

# Wiki Projects for 3562w

As more organizations rely on **content management systems** (CMS) and collaborative writing tools, it is important to learn how to compose documents as part of a team. From universities to the CIA to major corporations and beyond, wiki tools are so common that **OpenOffice** can save wikitext files. During 3562w you will contribute to two online collaborative projects: an online Wikibook for *Professional and Technical Writing* students and one you select from a list of choices. The goals of working on a wiki project include:

- Creation of a document that has a real, worldwide audience. When you have an audience beyond the artificial classroom, writing is different.
- Experience using Web 2.0 technologies that are being embraced by many organizations.
- Development of collaboration and project management skills throughout the course.
- Exposure to the skills, work ethics, and personalities of your peers.

You are encouraged to learn wikitext formatting, which is used by many Web applications. The easiest way to learn is to examine existing Wikimedia pages at Wikipedia or Wikibooks. Click “Edit” to view the wikitext code of most pages. For an overview of wikitext, visit:

- The Official Wikitext guide: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Editing\\_guide](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Editing_guide)

## Participation and Grades

The wiki projects are approximately **20 percent of your grade** in 3562w, including peer evaluation points. Work on the class Wikibook is worth a potential 100 points and work on the wiki of your choice is worth 50 points. Approximately 50 points of class participation grade are linked to how well you work with your colleagues and other wiki contributors.

You should setup a Wikibooks account as soon as possible, if you do not already have one. Then, create a “User” page to introduce yourself to other wiki contributors. You might want to visit my user page (<http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/User:Poetcsw>) for an example introduction. You can cut-and-paste the wikitext into your own page if you want a template.

For the Wiki projects you should <b>select a unique ID and password</b> to protect your identity. <b>Do not</b> use your University x.500 ID. Your identity is a valuable, private possession.
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At the end of class, you will print the “My Contributions” report from Wikibooks and any similar reports from the wiki project you select. If you fail to log in to Wikibooks before making any edits, the system will not be able to track your efforts. **Never forget** to use your Wikibooks account.

## Use the Class Forums

Most of the project management should be conducted on WebVista. As a class, it is important to consider who will edit which chapters of the 3562w Wikibook. It is also useful to team up on the additional wiki project. It is important to appreciate that wiki pages never belong to a single person. Sometimes this can be frustrating and lead to conflicts.

Expect me to post questions and suggestions to the forum. If I suggest revising or rewriting a page, someone should jump in and make the changes as soon as possible. We want our work, which is visible to the entire Web community, to be great.

## ***Requirements***

The Wikibook assignments should be equal to a 2500-word research project, approximately 12 hours of dedicated time. Because editing does not necessarily add words to a wiki project, the quality of editing must be the measure of meeting part of the time requirement. You will most likely add 1000 to 1500 words, total, to the wiki projects, while editing approximately 1000 words. Your peer evaluations and the history reports from Wikimedia sites will be instrumental in grading your contributions.

There will be a reflective writing assignment in which you explore the collaborative process. The final portfolio will therefore include the following:

- Reflection on Wikimedia writing and editing;
- Printed reports from My Contributions and History tabs of Wikimedia sites; and
- Samples of the pages to which you contributed.

## ***Optional Assignment***

The University of Minnesota recognizes that some students have safety and privacy concerns when working online. For those with verifiable need for an exemption to the Wikibook projects, an alternative assignment is available, worth an identical weight towards the course grade.

### **Collaborative Writing in the Workplace**

The optional assignment is a report on content management systems (CMS) or collaborative writing systems used within workplaces. This report would be 2000 words, with citations. The report should be in MLA or APA format. The report would be due the last day of class, as part of your portfolio in place of the wiki project content.

If you intend to work on the optional report, you must clear this with the instructor by the third week of class. This assignment will require the same time investment as the wiki projects, which is why you must start the project early in the semester. The instructor cannot require you to work on the Wiki projects, in accordance with university policies, but the optional assignment must meet the standards of the Department of Writing Studies.

Please notify your instructor via the Mail feature **within WebVista** if you wish to pursue the optional report assignment. We must have a record of this request.