

This undergraduate course is designed to assist students in all majors in advancing their digital literacies at the same time that they work to craft and manage an online identity. The course is designed for students who have completed first-year writing requirements, and students will be encouraged to focus assignments toward their specific major or professional aspirations. The course is designed to be taught in a networked computer lab.

SYLLABUS: DIGITAL LITERACY AND IDENTITY (undergraduate)

Instructor: Erin Dietel-McLaughlin

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- *Readings:* There is no mandatory textbook for this course. Given the topic of this course, most of our readings will be drawn from sources on the Web. You are required to read these items before class discussion and are expected to either bring a printed copy of the reading to class or be able to call up the reading on a computer.
- *E-mail:* You must have an active e-mail account that you check regularly.
- *Digital Storage:* You should purchase a flash drive for saving your work each class period and at least one rewritable CD for submitting an electronic version of your final digital portfolio. For the video unit of this course, you will also need to purchase a mini-DV tape, available for about \$3 at most office supply retailers (we will discuss this in class).

COURSE GOALS

In our multimodal society, 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 response, this course will help deepen your understanding of a variety of digital writing technologies and to consider the ways in which our perceptions of self and other are mediated through these and other technologies. Over the course of the semester, you will craft and manage a digital identity at the same time that you learn about and experiment with a variety of digital composing tools, including web-authoring software, video editors, and web-based tools such as blogs, social networking sites, and microblogging applications. We will discuss the benefits and risks associated with digital footprinting and will discuss the importance of self-literacy in a digital culture, particularly as it pertains to managing an online identity. In short, this course aims to help you develop not only the skills involved with operating the technologies, but the rhetorical and critical attitude involved with being content-producers and critical analysts of technology.

DESCRIPTION OF GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

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. Due Week 4 (9/16).

Personal Weblog (100 points): Once you have reflected on your digital identity as it currently stands, you will be ready to begin actively crafting your own. You will begin this process by keeping a blog that is consistent with the digital identity you wish to project. Once we establish blogs in class, you should plan to update your personal weblog with at least one substantial blog entry per week that is relevant to the overall theme, focus, or topic you have established. These entries should be appropriately organized and developed and should be free of sentence-level errors. More importantly, these entries should somehow enhance your ethos as you work to construct a focused digital footprint. Your blog will be linked to the website you will be designing in class and will be graded at the end of the term, though I will check blogs periodically for updates.

Online Identity Analysis (100 points): You will write an essay of 3-5 double-spaced pages (or equivalent) that analyzes and critiques the web identity of an individual of your choice (note: this should be an individual within the general population and NOT a celebrity in popular culture). You will analyze this web presence based on criteria we develop in class. The purpose of this assignment is to emphasize the rhetorical nature of online identities by highlighting the various ways in which rhetorical choices are made online and, in turn, interpreted by viewers. This assignment will aid you in thinking critically about the process of composing a digital identity and the rhetorical choices that are involved in such an endeavor. Due Week 7 (10/9).

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 portfolio, 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.

Video Introduction (100 points): You will create a video that will introduce viewers to your website. You do not necessarily need to appear in the video, but the video should contribute to your digital identity in a meaningful way and should be consistent with the online presence you are constructing. 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 10 (10/28).

Social Media Presence (100 points): Throughout the term, we will be experimenting with a variety of social media sites, including social networking sites like Facebook and YouTube, microblogging applications such as Twitter, and gaming technologies such as Second Life. You will be evaluated not only on your level of participation with those technologies, but also on the degree to which you are able to use those technologies in support of the digital identity you have set out to construct for yourself. The purpose of this assignment is to orient you to a variety of Web 2.0 technologies and to explore the many ramifications that these technologies have for education, work, play, community, and self. Due throughout the term.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Your grade in this course will be based on your performance in the following major areas:

- I. **Attendance, Participation, and Daily Work (including Discussion Board posts)** (worth 25% of your grade) – 200 points

- II. **Personalized Writing Portfolio** (worth 75% of your grade) – 600 points. Your portfolio will be comprised of the following graded assignments:
 - a. Technology Autobiography (100 points)
 - b. Online Identity Analysis (100 points)
 - c. Personal Weblog (100 points)
 - d. Website Design (100 points)
 - e. Video Introduction (100 points)
 - f. Social Media Presence (Twitter, Wikis, Second Life, etc.) (100 points)

Total Possible Points: 800

720-800 points = A
640-719 points = B
560-639 points = C
480-559 points = D
Less than 480 = F

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

You will be allowed *three* “free” absences; after that, each absence will result in a point deduction from your attendance/participation score. More than four absences will result in a conference with me to discuss your class standing; students with six or more absences will not pass the course. Similarly, failure to participate actively in class discussions/activities may result in point deductions. For this class, “active participation” involves coming to class with all materials, being prepared to discuss readings and/or homework, offering thoughtful contributions to class discussion and workshops, and fully utilizing studio time to work on course projects.

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 draft deadline, then please discuss it with me ahead of time so that we can make alternate arrangements.

ADVANCED DRAFTS AND STUDIO REVIEW

I will assign a preliminary grade to the draft you bring to Studio Review (our whole-class peer review sessions). This draft should not be considered a “first” or “rough” draft, but should be the product of your careful drafting and revision. If you need help in your early drafting process, then please visit me during my office hours or make an appointment and I

will be happy to help you; you may also wish to form a small work group with other members of the class. The preliminary grade you receive on your advanced draft will be accompanied by my comments and suggestions for revision, should you choose to revise your project for a higher grade. If you do choose to revise a project for a higher grade, you may turn in your revised final draft at any point during the semester. You must also submit a “revision summary” form with your revised draft (we will discuss this in class).

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. Please come to your conference with copies of your work and a clear sense of what you would like to cover during our meeting. Be sure to make note of your conference time, as well - *a missed conference will count as an absence.*

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. You are an intelligent person capable of submitting your own quality work, and I expect nothing less.

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	Homework for next class
Tues., 8/26	Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review syllabus ✓ Write a one-sentence definition of the term “digital identity,” in your own words. ✓ Think about what kind of identity you would like to project to a particular audience ✓ Google yourself and make note of the results ✓ Be prepared to share your responses to the above items in the next class period. ✓ Bring 3 personal artifacts to the next class
Thurs., 8/28	Introductions, cont. Orientation to Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be sure you are added to course Facebook site ✓ Read, “Information, Media, and Digital Literacies,” http://nirak.net/2007/09/12/information-media-and-digital-literacy/ ✓ Read “Identity Production in Networked Culture,” http://www.danah.org/papers/AAAS2006.html ✓ Read “Footprints in a Digital Age,” http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/nov08/vol66/num03/Footprints_in_the_Digital_Age.aspx ✓ Read “Build a Digital Footprint You Can Be Proud Of,” http://msn.careerbuilder.com/Article/MSN-2045-Job-Info-and-Trends-Build-a-Digital-Footprint-You-Can-Be-Proud-Of/?cbsid=7741b978037e47c486c61800a7fe1386-308680429-I3-5&ArticleID=2045&cbRecursionCnt=2 ✓ Begin drafting your autobiography
Tues., 9/2	What is Digital Literacy/Identity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Read “A Guide to Twitter,” http://www.lostartofblogging.com/twitter-guide ✓ Continue drafting your autobiography
Thurs., 9/4	Orientation to Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Follow at least 3 of your classmates on Twitter (you may follow more). ✓ Read “How to Write Effectively for Twitter and the Social Web,” http://www.interactiveinsightsgroup.com/blog/1/how-to-write-effectively-for-twitter-and-the-social-web/ ✓ Write your first “Tweet” (from this point forward, you should update with a tweet every 24 hours)

Tues., 9/9	Studio Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Complete a complete, almost-final draft of your autobiography
Thurs., 9/11	Studio Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Taking the feedback from your peers into account, revise your autobiography. ✓ Read “Basic Questions for Rhetorical Analysis,” http://rhetoric.byu.edu/Pedagogy/Rhetorical%20Analysis%20heuristic.htm Read “The Rhetorical Situation,” http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/625/01/
Tues., 9/16	Rhetorical Foundations/Analysis <i>**Technology Autobiography due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Begin drafting your analysis ✓ Read Mary Pipher’s “Blogs—A Revolutionary New Tool” (handout) ✓ Read “Blogs ‘essential to a good career,’” http://www.boston.com/business/globe/articles/2006/04/16/blogs_essential_to_a_good_career/
Thurs., 9/18	Orientation to Blogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue drafting your analysis ✓ Finalize a topic, audience, and purpose for your personal weblog ✓ Craft your first blog entry (about 300 words) ✓ Read “Connecting the Digital Dots,” http://www.educause.edu/EDUCAUSE+Quarterly/EDUCAUSEQuarterlyMagazineVolum/ConnectingtheDigitalDotsLitera/157395
Tues., 9/23	Digital Literacy and School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue drafting your analysis ✓ Read “Planning Your Website Design,” http://www.adobe.com/support/dreamweaver/layout/site_planning/
Thurs., 9/25	Orientation to Web-Authoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Read “Website Tips,” http://www.ecommercehelpdesk.com/general_tips.shtml ✓ Continue drafting your analysis
Tues., 9/30	Orientation to Web-Authoring, cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be prepared to work on you analysis, website, blog, or other class-related project during Studio Review next class.
Thurs., 10/2	Studio Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Complete a strong, almost-final draft of your analysis for Studio Review.
Tues., 10/7	Studio Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Read “Does the Internet Strengthen Community?,” http://www.publicpolicy.umd.edu/IPPP/fall1999/internet_community.htm ✓ Browse the “Best of Web 2.0 Community” list at http://www.allthingsweb2.com/mtree/COMMUNITY_2.0/ and choose one site that interests you. Respond to the discussion board prompt with that site in mind.

Thurs, 10/9	Digital Literacy and Community <i>**Online Identity Analysis due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Read "Introduction to Video Editing," http://www.mediacollege.com/video/editing/tutorial/ ✓ Read "Intro to Video Blogging," http://goodtreecompany.com/wordpress/2009/06/13/intro-to-video-blogging/ ✓ Read "YouTube Basics," http://www.scribd.com/doc/17078415/YouTube-Basics-Player-Embedding-and-Annotations
Tues., 10/14	Orientation to Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Read "Creating a Storyboard for Video Production," http://www2.hawaii.edu/~ricky/etec/storyboarding.html ✓ Finish the storyboard for your video ✓ Begin shooting your footage
Thurs., 10/16	Orientation to Video, cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Finish shooting your footage ✓ Be prepared to work on your video project during the next class.
Tues., 10/21	Studio Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be prepared to share your video during Studio Review next class.
Thurs., 10/23	Studio Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Taking the feedback from your peers into account, finish your video. ✓ Read "Saving Democracy with Web 2.0," http://www.wired.com/software/webservices/commentary/circuitcourt/2006/10/72001 ✓ Read "Iran's Protests: Why Twitter is the Medium of the Moment," http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1905125,00.html ✓ Browse http://www.citizentube.com/
Tues., 10/28	Digital Literacy and Citizenship <i>**Video Introduction due</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Watch "Wikis in Plain English," http://workliteracy.ning.com/video/video/show?id=2319680%3AVideo%3A6512 ✓ Read "Wikis as Personal Space," http://michelemartin.typepad.com/thebamboooprojectblog/2007/06/wikis-as-person.html
Thurs., 10/30	Orientation to Wikis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Read "Reality Bytes: 8 Myths About Video Games Debunked," http://www.pbs.org/kcts/videogamerevolution/impact/myths.html
Tues., 11/4	Digital Literacy and Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Watch "Introduction to Second Life," http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZAj8Cg4bLo
Thurs., 11/6	Orientation to Second Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ TBA, based on class decisions

Tues., 11/11	No Class – Holiday	
Thurs., 11/13	Topic TBA (class will decide)	✓ TBA, based on class decisions
Tues., 11/18	Technology TBA (class will decide)	✓ TBA, based on class decisions
Thurs., 11/20	TBA (class will decide)	✓ Make sure all of your work from this semester is compiled in your web portfolio, even if you are still working out some kinks. Be prepared to share your portfolio during Studio Review next class.
Tues., 11/25	Studio Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Review the work you've done this semester and determine if there are any projects you'd like to revise for a higher grade. ✓ Begin working on those projects ✓ Catch up on discussion board posts or your individual blog entries, if necessary ✓ Bring all of the work you've done this semester to the next class.
Thurs., 11/27	No Class - Thanksgiving	
Tues., 12/2	Reflective In-Class Essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue revising any projects, if desired. ✓ Continue assembling the contents of your portfolio ✓ Make sure to purchase a recordable CD – you will burn the final versions of your work to this CD.
Thurs., 12/4	Studio Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Continue revising any projects, if desired. ✓ Continue assembling the contents of your portfolio ✓ Make sure to purchase a recordable CD – you will burn the final versions of your work to this CD to turn in.
Tues., 12/9	Studio Time	✓ Finish your writing portfolio. Make sure to bring an electronic version (on CD) and a print version to the next class.
Thurs., 12/11	Final Studio Review	✓ Remember to pick up your graded portfolio from me during the designated time on Tuesday.
Tues., 12/16	Pick up graded portfolios	Have a great semester!