

This graduate course is designed to introduce students to the theoretical and pedagogical issues relevant to digital literacy and identity. This course is designed to be taught in a computer lab.

SYLLABUS: DIGITAL LITERACY AND IDENTITY (graduate)

Instructor: Erin Dietel-McLaughlin

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- Selfe, Cynthia. *Multimodal Composition: Resources for Teachers*. Cresskill: Hampton, 2007.
- Wysocki, Ann, Johndan Johnson-Eilola, Cynthia L. Selfe, and Geoffrey Sirc. *Writing New Media: Theory and Applications for Expanding the Teaching of Composition*. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2004.
- Selber, Stuart. *Multiliteracies for a Digital Age*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004.
- Coursepack of additional readings

COURSE GOALS

In our current digital age, the term “literacy” no longer refers exclusively to the reading and writing of printed texts. Scholars, educators, and professionals across disciplines are recognizing the importance of digital literacy to citizenship, education, information-sharing, and community-building. In the field of composition studies, many scholar-teachers continue to research the impact that evolving Internet technologies hold for the processes of reading and writing, identity construction, and community-building, as well as the extent to which composition instructors must pay attention to these processes in order to keep writing courses relevant in an increasingly multimodal society. In response, this course will orient you to some of the major theoretical and pedagogical issues relevant to the subject of digital literacy and identity. Throughout the term, we will experiment with a variety of digital writing technologies as we learn about the theory and practice of multimodal literacies and digital identity.

DESCRIPTION OF GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

Blog Entries (50 points): We will set up and discuss blogs the second week of class. From that point forward, you should post a 250-300 word reading response to your blog every week, prior to class. You should also read and respond to the blog entry of at least one other classmate. Due weekly throughout the semester.

Technology Autobiography (100 points): You will craft a personal essay that describes your experiences with technology thus far and how those experiences have shaped your overall attitude toward digital technology. You should also discuss your online identity as it currently stands and why or how that identity has been constructed by or for you. The purpose of this assignment is to orient me to your previous experiences with and attitudes toward technology and the extent to which you are already aware of your digital footprint. Additionally, this project will help to set the critical awareness and self-reflexivity that will form the foundation

for the rest of the assignments in this course. Tip: You may wish to refer to pp. 59-61 in *Writing New Media* for an idea of some questions you could address in this essay. Due Week 4 (9/16).

Midterm Essay (150 points): You will write an essay of around 10 double-spaced pages that somehow engages a topic prompted by the readings. You will choose from a list of possible essay questions that will be compiled by the class later in the term. This essay should cite source material from the course readings in support of your own thesis; your topic may warrant additional research, as well. The purpose of this assignment is to help you synthesize the readings from the course. You may also find this to be a useful start toward a conference paper or other scholarly project. Due Week 9 (10/21).

Video Observation OR Video Introduction (100 points): You will create a video centered on your observation of a class being taught with technology. Within this broad theme, the focus of your video is up to you. Option B: You may instead elect to create a video that introduces viewers to some aspect of your professional identity on your website. For example, you may choose to use this video as a way to introduce viewers to your teaching philosophy or scholarly interests. The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience planning, filming, and editing digital video and to consider the literacies involved with creating new media texts. Due Week 13 (11/18).

Website Design (100 points): You will use web-authoring software to develop a unique web presence and will include the various artifacts you produce in this course on that website. We will also be experimenting with a variety of technologies over the course of the term that you may choose to integrate into your web design, including embedded and linked media, and you will use blogging and microblogging tools to further enhance your digital footprint. We will discuss the criteria for grading in class. Due the last day of class (12/16), with Studio Review sessions throughout the term.

Discussion Facilitation (50 points): Once this term, you will be responsible for leading the class in discussion of the week's readings. This will involve preparing activities and/or questions that encourage us to synthesize the readings for the week and that prompt meaningful discussion. You should prepare a handout or other artifact that will provide your colleagues with additional information on the topic, including texts and resources that may be useful for those interested in pursuing further research on that topic at a future date. The purpose of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to explore one of our weekly topics in more depth, as well as experience facilitating class discussion at the graduate level. Sign-ups will take place the 2nd week of class.

"How-To" Group Orientation Workshop (50 points): You will assist two or three of your colleagues in researching, planning, and delivering a "how-to" workshop on a technoliteracy of your group's choosing (topics might include, but are not limited to, podcasting, Second Life, PhotoShop, Flickr, or Google Docs). Your workshop should run for about 60-75 minutes (half of a class period) and should cover a technology we have not already been using in class OR should show us some new dimension or use for a technology with which we are already familiar. You should provide appropriate documentation for your workshop and may choose to assign readings in advance of your presentation. The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience researching and working with another web technology, as well as experience developing and teaching a technoliteracy curriculum. Sign-ups will take place later in the semester.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Attendance in this course is mandatory. More than two absences will result in a negative impact on your final grade. Similarly, failure to participate actively in class discussions/activities will negatively impact your grade. For this class, “active participation” involves coming to class with all materials, being prepared to discuss readings, offering thoughtful contributions to class discussion, and providing meaningful feedback to other students in the course.

STUDIO TIME/STUDIO REVIEW

Throughout the term, there will be designated “Studio Time” or “Studio Review” sessions. “Studio Time” sessions are designed to give you significant in-class work time, and you are welcome to take advantage of the technology available in class to continue work on the various projects involved with constructing your unique web presence. I will be available to assist you with any issues and/or answer any questions you may have during that time. “Studio Review” sessions are designed to give you an opportunity to receive feedback on your work in progress, as well as view the work of your colleagues.

MISSING/LATE WORK POLICY

Work is due on the designated due date, and late work will not be accepted, except in the event of a documented medical emergency. If you anticipate problems meeting a deadline, then please discuss it with me ahead of time so that we can make alternate arrangements.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE AND DECORUM

Differing opinions will likely emerge during class, and while you are *not* required to agree with me or your peers, you *are* expected to be respectful and courteous to me, your peers, and yourself during these discussions. You should feel free to express your alternate perspectives at any time, but be sure to keep your focus on the *ISSUE* at hand and not on the *PERSON* you may be disagreeing with. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory language will not be tolerated. Additionally, as a courtesy to others in the room, please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices before class begins.

OFFICE HOURS AND CONFERENCES

My office hours for [SEMESTER] are _____ and by appointment. I encourage you to visit me during my office hour and to make appointments with me to discuss your writing progress or any other concerns you may have about the course.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form. In the event that you are caught violating the University's Academic Honesty policy, I will immediately recommend that you be withdrawn from the course and assigned a failing grade. Cheating is not worth the risk.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

It is university policy to provide reasonable accommodations for students affected by documented disabilities. If you need such an accommodation, then please talk to me after class and contact ____ at _____.

COURSE SCHEDULE

	Topic	Readings for next class
Week 1 (8/26)	Introductions Orientation to Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Baron, "From Pencils to Pixels" ✓ Kress, "Preface" ✓ Takayoshi and Selfe, "Thinking about Multimodality"
Week 2 (9/2)	Literacy and Technology: Histories, Definitions, Questions Orientation to Blogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Selber, "Reimagining Computer Literacy" ✓ Bolter, "Writing as Technology" ✓ Wysocki, "Opening New Media to Writing"
Week 3 (9/9)	Literacy and Technology: Histories, Definitions, Questions Orientation to Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Selfe et. al, "Words, Audio, and Video: Composing and the Processes of Production" ✓ Bolter, "Refashioned Dialogues" ✓ Johnson-Eilola, "The Database and the Essay"
Week 4 (9/16)	Changing Textualities/Literacies Studio Time <i>**Technology Autobiography due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Selfe, "Students Who Teach Us" ✓ Bolter, "Writing the Self" ✓ Selber, "Functional Literacy"
Week 5 (9/23)	Digital Literacy and the Self Orientation to Web-Authoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Selber, "Critical Literacy" ✓ Inman, Ch. 4: "Cyborg Literacy" ✓ Hess, "Composing Multimodal Assignments"
Week 6 (9/30)	Digital Literacy and Community Orientation to Web-Authoring, cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Selber, "Rhetorical Literacy" ✓ Barton, "The Future of Rational-Critical Debate" ✓ Pederson and Skinner, "Collaborating on Multimodal Projects" ✓ Briefly research the way a particular web space or technology is being used to support citizenship, activism, etc.
Week 7 (10/7)	Digital Literacy and Citizenship Orientation to Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Addison & Hilligoss, "Lesbian Lives on the Line" ✓ Wakeford, "Cyberqueer"
Week 8 (10/14)	Digital Literacy and Gender, Sexuality Orientation to Video, cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Nakamura, "Race In/For Cyberspace" ✓ Blackmon, "But I'm <i>Just</i> White" ✓ Browse BlackPlanet.com or another relevant website
Week 9 (10/21)	Digital Literacy and Race, Class Studio Time <i>**Midterm Reflective Essay due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Johnson-Eilola, "Plagiarism, Originality, Assemblage" ✓ DeVoss and Webb, "Media Convergence"
Week 10 (10/28)	Digital Literacy and Intellectual Property Studio Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ McKee, "Ethical and Legal Issues" ✓ Gajjala, "The SawNet Refusal"

Week 11 (11/4)	Digital Literacy and Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cooper, "Learning and Teaching Digital Technologies" ✓ Inman, Ch. 5: "Cyborg Pedagogy" ✓ DigiRhet.org, "Teaching Digital Rhetoric" ✓ TBA (group will assign)
Week 12 (11/11)	Digital Literacy and Writing Pedagogy Group Orientation Workshop 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ TBA (group will assign)
Week 13 (11/18)	Group Orientation Workshop 2 Studio Time <i>**Video Observation due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ TBA (group will assign)
Week 14 (11/25)	Group Orientation Workshop 3 Studio Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ TBA (group will assign)
Week 15 (12/2)	Group Orientation Workshop 4 Studio Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Complete your portfolio and burn to disc
Week 16 (12/9)	Final Studio Review/Reflections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have a great break!