Writing for the Web

Leslie Hilbert
Department of Web Communications
Chair, University Web Committee
Why does writing matter?

*It’s all about the users*

- What you want them to do
- What they want to do
- What they will do
Why is it different online?

“Users are selfish, lazy, and ruthless.”

- Jakob Nielsen

• Becoming more selfish, focused
• Task oriented
• Don’t want to “think”
How do you engage these rogues?

Create pages that are easy to scan.

Users scan because:

• They are in a hurry
• They don’t need to read everything
• They don’t want to read everything
• They are good at it
Our University

Visiting Our Campus

Our campus is in the center of Fort Collins, Colorado, just at the base of the Rocky Mountain foothills. It's an ideal location to live and learn - a unique mix of big city advantages and small town hospitality with easy access to the great outdoors.

University Welcome Center
Kimanis Hall (maps & directions)
970-491-4000
Summer hours: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Academic year hours: 7:45 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.
The Welcome Center serves as the university’s office front door for our visitors and friends. The center is a great place to gather information about campus and the Fort Collins community, along with admissions information for prospective students and their families, including day information sessions and campus tours.

Fort Collins
Fort Collins is a city of 124,000 located 60 miles north of Denver. "The Fort" seems to have something for just about everyone - several shopping malls, hundreds of restaurants, multiple movie theaters, a regional natural center, natural areas, miles of bike trails, and many coffee houses - right in town, and for outdoor enthusiasts, camping, hiking, snowboarding, downhill and cross-country skiing, rafting, fishing, and water skiing are all within a short drive.

Driving Directions and Parking Information
building locations, campus maps, and driving directions can be found on maps.colostate.edu.

Denver International Airport is served by most major airlines which provide nonstop daily service to more than 115 national and international destinations. Main rental car companies offer service at DIA and ground transportation (shuttle service) to Fort Collins in addition to services from the main highway.

Fort Collins is also served by the Fort Collins/Northern Colorado Regional Airport.

Greyhound bus lines connections are available to and from Fort Collins. For reservations and information, visit the www.greyhound.com or call (800) 231-1122.

After You Arrive
University Parking Services - Parking on campus is regulated - visit Parking Services online and get all this information you need prior to your arrival. You can also pick up your permit parking permit and detailed parking information at Green Line, located on the corner of Lincoln/Platanus and Laurel.

Campus Maps - Building locations, campus maps, and driving directions can be found online, at the Welcome Center, or at Parking Services.

Colorado Visits Center - Colorado visits center is located on the corner of Lincoln/Platanus and Laurel.

Campus Resources
About Our Campus
Admissions
Alumni
Athletics
Cafeteria
Campus Life
Career Services
Classroom Information
Contact Us
Events & Activities
Facilities
Finance
Food
Giving to CSU
Health Services
Library
Media
Office of the President
Online Stores
Registrar
Research
Safety
Student Life
Student Affairs
Student Services
Technology
Transportation
University Administration
University Housing
University Marketing
University Police
University Relations
University System
Visit Campus

Where do you start?

• Be prepared to rewrite & restructure

• Avoid just “throwing it up on the web”
Tips for rewriting

• Short & simple
  – Use plain English ("walk"… not "ambulate")
  – Eliminate needless words

• Consistent
• Chunked
• Carewords
• Prompt to action
Equine Sciences Students are Legends in the Making

Fort Collins - On April 30, 2009, Colorado State University’s B.W. Pickett Equine Center will be busy. The energy will be high as an estimated 55 running mares and young horses, whose prospects are promising, are auctioned off at the 23rd annual Legends of Ranching Performance Horse Sale, hosted by the CSU Equine Science program. In all of the excitement, don’t forget to take a moment to notice who is running the show—these students.

“Our goal in starting the sale was to build an event that gave our students the chance to practice skills we think are vital to their success in the equine industry,” said Jim Beers, Director of Teaching and Outreach for the Equine Science program. “After three years it is quite clear that student involvement with the faculty and advisory committee is what has made this event so successful!”

This year, 32 students in the Horse Training Laboratory are working with 34 young horses conceived by some of the most legendary ranches in the Western United States. These students not only start these young horses under saddle, they also learn about marketing horses based on pedigrees and training. The sale will be the culmination of two semesters of hard work. Prior to the sale on April 18, 2009, students will have the chance to demonstrate what they have learned in the Wagenhoudt Land & Livestock Student Competition. Scholarships for the competition are sponsored by Wagenhoudt Land & Livestock of Douglas, WY.

While the training class students are preparing the horses, the Equine Sales Management students will be hard at work building the framework for the sale. These students will create the sale catalog, manage sale marketing and advertising, communicate with consignors and sponsors, hire and manage employees, and oversee the events surrounding the sale. This year, these events will include a VIP Reception & Portfolio, an Educational Day, a Consignor Recognition Dinner, and the preview sale.

Working with the sales class will be students from the Equine Event Management class. These students will help to organize the Wagenhoudt Student Competition, the Educational Day on April 18, and will provide much-needed support to the sales class on the day of the sale. In total, approximately 25 percent of the 400 undergraduate Equine Sciences students at CSU will be directly involved in managing the events surrounding the sale.

“We are very fortunate to have the support of great industry leaders in our advisory committee, and our consignors are true legends in the industry,” says Beers. “But our real excitement comes when we see our students excel. They are legends in the making.”

For more information on the Legends of Ranching Performance Horse Sale, please visit www.csunews.com or call (970) 491-8373.

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For Immediate Release

Monday, December 22, 2008

Contact for Reporters:
Jim Beers
(970) 491-8373
Jim.beers@colostate.edu

Colorado State Student Legends in the Making

4th Annual Legends of Ranching Performance Horse Sale, hosted by the CSU Equine Sciences program, is the culmination of two semesters of hard work by students studying horse training, equine sales management, and equine event management.

“Our goal in starting the sale was to build an event that gave our students the chance to practice skills we think are vital to their success in the equine industry,” said Jim Beers, Director of Teaching and Outreach for the Equine Science program.

“What these years is to quite clear that student involvement with the faculty and advisory committee is what has made this event so successful!”

Students run the show

This year, 32 students in the Horse Training Laboratory are working with 34 young horses conceived by some of the most legendary ranches in the Western United States. These students not only start these young horses under saddle, they also learn about marketing horses based on pedigrees and training.

While the training class students are preparing the horses, students studying equine sales and event management will be hard at work building the framework for the sale. These students will create the sale catalog, manage sale marketing and advertising, communicate with consignors and sponsors, hire and manage employees, and oversee the events surrounding the sale, including:

- a VIP Reception and Portfolio,
- an Educational Day,
- a Consignor Recognition Dinner, and
- the Legends of Ranching Performance Horse Sale and preview.

In total, approximately 25 percent of the 400 undergraduate Equine Sciences students at CSU will be directly involved in managing the events surrounding the sale.

Competition for scholarships

The sale will be the culmination of two semesters of hard work and students will have the chance to demonstrate what they have learned in a pre-sale competition on April 18. Scholarships for the student competition are sponsored by Wagenhoudt Land & Livestock of Douglas, WY.

“We are very fortunate to have the support of great industry leaders in our advisory committee, and our consignors are true legends in the industry,” says Beers. “But our real excitement comes when we see our students excel. They are legends in the making.”
Try to write about the experience…

- Bob Johnson Consulting, LLC

“*Rolls-Royce has an obsession with quality appreciated by discerning customers*”

- Rolls-Royce campaign before David Ogilvy

“At 60 miles an hour the loudest noise in this new Rolls-Royce comes from the electric clock”

- Rolls-Royce campaign after David Ogilvy
Popular Science magazine has named David Thompson, atmospheric science associate professor at Colorado State, one of the "Brilliant 10" young scientists to watch.

"This is wonderful recognition of Dr. Thompson and the very important research occurring in our atmosphere science department," said Tom Frank, provost and senior vice president. "He epitomizes the commitment of faculty at Colorado State University to foster excellence in research."

Mavericks and young guns
Popular Science refers to the "Brilliant 10" as mavericks and young guns: "The eventual winners are young ... and each is just beginning to be noticed in the world outside their respective fields. But among their peers, our winners' off-radical ideas are generating a rare degree of respect and admiration. ... And for that, they deserve to be part of our Brilliant 10."

Other scientists named by Popular Science are from such institutions as Harvard University, Carnegie Mellon University, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology-Lausanne and the University of California-Los Angeles. The feature on Thompson focuses on his role in discovery of the El Niño of the North, a climate system that affects the top third of the planet.

The latest in a string of honors
In 2006, Thompson was honored with the prestigious McIntyre Professor Award, one of the university's top honors, and in 2006, Time magazine named Thompson one of the leading innovators in the science community.

In 2004, Thompson was awarded the American Geophysical Union's James B. Macelwane Medal in recognition of his contributions to the geophysical sciences by an outstanding young scientist. His many other honors include the NASA Earth System Science Fellowship, an NSF CAREER award and the NOAA GAP Outstanding Scientific Paper Award.

Thompson's research
Thompson's current work emphasizes improving understanding of global climate variability using observational data. His recent publications have contributed to improved understanding of large-scale modes of month-to-month variability in the atmosphere and the signature of these modes in recent climate trends.

He has published more than 20 peer-reviewed journal articles in publications such as Science Magazine, Physics Today and the Journal of Climate. Some of his work has received national media attention in such publications as National Geographic, The New York Times and the Los Angeles Times.

"Our Department of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State has celebrated more than 40 years of excellence in graduate education and cutting-edge research," said Sandra Woods, dean of the College of Engineering. "David's outstanding scientific discoveries contribute to that reputation and the department's standing as a Program of Research and Scholarly Excellence at Colorado State."

David Thompson, Ph.D.

"The honor is nice in that it highlights climate research to a relatively wide audience," Thompson said. "But receiving an individual honor feels a little awkward, too, since all of my work is done in collaboration with my peers."
Why short & simple?

- People are impatient
- People are in a hurry
- They skim, scan, select, or search
- They want to move on
- And they do
Keys to simple & short

- Eliminate words
- Write short, straightforward, concise sentences
- Reduce instructions (click here, scroll down, browse)
- Imbed links to other useful information and resources
- Use plain language
- Use words your audience cares about
- Focus micro-content elements
Users are looking for “care” words

• Write for your audience
• Know and focus on the tasks or goals of the user
• Use headlines/subheads that catch attention
Focus on micro-content

• Main idea
  – Headline & title
  – Deck, summary

• Major points
  – Subheads

• Minor points
  – Bold-faced lead-ins

• Series
  – Bullets
  – Lists
Frontload content

- Key messages first
- First sentence can stand alone
- Start with the known
- Link to details, resources and help
The City Museum, the premier place to see modern art, is located in Reed Park, next to the zoo, at 235 Park Drive, Big City, ST, 55667. The City Museum is open Tuesday through Friday from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm, Saturday from noon to 6:00 pm, and Sunday from noon to 6:00 pm. Admission is $10 for each adult, $5 for seniors (that's anyone 65 or older), $5 for students (6 to 18 or with student ID), free under 6. Call 456-555-8899 for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Admission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Museum</td>
<td>Mon. Closed</td>
<td>Regular $10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>235 Park Drive</td>
<td>Tues.-Fri. 10:00 - 4:30</td>
<td>65 and older 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big City, ST 55667</td>
<td>Sat. 10:00 - 4:30</td>
<td>Student 5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sun. 10:00 - 4:30</td>
<td>(6 to 18 or with student ID)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Under 6 free</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information, call 456-555-8899
Works for all sorts of pages

- Stories
- News releases
- Blogs
- Instructions
- Policies / procedures
- Documentation
CS200: Algorithms and Data Structures

Syllabus Fall 2008

Who and When:

Instructor:

John Smith
215 University Services Center
Office Hours: TBA
Office Phone: TBA
Email: john.smith@cs.colostate.edu

GTA:

Julia Stvens
Office Hours: 2-4 PM
Location: USC 3rd floor north lab
Email: julia.stvens@cs.colostate.edu

UTA:

Ben Nagel
Office Hours: 1-3
Location: USC 3rd floor south lab
Email: ben.nagel@cs.colostate.edu

Times/Place:

Lectures:

8:30-10:50 AM Monday
11:00-12:20 PM Monday
11:30-12:50 PM Tuesday
1:00-2:20 PM Tuesday
1:30-2:50 PM Thursday
2:00-3:20 PM Thursday
3:30-4:50 PM Friday
4:30-5:50 PM Friday

Office Hours:

10:00-11:00 AM Monday
1:00-2:00 PM Monday
1:00-2:00 PM Thursday
2:30-3:30 PM Thursday
3:00-4:00 PM Friday
4:00-5:00 PM Friday

Grading:

The course requires demonstration of a student's grasp of the concepts, as follows:

Programming Assignments (-5) 30%

Written Assignments (-5) 15%

Quizzes (-10) 10%

Midterms (2) 25%

Final Exam 20%

Programming assignments will be done individually to start and then as part of a 2-person team later in the semester. To expedite grading, no time in renotation section will be reserved for team renotations and teams will be formed from students in the same renotation section whenever possible.

Quizzes will be given during lecture each week, except those weeks in which a midterm exam is being given. Quizzes will be announced. There will be approximately 12 quizzes in the entire semester. No makeups will be given for quizzes, but three quiz grades will be dropped.

Class participation is strongly encouraged. To make it fair, students who ask or answer questions during lecture will be given a credit (maximum of one credit per class session). These credits must be translated into additional points on the next quiz.

The assignment of letter grades will be made as follows:

Letter Grade Point Range
A 90-100%
B 80-89%
C 70-79%
D 60-69%
F below 60%

**PROOF:** We will not assign you more points (but reserve the privilege to our selves)

Late and Makeup Policy

Midterms and Finals: Make-up exams are only given for extraordinary circumstances (e.g., death, serious illness). Students must consult with the instructor as soon as possible, preferably before the start of class. Course examination dates are listed in the syllabus, be aware of them and plan accordingly.

No make-ups will be given for missed quizzes.

Programming assignments will be submitted electronically. Details of how this is done will appear with the first assignment. Always check the assignment form for due times. Assignments will be due at 3PM on the due date. Late assignments submitted within 48 hours of the due date will receive a 10% penalty; electronic submission is required. No extensions will be given for missed deadlines.

Important Dates:

Course Examination Dates (Tentative):

- October 7 – First Midterm in Class
- November 11 – Second Midterm in Class
- December 19 – Final Exam, 9:30AM-11:30AM
- All exams are given the same way as the lectures continue.

Professional Conduct

All students are expected to conduct themselves professionally. The instructor and GTA assume you are familiar with the policies in the student information sheet for the department. Additionally, you are expected to be professional, albeit perhaps just starting. You should be familiar with the code of conduct for the primary professional society, ACM. You can read the ACM Code of Conduct HERE.

We work to maintain an environment supportive of learning in the classroom and laboratory. Towards that end, we require that you be courteous to and respectful of your fellow participants (i.e., classmates, instructors, GTA, and anyone). In particular:

- Please turn off your cell phone before class if you are expecting an emergency call, or at least mute the ring and have no accessory to make it.
- If you plan to use a laptop during class, please put it in the back of the classroom and turn off any sound from the machine. The top of the laptop is the only part that needs to be visible to the instructor.
- Laptops must be charged during exam and quizzes.
- Laptops will be placed on the desk in the classroom.

Last Updated: August 25, 2009

Course Description:

CS200 teaches the principles of programming and discrete math concepts that are introduced in CS161 and applies them to the development, analysis, and implementation of data structures and software.

The course is taught using the Java Language and emphasizes an Object-Oriented approach to data structures. Specific topics in data structures/algorithms include: advanced sorting, queues, stacks, hashing, trees, and graphs. Complementary topics from theory include relations, sets, and graphs. The course requires some larger programs and team programming.

Topics:

- Data Structures: Stacks and Queues
- Advanced Sorting
- Trees
- Graphs
- Hash Tables
- AVL Trees, B-trees, Red-Black Trees
- Relations
- Computational Complexity

Prerequisites:

CS161 (Object-Oriented Problem Solving) AND Math 160 or Math 161 or Math 165 (all with a C or better)

Textbooks:


Folkes, M. et al.
Consistency helps users navigate

- Establishes a visual hierarchy
  - The main topics are the biggest
  - The links are always green
  - Callouts will contain tools
  - PDFs will be indicated
PDFs

• PDFs work on the web
  – Best format for items to be printed (5+ pages)
  – Long documentation that won’t be read online
  – Preserve formatting and intent
• PDFs don’t work on the web
  – Primary content delivery or shortcut to delivery
  – Showoff beautiful brochure
  – Not as bad as monitor size increases
Aim higher.

At Colorado State, you can take your studies to a completely different level.

If you're looking for an accelerated learning environment, you'll find it at CSU — and our 1,200-acre Progress Park Campus as the heart of the Rockies isn't the only place you can take your education to new heights.

As soon as your freshman year, you can get the kind of professional-level experience that's reserved for graduate students at a lot of other institutions, whether you're conducting research in one of our labs, rehearsing for a concert in the University Center for the Arts or presenting your findings at a conference halfway around the world, you'll collaborate with internationally recognized experts in their fields.

And your academic experience at Colorado State won't end when you've wrapped up your assignments for the day. Our 13 Residential Learning Communities will unite you with students who share your interests, setting the stage for scholarships and connections that broaden your intellectual horizons far and wide. And here's what college is all about.

Explore your interests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Undergraduate programs of study</th>
<th>Faculty members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>150+</td>
<td>1,450</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Student-to-faculty ratio: 17:1

Tenure-track faculty with doctorate/terminal degrees: 99%

Experience our Residential Learning Communities

- Engineering
- Equine and Agricultural Sciences
- Global Village
- Health and Exercise Science
- Women's
- Honors Residential College
- Key
- Key Academic
- Key Service
- Leadership Development
- Law Grants
- Using Languages
- World Language

Explore your interests

Colleges: 8

Undergraduate programs of study: 150+

Faculty members: 1,450

Student-to-faculty ratio: 17:1

Tenure-track faculty with doctorate/terminal degrees: 99%
Making PDFs Work Online

• Provide an intro
  – What’s in it for me
  – Make it searchable

• Consider layout
  – Booklet vs tri-fold
  – Designs span pages
  – Cursor behavior

• Consider size
  – Design for online delivery
  – Use large font size
  – Make it easy to scan
Writing and SEO

- Titles
- File names
- Keywords
- Links
Gurus

- Gerry McGovern – http://gerrymcgaug lesson.com
- Bob Johnson - http://bobjohnsonconsulting.com
- Ginny Redish - http://www.redish.net
- Steve Krug - http://www.sensible.com
- Jared Spool – http://www.uie.com