

ENGL 303: Multimedia Writing

- + West Virginia University
- + Department of English
- + Professor Sandy Baldwin
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- + Class: TR 16:00-17:15
- + G18 Colson Hall
- + Office: G20 Colson Hall
- + Hours: TR 14:30-15:30 and by appointment

Peter Morville: "In the digital realm, we rely heavily on words. Words as labels. Words as links. Keywords."



Class blog: <http://engl303s11.blogspot.com/> (includes Diigo Links and Class blogroll)

This page: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1J-l74b1aKtzAWaTMXVWYvEmqh4OT8HWnh-jAPnpeE-k/edit?hl=en#> or <http://tinyurl.com/36j2qkj> or Mix

Winograd and Flores: "Computers are not only designed in language but are themselves equipment for language."

ENGL 303 Catalog Description

"Study of communication and design issues in multimedia composition. Focuses on communication, creative expression, persuasion, interactivity, and rhetorical principles. Practice in composing multimedia documents such as online publications, interactive literary works and tutorials."

Format

This semester the focus is a semester-long project on *multimedia authorship and creativity*. What or who is the multimedia writer? What defines authorship in multimedia? What makes multimedia writing *creative*? What problems arise around defining intellectual property or notions such as "voice" or "story"? What are the effects of collaborative, distributed, *remixable* texts? Are emails, chatroom discussion, and IMs instance of multimedia authorship? How about Facebook posts and YouTube videos as authorship? How about spam?

The class will be run as a single research team devoted to this project. We will gather research materials and author a collaborative video. You will also create individual, directed projects on a research question (your topic) emerging from the overall project.

The first several weeks of the course will consist of brainstorming, information gathering, and defining the topic. You will develop a YouTube video trailer/preview of your project, within the framework of the class project. The second part of the class will consist of directed reading and discussion on the topic. You will develop a Google Docs abstract and annotated bibliography

for your project. The third part consists of continued exploration and refining of the project. You will write an essay on the topic, based on your research. You will make creative gallery linked to your blog, where you extend your topic through something you *make*. You might: make an iPod-ready soundtrack for your project, using audio that you find or create; make a YouTube video; make a presentation with images and animation; make a remix of the project, mashing up text images...; what else? We will work together on the collaborative video, and revise your previews/trailers. In the final weeks, you will present the materials to the class and publish them online.

There are no textbooks for this course. Everything is online. There are no tests, quizzes, or final exams. This is not a course about writing for mass media, nor is it a course about tools for writing on the web. It is a course that asks you to think and write.

Requirements

NOTE: The blog you create in the second class will be the portal for all your projects. Work must be uploaded to Google Docs and linked/embedded to your blog, unless otherwise noted.

- Web Presence (see below), blog posts (all 250 words minimum), group work, etc. 20%
- Project Preview/Trailer, intro to your topic, at least one minute of video + music + text, uploaded to YouTube + embedded in your blog, 20% of final grade, due 2/10
- Project abstract and annotated bibliography (at least ten items), 20% of final grade, due 3/1
- Project Essay, 20% of final grade, due 3/31. 2000 words minimum, not including Works Cited.
- Project Creative Gallery, including revised preview/trailer + other explorations and elaborations 20% of final grade, due 5/3

Grade Descriptors

Adapted from standard grade descriptors for writing courses. These are intended to give general grading guidelines and may not apply in every case. Note: In general, I follow a contractual rather than qualitative approach to grading, i.e. if you do the project as described you will get a high grade.

A Exemplary work that demonstrates originality and initiative. The content is mature, thorough, and well-suited for the audience; the style is clear, accurate, and forceful; the information is well-organized and formatted so that it is accessible and attractive; genre conventions are effectively used; mechanics and grammar are correct.

B Good work. The work generally succeeds in meeting goals in terms of audience, purpose, and genre without the need for further major revisions. It may need some minor improvements in idea, content, presentation, or writing style/mechanics.

C Satisfactory. Work is adequate but requires some substantial revisions of idea, content, presentation, or writing style/mechanics; may require further work in more than one area.

D Work is unprofessional, requires extensive revisions of idea, content, presentation, writing

style, and/or mechanics. The writer has encountered significant problems meeting goals of audience, purpose, and genre.

F Not enough information; inappropriate for the situation; and/or major and pervasive problems in terms of content, presentation, or writing style/mechanics that interfere with meaning. May be incomplete, or plagiarism may compromise the work on ethical grounds.

Attendance and Participation

Attending class and participating in the class activities is indicative of professional conduct and is a basic courtesy to others in the class. You are expected to attend every class. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class. Every unexcused absence or failure to participate after the first week – starting with class on 1/18 – will lower your final grade by 1/3 of a grade. I am happy to discuss the absence policy. I will determine what constitutes an *excused* absence.

Participation includes but is not limited to coming to class prepared and with all the work due; participating in class activities, especially collaborative work, workshop, and review sessions; and maintaining a courteous and considerate attitude in class (for example: cell phones on silent). All work should be turned in promptly, on the due date, with the proper formatting, and with attention to spelling and grammar. You will receive feedback on all your assignments. Completing ungraded writing such as drafts and other short writings is *assumed* as part of your participation. Also, you must backup all your work at home as well as hosting it on the web. Every failure to participate in the above manner reduces your final grade by 1/3.

Plagiarism Policy

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, I will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of this course. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the Student Conduct Code at <http://www.arc.wvu.edu/rightsc.html>. Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see me before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Social Justice

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veterans status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate

arrangements with the Office of Disability Services (293-6700).

Undergraduate Writing Center

Please consider taking your ideas and your written work to the WVU Writing Center, where trained peer tutors will consult with writers about any piece of writing at any stage of the writing process. The Writing Center is located in G02 Colson Hall. To schedule appointments or to ask questions, call 293-5788. For more information about Writing Center programs as well as for materials to help you negotiate various stages of the writing process, visit http://english.wvu.edu/centers/centers/writing_center.

Web Presence Activities

As part of the “Web Presence” requirement, you must do the following prior to the third class (1/18).

- Create a Blog at <http://blogger.com> (free with your Google Account). All your projects will be linked here. (We will do this in the second class, but if you miss that, it must be complete prior to the third class.)
- Join the class Diigo group at <http://groups.diigo.com/group/engl-303-spring-2011>. During the semester, you will search the web for sites relating to the class topic. Use Diigo to bookmark sites of interest and be sure to post the bookmarks to the group. These will be our research resources. (If you bookmark resources on your personal account and you wish to share with the group, you will need to use the “Share to group menu”). Make sure to annotate the resource using the Diigo “description” field – describe it briefly and why it is interesting and significant – and add descriptive tags. Also, you can use the Diigo sticky notes feature to add notes to the resource. The shared bookmarks will be updated to our class blog. We will go through this in the third class.
- Create a Google Docs account at <http://google.com/docs> (free). Develop and store your projects here.
- Email me with two things: 1) The url of your blog’s RSS feed. To do so: mouseover the Subscribe to: Posts (Atom) link towards the bottom of your blog, right mouse and copy the link. Email me this link. I will create an “aggregator” that feeds all blog postings from your blogs to the class blog at <http://engl303s10.blogspot.com/>. 2) Also, *in the same email*, send me any questions that arise in reading the syllabus, and a statement that you read and understand the requirements and schedule set out in the syllabus (this document)
- Throughout the semester: coolify your blog. Add design, gadgets, etc. Remember, this is your platform for presenting your work in a professional and persuasive manner. Make it look good. Take a look at “Customizing your blog” on the following page: <http://www.google.com/support/blogger/>. Also, take a look at <http://btemplates.com> for other ways to customize your blog.

You will use Diigo to collaboratively collect resources pertaining to the overall project, as well as to your individual topic. Diigo will become the knowledge base for the class. Question:

What resources should you collect? Answer: any web-based resources pertaining to the topic. Make the topic your own. Take it in the direction of your interests. If you play computer games, you might consider that as a topic, or music, or law, or writing computer code, etc. Bookmark resources pertaining to the topic of multimedia authorship and to your interests. You must collect **at least two resources from among Project Muse and JSTOR databases** available through the WVU Library here <http://www.libraries.wvu.edu/find/index.htm#articles>. The rest can come from the web "at large." Take a look at the following WVU guide for web research, especially the tab for evaluating web sources: <http://libguides.wvu.edu/content.php?pid=56317&sid=412383>.

Schedule

You must read / watch the assigned work *before* coming to class, unless the schedule indicates "in class." Due dates are indicated in yellow.

January 11 Introduction. Watch [Introducing the book](#) and Wesch, "[The Web is Us/ing Us](#)".

Jan 13 Read Lethem "[The Ecstasy of Influence](#)." In class: discuss collaboration strategies and tools. Brainstorm Topics. Work on blogs. Coolify some using design. [Wordles](#) for blog.

Jan 18 Brainstorm and present links. Due: Two resources to Diigo + "Web Presence" activities + blog post responding to Lessig's "[Remix](#)" (through Chapter 1). In class: [Let's Go Crazy video](#), [Working Class Hero video](#), [Girl Talk](#) and [Play your part](#), browse "[Creative Commons Mixer](#)".

Jan 20 Brainstorm and present links. In class: continue to discuss Lessig, [Thru-You](#), [Downfall](#) parodies, [Bed Intruder Song](#), [Remix Buffy vs. Edward](#), [Wizard People](#). Intro to Moviemaker. What is a [trailer](#)?

Jan 25 Brainstorm and present links. Due: Two resources to Diigo + blog post talking about your "preview/trailer." Image/Audio/Video tools: [Splashup](#) , [Pixlr](#), [Audacity](#) , [Moviemaker](#) , music at [Freesound](#), other media at [Creative Commons Search](#). Intro to iMovie. Uploading to YouTube. YouTube Annotations.

Jan 27 Brainstorm and present links. Work on movies.

February 1 Brainstorm and present links. Due: Two resources to Diigo + "draft" preview/trailer. [Google Story Videos](#) and [Story Video Maker](#)

Feb 3 Brainstorm and present links.

Feb 8 Brainstorm and present links. Due: Two resources to Diigo. In class blogging about concept/argument via Lessig.

Feb 10 Brainstorm and present links. Due: **preview/ trailer revised for grading.** In class work on developing abstracts using Google Docs.

Feb 15 Brainstorm and present links. Read Lessig up through chapter 4.

Feb 17 Brainstorm and present links. Read Lessig chapter 9 through end.

Feb 22 Brainstorm and present links. Due: Two resources to Diigo + "draft" project abstract + annotated bibliography

Feb 24 Brainstorm and present links. Read: [Doctorow's Project: With a Little Help](#) , [With a Little Help: The Price is Right](#), [Doctorow's First Law](#), [Free Data Sharing is Here to Stay](#) , [What do we want copyright to do?](#)

March 1 Brainstorm and present links. Topic: YouTube In class: [The Very First YouTube video](#),

[Chatroulette Piano Improv](#), [Noah takes a photo of himself](#), [Where in the world is Matt](#), [Old Spice Guy Questions](#), [InBFlat](#). Due: Two resources to Diigo + **project abstract + annotated bibliography revised for grading**

Mar 3 Brainstorm and present link. Discuss YouTube.

Mar 8 Read: [Wikimedia](#), [About Wikipedia](#), [What Wikipedia is not](#), [Criticism of Wikipedia](#), [Verifiability](#), [Neutral Point of View](#), [No Original Research](#). Due: Two resources to Diigo + blog post in response to readings. Do you use Wikipedia? Why or why not? What are your thoughts about it in general? In class: [Essay Controversy](#), [2010 Haiti Earthquake](#), [History Flow](#). Brainstorm and present links.

Mar 10 Brainstorm and present links. Discuss Wikipedia. Look at original [Wikileaks](#) and [Wikileaks](#).

Mar 15 Read: Doctorow, "[How Your Creepy Ex-Workers Will Kill Facebook](#)". Due: Two resources to Diigo + "draft" project essay. Discuss Facebook. In class: [Ordering Pizza in the Future](#)

Mar 17 Workshop.

Mar 22 No Class: Spring Break

Mar 24 No Class: Spring Break

Mar 29 Due: blog post responding to one of the following: [The Night of Melvin's Murder](#), Ryman, "[253](#)", Jackson, [My Body a Wunderkammer](#). Describe the work and your response. In class: look at [YHChang](#), [Jason Nelson](#), [Glia](#), [Longest Poem in the world](#). Blog narrative.

Mar 31 In class: look at [Zork](#), [PacManhattan](#), [Live Action Scotland Yard](#). Due: Two resources to Diigo + **project essay revised for grading**

April 5 Due: blog post responding to one of the following: Alan Sondheim, [Lost](#), [Learning to Love you More](#), Shelley Jackson [Skin](#), [Found Magazine](#).

Apr 7 In class: look at [Platias](#) and [Google maps storytelling](#) and [Murmur](#)

Apr 12 In class: look at [Gaiman's Twitter novel](#), [Emoji Dick](#). In class: look at [Herdict](#).

Apr 14 In class: Look at creating timelines with [Dipity](#), Mind Mapping with [Bubbl](#), movies with [Xtranormal](#)

Apr 19 Workshop

Apr 21 Workshop

Apr 26 Show creative galleries. Complete [ESEI](#) Class Evaluations.

Apr 28 Show creative galleries. Complete [ESEI](#) Class Evaluations.

May 3 **Creative Gallery due**

