

Evaluating Design in Social Media Activism

Activity plan for a 75-minute class

Section	Steps	Time
Assignment/ warm up	Introduce or review assignment at the start of class Opening questions for class to warm up/connect to prior knowledge: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you like about Instagram? How do you use it? 2. What catches your attention/appeals to you in a post? 	5-10 minutes
Design principles overview	Presentation on design principles, typography and color; draw connections to how design impacts the delivery of the message and the importance of making intentional design decisions that appeal to a specific audience Alternative: watch design principles video (covers similar content to first part of presentation; 7 min)	15-20
Social media evaluation activity	Students split into groups and must be able to access Google docs. Each group is assigned a series of Instagram posts to analyze and prompts to answer <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the purpose of the post? What is the message it is communicating? 2. How effective is the post? Would you share it? Why or why not? 3. Pick two design principles/features (proximity, repetition, alignment, contrast, color, font) and describe how they are applied in this campaign. 4. If you think it is not effective, what would you change about it? What would you cut or add? 5. What is something from this campaign's design that you might want to use in your own? Each group reports out their answers to the class	20-25
Canva	Have students log into Canva (or create free account) Review interface- how to start a project, add content (left side menu- templates, photos, graphics, text) and make adjustments Practice: Students can recreate one of the posts they evaluated or provide students with all the same text (such as info for an upcoming campus event) and have them create a graphic for it.	15-20
Questions/ brainstorming	Questions about assignment? Take the last few minutes to brainstorm your own project: free-write your ideas about how you can take your research paper topic and turn it into a social media post. What information is the most important to include? How will you make it visually engaging?	5-10

Suggestions for modification:

- For 50-minute classes, split the lesson into two classes. Focus on design principles and the evaluation activity in the first class and Canva in the second class. If spending more time with Canva, have students work on a design challenge and ask a few students to share their work and their thought process for the design.
- Students could watch the design principles video before class, so not as much time is spent on the presentation.
- For asynchronous classes, the evaluation activity can still be completed with google docs or a discussion board in the LMS.