefully describe current developments that impact how information architecture is written about and practiced.
- 2) To create a document that is useful for the final exam, and well beyond the boundaries of this class and your degree.

Part of the foundation of developing any new disciplinary knowledge or perspective is reading both deeply and widely, *and* responding to what you read. This is a chance for you to know about and share something about Information Architecture that no one else in class is going to be working on or know as much about as you do.

Directions

Your extended summary will develop with an appropriate reading and writing strategy. This assignment will require you to work consistently over the course of weeks to complete the summary effectively. As you review how I would approach the work below, please note that there is definitely a linearity to this process, but you don't read the entire book, then take notes on the entire book, then write the entire summary. Work in chapters, and then when the notes are complete, finish the summary and rewrite it. Here is how I would approach the work:

- 1) **Perform a close reading of the text.** As you read, take notes in the margins (in pencil if a borrowed book), underline and define key terms (using the text, not a dictionary). As much information as you can generate through this process, the more you will have to work with as you summarize.
- 2) **Develop your notes.** Working on paper or the screen, whatever, but develop your notes. Respond to them. Push to make connections to other ideas of the course, or the book. The more text you generate in your notes, the more options you will have to work from as you write. Cite every note you take with the page number (so you don't have to go back and find it all at the end).
- 3) **Draft the summary.** As you determine how your notes fit together into hierarchical sections. Use formatting and design features to organize information that can be abstracted. Your draft should contain all of the major sections of your summary, the rough information architecture of your final document and complete citations. You are restating the framing, the ideas, and the arguments/examples the book uses to present them.
- 4) **Refine the summary.** Here is where you get the chance to ensure that your summary is internally consistent and logical, precise but also complete, and a benefit to a reader that wishes to know more about this book in a short period of time.

Grading

This assignment is worth 20% of your final grade. This assignment will be graded using self- and instructor-evaluation using an analytical rubric that we develop together as a class. In other words, we will negotiate the aspects of the project that will have value to your course grade. Obviously, incomplete projects cannot receive full credit, and I reserve the right of changing anything necessary to meet the outcomes of the course, but think about what you believe matters here.

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[Enterprise Architecture As Strategy: Creating a Foundation for Business Execution](#)

\$25.21

by Jeanne W. Ross, Peter Weill, David Robertson (Hardcover)

Does it seem you've formulated a rock-solid strategy, yet your firm still can't get ahead? If so, construct a solid foundation for business execution—an IT infrastructure and digitized business processes to automate your company's core capabilities. In *Enterprise Architecture as Strategy: Creating a Foundation for Business Execution*, authors Jeanne W. Ross, Peter Weill, and David C. Robertson show you how.



The key? Make tough decisions about which processes you must execute well, then implement the IT systems needed to digitize those processes. Citing numerous companies worldwide, the authors show how constructing the right enterprise architecture enhances profitability and time to market, improves strategy execution, and even lowers IT costs. Though clear, engaging explanation, they demonstrate how to define your operating model—your vision of how your firm will survive and grow—and implement it through your enterprise architecture. Their counterintuitive but vital message: when it comes to executing your strategy, your enterprise architecture may matter far more than your strategy itself.

DITA Best Practices: A Roadmap for Writing, Editing, and Architecting in DITA (IBM Press) 1st Edition

\$35.95

by IBM

&>The Start-to-Finish, Best-Practice Guide to Implementing and Using DITA

Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) is today's most powerful toolbox for constructing information. By implementing DITA, organizations can gain more value from their technical documentation than ever before. Now, three DITA pioneers offer the first complete roadmap for successful DITA adoption, implementation, and usage.



Drawing on years of experience helping large organizations adopt DITA, the authors answer crucial questions the “official” DITA documents ignore, including: *Where do you start? What should you know up front? What are the pitfalls in implementing DITA? How can you avoid those pitfalls?*

The authors begin with topic-based writing, presenting proven best practices for developing effective topics and short descriptions. Next, they address content architecture, including how best to set up and implement DITA maps, linking strategies, metadata, conditional processing, and content reuse. Finally, they offer “in the trenches” solutions for ensuring

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quality implementations, including guidance on content conversion.

Gamestorming: A Playbook for Innovators, Rulebreakers, and Changemakers

\$18.70

by Dave Gray, Sunni Brown, James Macanufo (Paperback)

Great things don't happen in a vacuum. But creating an environment for creative thinking and innovation can be a daunting challenge. How can you make it happen at your company? The answer may surprise you: gamestorming.

This book includes more than 80 games to help you break down barriers, communicate better, and generate new ideas, insights, and strategies. The authors have identified tools and techniques from some of the world's most innovative professionals, whose teams collaborate and make great things happen. This book is the result: a unique collection of games that encourage engagement and creativity while bringing more structure and clarity to the workplace. Find out why -- and how -- with *Gamestorming*.



- Overcome conflict and increase engagement with team-oriented games
- Improve collaboration and communication in cross-disciplinary teams with visual-thinking techniques
- Improve understanding by role-playing customer and user experiences
- Generate better ideas and more of them, faster than ever before
- Shorten meetings and make them more productive
- Simulate and explore complex systems, interactions, and dynamics
- Identify a problem's root cause, and find the paths that point toward a solution

Information Dashboard Design: The Effective Visual Communication of Data

by Stephen Few (Paperback)



Dashboards have become popular in recent years as uniquely powerful tools for communicating important information at a glance. Although dashboards are potentially powerful, this potential is rarely realized. The greatest display technology in the world won't solve this if you fail to use effective visual design. And if a dashboard fails to tell you precisely what you need to know in an instant, you'll never use it, even if it's filled with cute gauges, meters, and traffic lights. Don't let your investment in dashboard technology go to waste.

This book will teach you the visual design skills you need to create dashboards that communicate clearly, rapidly, and

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compellingly. *Information Dashboard Design* will explain how to:

- Avoid the thirteen mistakes common to dashboard design
- Provide viewers with the information they need quickly and clearly
- Apply what we now know about visual perception to the visual presentation of information
- Minimize distractions, cliches, and unnecessary embellishments that create confusion
- Organize business information to support meaning and usability
- Create an aesthetically pleasing viewing experience
- Maintain consistency of design to provide accurate interpretation
- Optimize the power of dashboard technology by pairing it with visual effectiveness

Essential Scrum: A Practical Guide to the Most Popular Agile Process (Addison Wesley Signature Series)

\$36.14

by Kenneth S. Rubin (Paperback)

If you want to use Scrum to develop innovative products and services that delight your customers, *Essential Scrum* is the complete, single-source reference you've been searching for. Leading Scrum coach and trainer Kenny Rubin illuminates the values, principles, and practices of Scrum, and describes flexible, proven approaches that can help you implement it far more effectively.



Whether you are new to Scrum or years into your use, this book will introduce, clarify, and deepen your Scrum knowledge at the team, product, and portfolio levels. Drawing from Rubin's experience helping hundreds of organizations succeed with Scrum, this book provides easy-to-digest descriptions enhanced by more than two hundred illustrations based on an entirely new visual icon language for describing Scrum's roles, artifacts, and activities.

Essential Scrum will provide every team member, manager, and executive with a common understanding of Scrum, a shared vocabulary they can use in applying it, and practical knowledge for deriving maximum value from it.

Pervasive Information Architecture: Designing Cross-Channel User Experiences

\$24.10

by Andrea Resmini, Luca Rosati (Paperback)



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As physical and digital interactions intertwine, new challenges for digital product designers and developers, as well as, industrial designers and architects are materializing. While well versed in designing navigation, organization, and labelling of websites and software, professionals are faced the crucial challenge of how to apply these techniques to information systems that cross communication channels that link the digital world to the physical world.

Pervasive Information Architecture provides examples showing why and how one would:

- Model and shape information to adapt itself to users' needs, goals, and seeking strategies
- Reduce disorientation and increase legibility and way-finding in digital and physical spaces
- Alleviate the frustration associated with choosing from an ever-growing set of information, services, and goods
- Suggest relevant connections between pieces of information, services and goods to help users achieve their goals.

*Master agile information structures while meeting the unique user needs on such devices as smart phones, GPS systems, and tablets

*Find out the 'why' and 'how' of pervasive information architecture (IA) through detailed examples and real-world stories

*Learn about trade-offs that can be made and techniques for even the most unique design challenges

The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses \$14.96
by Eric Ries (Hardcover)

Eric Ries defines a startup as **an organization dedicated to creating something new under conditions of extreme uncertainty**. This is just as true for one person in a garage or a group of seasoned professionals in a Fortune 500 boardroom. What they have in common is a mission to penetrate that fog of uncertainty to discover a successful path to a sustainable business.



The Lean Startup approach fosters companies that are both more capital efficient and that leverage human creativity more effectively. Inspired by lessons from lean manufacturing, it relies on “validated learning,” rapid scientific experimentation, as well as a number of counter-intuitive practices that shorten product development cycles, measure actual progress without resorting to vanity metrics, and learn what customers really want. It enables a company to shift directions with agility, altering plans inch by inch, minute by minute.

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Rather than wasting time creating elaborate business plans, *The Lean Startup* offers entrepreneurs - in companies of all sizes - a way to test their vision continuously, to adapt and adjust before it's too late. Ries provides a scientific approach to creating and managing successful startups in a age when companies need to innovate more than ever.

Rework

\$12.92

by Jason Fried, David Hansson

Most business books give you the same old advice: Write a business plan, study the competition, seek investors, yadda yadda. If you're looking for a book like that, put this one back on the shelf.

Rework shows you a better, faster, easier way to succeed in business. Read it and you'll know why plans are actually harmful, why you don't need outside investors, and why you're better off ignoring the competition. The truth is, you need less than you think. You don't need to be a workaholic. You don't need to staff up. You don't need to waste time on paperwork or meetings. You don't even need an office. Those are all just excuses.



What you really need to do is stop talking and start working. This book shows you the way. You'll learn how to be more productive, how to get exposure without breaking the bank, and tons more counterintuitive ideas that will inspire and provoke you.

With its straightforward language and easy-is-better approach, *Rework* is the perfect playbook for anyone who's ever dreamed of doing it on their own. Hardcore entrepreneurs, small-business owners, people stuck in day jobs they hate, victims of "downsizing," and artists who don't want to starve anymore will all find valuable guidance in these pages.

Scrum: The Art of Doing Twice the Work in Half the Time

\$16.07

by Jeff Sutherland, JJ Sutherland

We live in a world that is broken. For those who believe that there *must* be a more efficient way for people to get things done, here from Scrum pioneer Jeff Sutherland is a brilliantly discursive, thought-provoking book about the management process that is changing the way we live.



In the future, historians may look back on human progress and draw a sharp line designating "*beforeScrum*" and "*after Scrum.*" Scrum is *that* ground-breaking. It already drives most of the world's top technology companies. And now it's starting to spread to every domain where people wrestle with complex projects.

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If you've ever been startled by how fast the world is changing, *Scrum* is one of the reasons why. Productivity gains of as much as 1200% have been recorded, and there's no more lucid – or *compelling* – explainer of Scrum and its bright promise than Jeff Sutherland, the man who put together the first Scrum team more than twenty years ago.

The thorny problem Jeff began tackling back then boils down to this: people are spectacularly bad at doing things quickly and efficiently. Best laid plans go up in smoke. Teams often work at cross purposes to each other. And when the pressure rises, unhappiness soars. Drawing on his experience as a West Point-educated fighter pilot, biometrics expert, early innovator of ATM technology, and V.P. of engineering or CTO at eleven different technology companies, Jeff began challenging those dysfunctional realities, looking for solutions that would have global impact.

In this book you'll journey to Scrum's front lines where Jeff's system of deep accountability, team interaction, and constant iterative improvement is, among other feats, bringing the FBI into the 21st century, perfecting the design of an affordable 140 mile per hour/100 mile per gallon car, helping NPR report fast-moving action in the Middle East, changing the way pharmacists interact with patients, reducing poverty in the Third World, and even helping people plan their weddings and accomplish weekend chores.

Woven with insights from martial arts, judicial decision making, advanced aerial combat, robotics, and many other disciplines, *Scrum* is consistently riveting. But the most important reason to read this book is that it may just help you achieve what others consider unachievable – whether it be inventing a trailblazing technology, devising a new system of education, pioneering a way to feed the hungry, or, closer to home, a building a foundation for your family to thrive and prosper.

Intertwined

by Peter Morville



This is a book about everything. Or, to be precise, it explores how everything is connected from code to culture. We think we're designing software, services, and experiences, but we're not. We are intervening in ecosystems. Until we open our minds, we will forever repeat our mistakes. In this spirited tour of information architecture and systems thinking, Peter Morville connects the dots between authority, Buddhism, classification, synesthesia, quantum entanglement, and volleyball. In 1974 when Ted Nelson wrote "everything is deeply intertwined," he hoped we might realize the true potential of hypertext and cognition. This book follows naturally from that.

\$13.50



ENG 3790 Assignment | IA Visualization Project

As part of your work in ENG 3790, you are responsible for a portfolio section that demonstrates basic writing plus design (writing+design) competencies in presenting process- and information-organization both visually and to a broad audience. The deliverables for this project will be three or four (depending on their complexity) polished visual information graphics (e.g., schematic, journey map, block diagram, flow diagram, Gantt chart, quadrant diagram, swim land diagram, Venn diagram, Ishikawa diagram, etc.)

The purpose of this project is four-fold:

- 1) To develop confidence and workflow strategies when synthesizing unorganized information into new structures.
- 2) Learn to choose appropriate rhetorical strategies and information structures for an information organization problem.
- 3) Use iterative writing and design processes to organize and build complexity into deliverables.
- 4) Present deliverables with follow-up reflection and analysis on paper and on your OpenLab ePortfolio.

These skills are absolutely critical when sharing high-level insights with diverse audiences. They will be part of your basic toolbox for organizing your own ideas and sharing the results of that work with others.

Directions

Your visual information graphics will be developed through an appropriate writing+design strategy and workflow that you design for yourself with my assistance.

Visualization is difficult work for the inexperienced (and, on a professional level, this includes me). This project will require your tenacity, focus, and creative thinking to successfully complete.

Your basic strategy should look something like this:

- 1) **Gather as much information about your area of focus as you can work with.** It's best to do information design with a clear idea of what you have to work with. Generating this raw content is your first job. Mind mapping, invention, brainstorming, shower thinking, chasing the green fairy, or however else you choose to bring words to paper/screen—do it and keep coming back to it for a few days. Sometimes I do this work on large sheets of paper.
- 2) **Look for natural structures in your content and ideas.** There is already systematicity in your ideas. Find it and tease out the connections. What relates to what? How? Why? When? Where? Under what conditions? What seems less important now? What seems more? What are the important words to think about?. Working on paper or the screen, whatever, but develop your notes. Respond to them. Push to make connections.

- 3) **Work Play with your information.** Use Abby Covert’s tools and processes of “How to Make Sense of Any Mess” as you need inspiration to move forward. As you come to an awareness of how your content fits together, begin to prototype solutions (e.g., sketch them out). Your initial prototypes do not need to be pretty or complex, but they do need to make sense to you and to the kind of audience you are seeking.
- 4) **Refine your prototypes into polished visual information graphics.** Here is where you get the chance to ensure that your deliverables are fit to represent your current skills and abilities as a technical communicator. While the process of creating these is part of the work of the project, the results are how we primarily evaluate your progress.
- 5) **Write a reflective text to accompany your graphics.** For each graphic, you must write a one paragraph reflection about what was most striking aspect of creating this graphic for you. In other words, what is most important for someone evaluating your work to know about that graphic? Second, you will write a one page (single-spaced) reflective essay that focuses on your journey doing this kind of work. What have you learned? Why does it matter? What are you going to do with your newfound abilities?

Grading

This assignment is worth 20% of your final grade.

TBD



ENG 3790 Assignment | Information Architecture Study

For your ENG 3790 final project, you will produce a visual and textual “study” of a “place.” In doing this, you will engage in purposeful “placemaking” for a specified audience (Polar Bear, p. 54). The content of this project, the audience for it, and your approach will be developed as a negotiation between your needs as a student, the needs of the course, the nature and purpose of the “place” you choose for your study, and the informational and rhetorical needs of the project as it develops. Your project must connect your own emerging abilities as a community of information and communications professionals.

You will work through the processes of developing a small, but complex, project from idea to completion. Further, you will be responsible for planning the project from the beginning, tracking the progress of the project in a quantifiable manner, conducting all necessary research, and producing deliverables under tight, inflexible deadlines. To successfully complete the final project, you need to work in an aggressively proactive manner, with significant discipline, and with the ability to re*envision the work of the project several times.

Your work in developing this project and the resulting study will be supported by smaller exercises and assignments, which will guide your decision-making process and work product. Use these activities to help develop your ability to articulate different aspects of your study and what it needs to look like “on paper.”

The final document will represent your own best ability to make use of practical information architecture skills, with all of the discipline, vision, and productivity this includes. Obviously, your study must be designed according to best practices in information hierarchy, argumentation, research support, page design, rhetorical strategy, and documentation that is appropriate to the intended audience.

Directions

Your study of a “place” will be developed through an appropriate writing+design strategy and workflow that you design for yourself with my assistance.

Visualization is difficult work for the inexperienced (and, on a professional level, this includes me). This project will require your tenacity, focus, and creative thinking to successfully complete.

Your basic strategy should look something like this:

- 1) **Establish a “place” or “site” of your project.** Remember, place is an abstract cultural concept, but our “place-making drive” is a real behavior. It’s best to do a study with a clear idea of what you want to work with, so you need to establish place to help set these parameters. Possibilities include:
 - a. Create a comparative analysis of two websites that serve a similar audience with a similar purpose. Use information architecture tools and techniques to create a report

- with actionable intelligence.
- b. Visually establish a CUNY major as a site using information architecture tools and techniques.
 - c. Design the information architecture of a space on the web for a particular purpose, with sample content, and for an identified and quantifiable audience.
 - d. Identify a small business (not your own) or a segment of a larger business that you can use as a site to visualize some aspect of their work.
- 2) **Write a Proposal.** Use Abby Covert’s tools and processes of “How to Make Sense of Any Mess” as you need inspiration to move forward. As you come to an awareness of how your content fits together, begin to prototype solutions (e.g., sketch them out). Your initial prototypes do not need to be pretty or complex, but they do need to make sense to you and to the kind of audience you are seeking.
 - 3) **Research Necessary Contextual Information and Your Site.** You will likely already know something about your site and how you want to approach it, but different sites require different content expertise that an information architect must quickly learn to do their work. For example, a project mapping the customer base of a small business selling cheese is going to require very different models than producing an organizational chart for a small team in a large institution.
 - 4) **Deliver Prototypes.** Early in your project, you will want to delivery low-resolution models of your work. The process of creating these is part of the work of the project, but the results are how we primarily evaluate your progress so you will want to have a few takes to do it as well as you can.
 - 5) **Develop Supporting Materials.** Your project needs content for context. How do you want to present your visualizations? For each graphic, you must produce at least one page of contextual writing. It should be informed by research and your best thinking about the project and the site you are creating?
 - 6) **Reflection.** Second, you will write a two page (single-spaced) reflective essay that focuses on your journey doing this kind of work. What have you learned? Why does it matter? What are you going to do with your newfound abilities?

Grading

This project is worth 25% of your final grade.

Breakdown TBD



ENG 3790 Final Exam | "The Celebration of Knowledge"

Unlike your other projects, which demonstrated your ability to apply information architecture tools and concepts to several types of problems, this exam will assess your ability to reason through information architecture concepts and demonstrate that reasoning to a reader.

For this exam you will need to produce two short essays that incorporate the following features:

- Write essay-based responses to questions that test your comprehension of information architecture concepts and methods and your ability to relay that information to a reader in a clear and coherent manner.
- Develop the content and analysis of your essays beyond a simple description of "what you've learned," to why it matters, how it is relevant, and other associations that you might have.
- Use the general writing process principles of drafting, revision, and editing to produce effective responses.
- Demonstrate technical and professional writing best practices in the format of your document.

You will be evaluated on your ability to coordinate the above features in your completed exam.

Directions

Review the four questions below. Choose two. Compose a 500-600 word short essay for each. As you compose your response, be sure to address the entire question and do so in a cohesive fashion. Your goal is to demonstrate a clear grasp of the theoretical and practical considerations involved, clear organization of ideas, and an ability to analyze relevant concepts and information. Information that you use from the text and other sources must be cited.

Post a completed exam to your individual Dropbox by noon on Thursday, 5/26/16. Without exception, late or corrupted exam files will not be evaluated for credit, so open your file after you post it, and don't wait until the last minute. If you have any questions, please contact me allowing enough time to receive a reasonable response.

Questions

- 1) Specifically, how has information architecture principles and practices helped you develop as a communications professional over the last 15 weeks of the course? Be sure to reference specific information architecture concepts and provide adequate analysis using concrete examples from your assignments, participation, and other activities inside or outside of the class.
- 2) What is the most difficult intellectual or conceptual barrier to the study of information architecture for you to overcome? Describe the barrier in detail. Why has this barrier been difficult? What progress have you made? Be sure to use specific information architecture concepts and provide adequate analysis using concrete examples from your assignments, participation, and other activities inside or outside of the class.
- 3) How do you envision using the concepts and techniques of information architecture either in your current professional student life, or in a future career position? What concepts and techniques seem most immediately valuable in that regard? If no element of the course seemed valuable, what is your critique? Again, specificity and analytical thinking are required in this response.
- 4) Having completed this course, how would you approach (i.e., assess with a mind to move forward) a novel information architecture situation. Be specific in your description including what concepts would be relevant, how you might use them, what questions you would ask and to whom, what process(es) you would engage, and how you would pattern your workflow.

Grading

This final exam is worth 15% of your final grade. This assignment will be graded using a holistic rubric based on the four features listed in the introduction. Obviously, incomplete or poorly written exams cannot receive full credit. If you are prepared to deliver insightful answers and engage in the writing process to develop those answers into a text, you will do fine.