

ENGL 380:
MICROSOFT WORD MANUAL
SPECIFICATIONS

Date: September 20, 2011
To: English 380
From: Prof. Solberg
Subject: Microsoft Word 2010 User's Manual

This memo outlines the basic specifications for your user's manual. As the semester progresses, we will continue to discuss, clarify, and add to the elements below. Annotate and update this handout by taking notes, as needed.

Overview

Your task is to research, write, test, and produce a 20-25-page user's manual for Microsoft Word 2010. It will be distributed to college and university faculty members in the humanities, both as a pdf and as a printed booklet. The manual should adopt a *task-oriented* approach (vs. "default manual"), should instruct via *procedure* (see Barker Ch. 3), and use a *modular format*. Your procedures should continue to use numbered, step-by-step instructions in the imperative mood. In upcoming weeks we will discuss principles of page layout and information design; these should inform your layout and revisions for assignment #5 and the final completed manual.

The completed manual must include the following (non-optional) elements:

- cover
- title page
- copyright page (optional)*
- dedication (optional)*
- acknowledgements
- table of contents
- introduction
- chapters (or sections) made up of modules
- appendix (optional)*
- index (optional)*
- page numbers

You must create all of your own original screen captures. Any decorative images must be attributed to a creator or source. All quoted/paraphrased sources must be cited. See course policy on plagiarism.

Substituting Word 2007 or Word 2011

Some of you have asked about the possibility of documenting Word 2007 (PC) or Word 2011 (Mac). I am willing to consider individual requests for substitution, under the following conditions:

- Your transmittal memo (accompanying your doc plan) must include a section in which you give an **accurate, well-considered overview of the differences** between Word 2010 and

Word 2007 (or between Word 2010 and Word 2011 for Mac, if that's the substitution you're requesting). Please note that the point of this overview is not to persuade me that the differences between the two versions are minor (this may or may not be the case), but rather to demonstrate that you have a solid understanding of how the two versions do, in fact, differ.

- You must be willing to make an effort to bridge any gaps between your documentation and that of other class members' (in workshops and discussion for example), and to make good use of lab time (whether by bringing your laptop or by working on parts of your manual that aren't version-specific).

Other, older versions of Word cannot be documented for this assignment, though of course you may certainly work within these programs to edit and draft prose.

Deliverables

Manual deliverable formats: color-printed, hard-copy version and a PDF file.

Manual due date: submit manual and supporting docs by Thurs, Dec 8.

Deadlines and deliverables for the Word manual project (see the course schedule for dates):

- user research memo
- doc plan + cover memo (graded assignment #2)
- first third + cover memo (graded assignment #3)
- user testing your modules
- second third + cover memo (graded assignment #5)
- have complete working draft before Thanksgiving break (see schedule)
- final complete draft, cover memo, and other accompanying documentation

Your next graded assignment will be the doc plan, which will incorporate your user analysis, present a table of contents, and map out a project completion schedule.