

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

ENGL 303: Multimedia Writing

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Class: TR 14:30-15:45, G18 Colson Hall
Office: G20 Colson Hall, TR 13:00-14:30 and by appointment

Class blog: <http://engl303f11.blogspot.com/> (primary portal for class)
This page: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1D1f6Z-imiTnrax3E3b06-fBgxLWRfiXtYLOj5RbLGw/edit?hl=en_US

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*. Some questions: What is multimedia writing? Who is the multimedia author? How can we tell stories and express ourselves in multimedia? How can we define multimedia writing as *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? 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 your topic within the overall project. Choose a topic that emerges from your interests and experiences with multimedia writing. You will develop a YouTube video trailer/preview of your project, within the framework of the project. The second part of the class will consist of directed reading and discussion on the topic. You will develop an abstract and annotated bibliography for your topic. The third part consists of continued exploration and refining of the project. You will write an essay on your 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? The creative project must be trans-platform, that is: it must cross more than one media form. We will also work together on the collaborative video project. 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; due by 8/30), blog posts (all 250 words minimum), group work, etc. 20%.
- Project Preview/Trailer, intro to your topic. Based on a script, using at least two minutes of video + images + music + text, uploaded to YouTube + embedded in your blog, 20% of final grade, due 9/22
- Project abstract and annotated bibliography (at least ten items), 15% of final grade, due 10/13
- Project Essay, 20% of final grade, due 12/1. 2000 words minimum, not including Works Cited.
- Trans-platform / trans-media creative gallery. 25% of final grade, due 12/13.

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 third class – starting with class on 9/1 – will lower your final grade by **1/3**. 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 (8/30).

- Create a Google Docs account at <http://google.com/docs>. Develop and store your projects here.
- 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.) You will often be asked to post a response to your blog. Respond by noticing and discussing interesting or striking things in the reading/viewing. You can also respond with your evaluation of the reading/viewing, but base your evaluation on what you notice – notice and discuss first, then evaluate.
- Join the class Diigo group at <http://groups.diigo.com/group/engl-303-fall-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.
- 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 entire 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. Where the schedule indicates **Read** or **Due**, you must complete the assignment **before** coming to class.

August 23 Introduction.

Watch [Introducing the book](#) and Wesch, "[The Web is Us/ing Us](#)" and [ENGL 303 Spring Final Video](#).

Aug 25

In class: Watch [A Vision of Students Today](#). Write Multimedia writing biography on blog. What is a website? Discuss collaboration strategies and tools. Brainstorm Topics. Coolify blog. [Wordles](#) for blog.

Aug 30

Read Lethem "[The Ecstasy of Influence](#)." **Due:** Two resources to Diigo + "Web Presence" activities + blog post responding to Lethem. Brainstorm and present links.

September 1

Brainstorm and present links. In class: continue to discuss Lethem. Look at [Thru-You](#), [Downfall](#) parodies, [Bed Intruder Song](#), [Remix Buffy vs. Edward](#). Intro to Moviemaker. What is a [trailer](#)? Image/Audio/Video tools: [Splashup](#) , [Pixlr](#), [Audacity](#) , [Moviemaker](#) , music at [Freesound](#), other media at [Creative Commons Search](#). Intro to iMovie.

Sep 6

Read Lessig's "[Remix](#)" (through Chapter 2). **Due:** Two resources to Diigo + blog post responding to Lessig/ about your "preview/trailer."

In class: [Let's Go Crazy video](#), [Working Class Hero video](#), [Girl Talk](#) and [Play your part](#), browse "[Creative Commons Mixer](#)." Brainstorm and present links.

Sep 8

Brainstorm and present links. In class: blog post about your preview/trailer. Work on movies.

Sep 13

Due: Two resources to Diigo + "draft" preview/trailer.

Brainstorm and present links. Uploading to YouTube. YouTube Annotations.

Sep 15

Brainstorm and present links. [Google Story Videos](#) and [Story Video Maker](#)

Sep 20

Read: Lessig Chapters 3-5. **Due:** Two resources to Diigo + blog post responding to Lessig.

Brainstorm and present links. In class blogging about concept/argument via Lessig.

Sep 22

Due: preview/ trailer revised for grading.

In class work on developing abstracts using Google Docs. Brainstorm and present links.

Sep 27

Read: Lessig Chapters 6-8. **Due:** Two resources to Diigo + blog post responding to Lessig.

Brainstorm and present links. In class: work on project abstract.

Sep 29

Brainstorm and present links. In class: work on developing annotated bibliography.

October 4

Read Lessig Chapters 9-end and Geert Lovink, Blogging, "[The Nihilist Impulse](#)." **Due:** Two resources to Diigo + blog post responding to Lovink.

Brainstorm and present links.

Oct 6

Brainstorm and present links. In class: complete "draft" project abstract + annotated bibliography. In class: look at [Orwell Diaries](#), [Disunion](#), [Dracula Blog](#), [Glass House](#), [Project 1968](#)

Oct 11

Read/Look at: [The Very First YouTube video](#), [Numa Numa culture](#), [First Vlogs](#), [Noah takes a photo of himself](#), [MadV Message](#), [Lonelygirl15](#) and [Wikipedia Lonelygirl15](#). **Due:** Two resources to Diigo + blog post responding to reading/viewing.

In class: brainstorm and present links. YouTube. [Chatroulette Piano Improv](#), [Where in the world is Matt](#), [Free Hugs](#), [Old Spice Guy Questions](#), [InBFlat](#), [Cute Kittens play classical music](#).

Oct 13

Due: project abstract + annotated bibliography revised for grading

Brainstorm and present link. Discuss YouTube. In class: [YouTube instant](#).

Oct 18

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 Wikipedia readings. Consider: 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. Talk about essays. Developing your thesis in terms of "value" and amateur production.

Oct 20

Brainstorm and present links. Discuss Wikipedia. Work on Wikipedia Tasks. Look at original [Wikileaks](#) and [Wikileaks](#).

Oct 25

Read: Doctorow, "[How Your Creepy Ex-Workers Will Kill Facebook](#)" and [Can we get some privacy here?](#) and Katie Roiphe [The Language of Fakebook](#) and [Facebook Terms of Service](#). **Due:** Two resources to Diigo + blog response to reading.

In class: Discuss Facebook. Work on essay. [Facebook Hamlet](#), [Amazon Fiction](#), [Longest Poem in the world](#), [Twistori](#), [SciFi Twitter Theater](#), [Zombie Attack](#), [Book Two](#).

Oct 27

Workshop essay.

Nov 1

Due: two resources to Diigo + blog post responding to one of the following: [The Night of Melvin's Murder](#), "[253](#)", Jackson, [My Body a Wunderkammer](#). Describe the work and your response.

In class: look at [YHChang](#), [Jason Nelson](#), [Glia](#). Talk about creative project. Work on collaborative project.

Nov 3

In class: Look at [YouTube Create](#), [Flickr Tell a Story in Five Frames](#) and [The Shining \(Romantic Comedy\)](#) and [Scary Mary](#). Work on Collaborative Project / Creative Project.

Nov 8

Due: Two resources to Diigo + blog post responding to one of the following: Alan Sondheim, [Lost, Learning to Love you More](#), Shelley Jackson [Skin](#) , [Found Magazine](#), [World Without Oil](#).

In class: Work on Collaborative Project / Creative Project.

Nov 10

Due: project essay revised for grading.

In class: Work on Collaborative Project / Creative Project.

Nov 15

Due: blog post on creative project. What will you do? What are you planning? What questions do you have?

In class: [Murmur](#) and [We Tell Stories](#) and [Mr. Plimpton's Revenge](#) and [The Day After ...](#) and [Poem on the Range](#).

Nov 17

In class: Choosing a [CC license](#) for your creative project. Work on collaborative and creative projects.

Nov 22

No Class: Thanksgiving Break

Nov 24

No Class: Thanksgiving Break

Nov 29

Workshop

Dec 1

Workshop

Dec 6

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

Dec 8

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

Dec 13

All work due by midnight for grading.

