ENGL 5362.201 (Fall 2017)
Writing across Digital Media
Wednesday 7:00-9:30 p.m.
CCH 207
Dr. Christopher Andrews

Email: christopher.andrews@tamucc.edu
Office: Faculty Center (FC) 285
Phone: 361-825-4124
Office Hours: As listed on Blackboard

I maintain a consistent web presence and am available via WebEx, email, or in person. I will commonly respond to Blackboard or email requests within 24 hours, but you can expect a response within 3 days.

Course description
There are many ways to approach writing, communication, or discursive production and distribution in the digital age. In this course, our lens will be rhetoric, which is oriented to theory as well as practice: we will apply rhetorical theory to understand how individuals and organizations can use digital media for action, and we will put that digital rhetorical theory into action in our own writing and delivery.

In this graduate seminar, we will read and respond to the fervent predictions of early hypertext theory and web-optimists, seeing how attitudes about the web of yesterday inform how we use the web today. We will analyze the dynamics of digital media through rhetoric and new media theory and explore the implications of digital media for rhetorical action. We’ll complete rhetorical analyses and apply theories of digital rhetoric to digital artifacts and interfaces. We’ll read scholarship in digital rhetoric, new media, and computers & composition, and in particular work to understand the nature and technological literacies involved in producing digital, multimodal, open-access scholarship. And as we produce digital texts in a variety of media, we will continually reflect on our lived, embodied experiences with technology and rhetoric.

Course Outcomes
- Students will study writing and publishing practices in digital environments and frame their own experiences in light of theories of literacy and technology
- Students will study how digital media enable and shape rhetorical and cultural expression and analyze such expression through rhetorical analysis
- Students will compose with attention to multiple and layered elements of digital writing conventions and documents, creating academic, expressive, poetic, and other rhetorical texts in a variety of media
- Students will develop research skills with scholarly print and digital media, including
audience- and media-appropriate documentation in the texts they compose

**Required materials**

- In addition to the three texts above, we will use several texts available for free online, and you will make use of our library collection and a number of open source, credible online resources.

**Additional expectations for course "materials":**

- Active student account to access University resources (network, library, student support)
- Active account @ Microsoft Office 365 (free from University)
- Active account @ Google. Course materials will be posted in a Google Drive folder that I will share with you before the first week of the course.

**Graduate student expectations**

Bona fide graduate-school behavior is distinguished in at least five ways:

- Students read assignments on time, completely, to the last page, and come to class with serious responses and a willingness to discuss them.
- Students do not assume that an assignment is legitimate only if it is graded. The work is done for its own learning value.
- Students expect to attend every class, and make home arrangements to ensure that this happens.
- Students approach all readings and coursework with an open mind and a spirit of curiosity. They work to understand ideas and texts prior to attacking or dismissing them.
- Students assume that open and equitable discussion is the soul of a graduate seminar. Everyone participates. Rather than expecting the professor or other students to originate or maintain discussion, students take on the responsibility to contribute their share.

**Grading and Assignments**

I will use the following percentages to calculate your course grade, and will use the grading system as described in the TAMU-CC Catalog. If you have questions about grades or grading throughout the semester, please don’t hesitate to ask. I accept revisions on all major projects, provided that you meet formally with me to discuss feedback on your project, a revision agenda, and a timeline for completion.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-class participation and homework</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital literacy autobiography</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetorical analysis of digital media</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of online scholarly journals</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar project</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To facilitate your learning, we’ll complete the following projects. Unless defined otherwise in the assignment description, you should compose and publish each of your projects in the rhetorically appropriate digital medium of your choice: a video, a podcast, a tweetstorm, an HTML/CSS website, etc. All of these projects could be completed as traditional essays, and some of them might work best for your purposes in essay format, but only one of them is required to be an essay. For each assignment, provide a brief cover letter in which you reflect on and explain the medium and design choices that you make for these assignments. I will provide full descriptions in the class Google Drive folder.

**Digital Literacy Autobiography**

Write about a technology that has affected your skills, abilities, and/or experiences as a writer and/or as a reader. This is not a research paper. This assignment is an autobiography—a piece in which you tell a story about yourself as a writer and/or as a reader, specifically a story about how technology has changed your approaches to writing or to reading.

**Rhetorical Analysis of Digital Media**

Choose a piece of digital media to explore and prepare a rhetorical analysis of it based on your reading of *Lingua Fracta*. Your rhetorical analysis should be delivered as a written report of 6-8 MLA or APA manuscript-formatted pages.

**Review of online digital rhetoric-related journal**

You will be assigned one of the following “digital rhetoric” scholarly journals: Kairos, Enculturation, Hybrid Pedagogy, Computers & Composition Online, or one of a few others. Write up a review of the last five published issues, with an eye to three questions:

1. What subjects does the journal publish on? Based on the last five issues, what sorts of research are scholars publishing and how does it fit under the general umbrella of digital rhetoric?
2. What kinds of media do webtext or article authors use? Survey the different forms that scholarship seems to take in the issues you review.
3. What’s the ‘coolest’ piece you see in the recent issue? What technological literacies would you need to compose such a webtext?
Seminar project
This is as close as we’ll get to the classic “seminar paper.” Take a deep dive on a concept, question, or idea that’s interested you from our readings this semester. Collect scholarly literature on the subject, including at least three conversants. Your project, in whatever medium you publish in, should not only review the scholarly conversation but also engage with that conversation—both in terms of the argument you make and the medium you use to deliver your argument.

Regardless of medium, all projects are required to include a correctly-formatted bibliography according to MLA or APA guidelines. Please consult the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th ed) or the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed, 2nd printing) accordingly.

Late work
Assignments are due on the dates listed on the syllabus unless for some reason I announce a change or unless you have made special arrangements with me. Work turned in after that time will be penalized 10% per day. I will not accept major assignments more than five days late. Hard drive crashes and other computer problems will not be accepted as excuses for late work.

Academic dishonesty
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in:

- first offense ⇒ no credit for assignment
- subsequent offenses ⇒ failure of class

Technology
As you might rightly assume, a course titled "Writing Across Digital Media” is entirely imbricated with technology: the class is about technology, and it works because of, as a result of, and in dialogue with technology. This means a handful of things:

- **Tech happens.** Difficulty with your computer or technology is not an acceptable excuse for late work, whether those are reading responses or one of our major projects. Practice agency by backing up your work, ensuring your technology is updated within your means and the expectations of coursework, and saving early & often.
- **You should learn something new about digital technology.** While I do not expect you to become an expert in HTML5 in fifteen weeks, for example, I do expect you to push beyond your current technical knowledge. The days of separating technical knowledge from literacy knowledge are long past. Ultimately, you are responsible for your command of technology as well as course content. I will help you do this and
provide resources to support you, but if you are having difficulty it is your responsibility to a) ask for help and b) look for tutorials and supplementary material that work for you (this is but one small example of an important idea, a “rhetoric of personal agency,” which we’ll talk about during the term).

- **Learn from failure.** A spirit of inquiry and experiment is just as important as particular technical skills in this course. "Showing up" with broken or malfunctioning work is far better than showing up with an excuse, and sometimes we can learn more from your broken webtext than some slick Squarespace module. Your honest effort is more interesting to me than perfect work.

**Social accounts and privacy**

We may use social accounts for this class. These are public accounts, and thus searchable and scalable: you can't control who finds what, how, and where. To protect your privacy you may create a pseudonym or alias any account we use. At the same time, I strongly encourage you to consider the long-term value of establishing these accounts under your own name or a professional alias. Having accounts where you conduct yourself professionally might well be an asset to your online presence, proving to be useful elements of portfolios you might eventually rely on when applying for jobs or schools in the future.

**Disability services**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Grade appeals process**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor.

For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf).
For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamu.edu/about/student-resources.html.

For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**Academic advising**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Academic continuity**

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.
### Course schedule

Due dates are tentative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Aug 30 | Intro to the course  
Lanham 1-2; Hass |
| 2    | Sept 6 | What’s a Digital Rhetoric? Eyman, Intro-1; Zappen; Lanham 3 |
| 3    | Sept 13| Digital Rhetoric: Theory/Method/Practice Eyman 2, 3, 4 |
| 4    | Sept 20| Interface & Ecology: Brooke 1, 2  
Turnley, Mediological method  
**Digital literacy autobiography due** |
| 5    | Sept 27| Invention: Brooke 3; Stolley, lo-fi manifesto |
| 6    | Oct 4  | Arrangement: Brooke 4; Bolter; Manovich |
| 7    | Oct 11 | Style: Brooke 5 et al |
| 8    | Oct 18 | Memory: Brooke 6 et al |
| 9    | Oct 25 | Delivery: Brooke 7, Porter  
**Rhetorical Analysis due** |
| 10   | Nov 1  | Critical Philosophy of Technology; The Q Question Lanham 7 |
| 11   | Nov 8  | Jenkins, Transmedia storytelling |
| 12   | Nov 15 | **Journal review due** |
| 13   | Nov 22 | Lanham 4-6 |
| 14   | Nov 29 | Lanham 8-10 |
| 15   | Dec 6  | **Deep dive presentations** |
| FINAL|       | **Deep dive due** |