

## Multimedia Writing

West Virginia University, Spring 2017

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### Description and Requirements

#### Course information

**Course number:** ENGL 303

**Course name:** Multimedia Writing

**Term and year:** Spring 2017

**CRN (section):** 11021 (001) / 17973 (H01)

**Instructor:** [John Jones](#), Assistant Professor

**Email:** john dot jones at-sign mail dot wvu dot edu

**Office:** 231 [Colson Hall](#)

**Office hours:** 1–2 Mondays and Tuesdays, or by appointment

#### Course description

*“I have been a person of the book, but I am becoming a person of the screen. It is not an easy transition.” – [Kevin Kelly](#)*

Screens have colonized our imaginations. Everywhere we go we are confronted by them—computer screens, mobile screens, television screens—and, increasingly, these screens have become the places where we write, read, and generally experience multiple forms of media.

In ENGL 303: Multimedia Writing, students will examine the rhetorical possibilities of digital media in multiple modes, from text to audiovisual communication, using that media to understand the effects of the ongoing transition from print to screen on communication practices.

As with Kelly, students may discover that this transition has not been an easy one. In this course students will be expected to use a number of different technologies as they learn how to write for multiple media. Although we will explore concepts in writing and rhetoric, we will also learn the technologies necessary for authoring and editing multimodal texts. Students must be open to learning with these new technologies and plan to spend a generous portion of their time, both in and out of the classroom, experimenting with and eventually mastering the technological tools necessary for multimodal and multimedia writing.

#### A note about multiple sections

This course combines two sections—001 and H01. Although students in both sections will meet at the same time in the same classroom, the requirements for each section are slightly different. Throughout this syllabus site,

some assignments and other material will be labeled as applying only to the H01 section. Any material that is not labeled in this way will apply to both sections. If you have any questions about which section you are in, please contact me immediately.

#### Course objectives

Students who earn a grade of C or higher in the course will meet average standards of quality when:

- Creating simple HTML files and editing HTML
- Creating and designing a website using the Wordpress content management system (CMS)
- Producing a short video in which they synthesize or analyze a text, taking advantage of the conventions and affordances of audiovisual media to make their arguments
- Producing multimodal texts that display an awareness of the needs of particular audiences and rhetorical situations
- Correctly applying the research and source citation methods appropriate for multiple media

#### Additional course objectives (H01 only)

- Reading *Digital Detroit* and *It's Complicated* and demonstrating how the major themes of these readings fit into current trends in digital culture by engaging in discussions with the professor and their classmates on the discussion board
- Effectively remixing a selection from the readings into a new, multimodal form

In line with the goals of the WVU BA Program in English, these objectives will enable students who successfully complete the course to

- interpret texts within diverse literary, cultural, and historical contexts;
- demonstrate a general knowledge of the social and structural aspects of the English language; and
- demonstrate a range of contextually effective writing strategies.

## Required texts

These texts can be obtained at the WVU bookstore or online using the ISBN numbers.

- Alred, Brusaw, & Oliu. *The Business Writer's Handbook*. 11th Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015. ISBN: 978-1457675515
  - Note: You are welcome to use **any edition** of this text—or Alred, Brusaw, & Oliu's practically identical Handbook of Technical Writing.
- Arola, Sheppard, & Ball. *Writer/Designer: A Guide to Making Multimodal Projects*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2014. ISBN 978-1-4576-0045-6
- MacDonald. *WordPress: The Missing Manual*. 2nd ed. O'Reilly, 2014. ISBN: 978-1-449-34190-9
  - Note: If you wish to not purchase this text, it can be accessed electronically via the WVU Libraries and WordPress has extensive online documentation. *However*: regardless of how you access the text, you are responsible for all the material contained in it.

## Additional required texts (HO1 only)

Note: Electronic versions of each of the Boyd and Rice texts can be read for free via the [WVU Libraries website](#).

If you are comfortable reading them in this way, you do not need to purchase physical copies of these books.

- Boyd. *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. Yale, 2015. ISBN: 9780300199000
- Rice. *Digital Detroit: Rhetoric and Space in the Age of the Network*. Southern Illinois University Press, 2012. ISBN: 9780809330874

Any additional course readings will be provided by the professor.

## Required digital resources

- Regular access to a computer and the Internet (on-campus computer access is available via the [Office of Information Technology](#) and the [WVU Libraries](#)) as well as access to the following technologies:
  - a computer with a microphone and webcam,
  - a means of recording video (you can check out video recording equipment from [Multimedia Services](#) at the WVU Library), and
  - software for converting between video file formats (like [Handbrake](#) for Mac or Windows) and for editing video (like [Imovie](#) for Mac or [Windows Movie Maker](#) for Windows).
- A [MIX email account](#) which is checked daily ([privacy](#)).
- A [WordPress.com](#) account ([privacy](#)).
- A means of keeping track of your course files using a cloud backup service like [Google Drive](#) (via your MIX account; [privacy](#)) or [Dropbox](#) ([privacy](#)) that can automatically archive your work.

## Additional recommendations

- A tool like [Zotero](#) ([privacy](#)) or [RefWorks](#) ([privacy](#)) to help manage research sources and format citations.

## Technical support

In this course, you will have a lot of freedom in choosing the tools you use to complete the assignments. I will directly support the required software for the course (that means, if you have a problem with any of this software, after you attempt to [troubleshoot the problem yourself](#), your next step will be to contact me and I will help you fix it). The supported software is:

- WordPress
- Imovie (Mac)
- Windows Movie Maker (Windows)

If you choose to use software not on this list for a project (for example, a different video editing program) and run into problems, I will do my best to help you, but you will be responsible for troubleshooting technology issues related to such software on your own.

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### Assignments

1. [Quizzes, homework, and in-class assignments](#): (20 points)
2. [Personal website](#): (20 points)
3. [Multimodal analysis](#): (20 points)
4. [Video remix](#): (20 points)
5. [Issue/cause website](#): (20 points)

### HO1 students only

6. [Reading forum posts](#): (15 points)

## Quizzes, homework, and in-class assignments (20 points)

### Description

On any day on which readings are assigned you should be prepared to demonstrate your comprehension of those readings, not simply by discussing them in class, but also by being quizzed on the content of the readings and/or successfully completing any assigned proof-of-reading activities. On workshop days, you may receive an in-class assignment grade based on your participation in and/or completion of workshop activities.

Quizzes will typically be given at the beginning of class. Because it is not practical for me to provide students with alternative quizzes for each class period, *missed quizzes cannot be made up*. If you are absent or late and miss a quiz or any other in-class activity, your grade for that quiz or activity will be zero.

### Evaluation

Where appropriate, quizzes, homework, and in-class activities will be graded on a percentage basis (i.e., correctly answering 4 out of 5 questions on a quiz will lead to a grade of 80% on that quiz). When such grading is not appropriate, these assignments will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Your final quiz grade will be calculated from the average of your daily quiz grades.

## Personal website (20 points)

### Personal website description

Your first major assignment will be to create a website where you can showcase your work over the course of the semester. This assignment will serve two purposes: First, it will provide an opportunity for you to explore basic HTML editing and web-based content management using the [WordPress](#) platform. Second, over the course of the semester the site will serve as a record of your activities and accomplishments in the course.

While all elements of your site are expected to function and display correctly in a variety of web browsers, because we will use a CMS, the project will primarily focus on your mastery of the WordPress platform and the appropriateness of the website—its design and implementation, the text and other media it contains, and the overall appeal and effectiveness of the site and its organization.

Your site will be designed for a professional audience—i.e., potential employers, peers and colleagues in your chosen field. Keep this in mind as you work on it. When assembling the sections of your site and the material it contains, you should do so in a way that will present the best version of your work for this audience of professionals.

### Personal website requirements

Your site's use of color, typefaces, images, and any other media should be legible and appropriate to its content. For example, the site should make effective use of visual material like photographs, illustrations, or embedded video, when appropriate, and these materials should be presented using the best practices of web design and accessibility.

Further, the site's content and design—from the tone of linguistic elements to the style of graphical elements to the arrangement of the interface—should be appropriate to the genre of the professional website.

Finally, if any material on the site is not wholly created by you, you must acknowledge the original author and link back to his or her work or, if the work is not online, provide a complete source citation that will allow your readers to find the original.

In addition to these general guidelines, your site should contain the following specific features:

- A *home page*—**not a post** (see MM for the distinction between pages and posts and how you can set a page to be the home page for your site)—featuring a brief description of the purpose of the site along with an image. Your description should be detailed (1–2 paragraphs). *Do not write* “this is a website for my class.”
- An *about page*—again, **not a post**—featuring a brief introduction of yourself. It is not necessary for you to divulge personal information about your life—for example, **do not** include personal information like your address. Rather, you should provide a description of yourself as the author of the site, connecting your skills to the purpose for the site described on the home page. For example, if you wanted to emphasize how the projects on the site showcase your design work, on this page you would give visitors to the site background information about you as a designer: How you became interested in design, your career goals, etc. This page should contain *at least 150 words of text* and *at least one image* (not including images that are part of your site’s template). The writing should showcase your wit and ability to connect with your site’s potential visitors. If you did not create the image(s) on the site, you must include a full citation for the image(s).
- A *portfolio page* highlighting the digital work you will create as part of the course (although you can feel free to include any other digital work of yours that you feel would be appropriate). This page can be blank for now.

Prior to your submission of the site, you should hide or delete any unnecessary pages or posts (such as the initial blog post) as well as any unused menu items or widgets.

## Personal website grading

You will submit this project once. I will evaluate the site across the following categories:

- **Design:** The site adheres to the best practices for Web and multimodal design as articulated in *Writer/Designer*.
- **Accessibility and requirements:** The site is logically ordered and structured and adheres to best practices for linking (using text tags instead of URLs, linking to all online sources, placing links where they are needed) and image use (using descriptive alt tags, providing citations and links to the original source for all images not created by you). The site meets all of the requirements laid out in the assignment description above.
- **Readability and effectiveness:** The text and other multimedia elements are free of major and minor errors in structure, syntax, and grammar and display the quality of writing appropriate for a professional audience.
- **Multimodality:** Multimodal elements are effectively incorporated into the site to complement, comment on, and/or extend the written text taking advantage of the affordances of those modes to serve the goals of the site and its audience.
- **Citation and research:** All media used on the site that are not the sole creation of the author are fully cited. If the original source exists online, there should be a clickable link to that source.

## Multimodal analysis (20 points)

### Multimodal analysis description

*Note: this assignment is adapted from one by Kristin Arola.*

This assignment will test your ability to analyze a series of multimodal texts for their effectiveness for a particular audience or group of audiences. You will select three multimodal texts (where “text” is understood broadly, including images, videos, websites, etc.) in a particular genre and analyze the potential goals of the author(s) and the effectiveness of the texts with regard to those goals along the dimensions of audience, purpose, context, and genre. In doing so, you should pay particular attention to the affordances (W/D, pp. 14–19) of the texts you are analyzing and their genre as well as the design choices made by the authors of those texts. (For a discussion of the rhetorical situation, a partial list of design choices, and examples of multimodal rhetorical analysis, see W/D ch. 2.)

This project will give you practice in describing the rhetoricity of multimodal texts—their persuasive goals and the ways that those goals are or are not achieved through the particular design choices of the author or authors. Additionally, you will practice creating your own multimodal project—integrating your sources and analysis—preparing you for the later assignments in the course.

## Multimodal analysis requirements

You are free to choose the form that your analysis will take: it can be an audio file, a video, or a primarily textual document. The only requirement for form is that your analysis should be multimodal and all submissions should be posted on your personal website in a web-native format (i.e., a webpage or embedded audio or video file). *Word documents or PDFs will not be accepted.*

For the purposes of this assignment, “analyze” means to describe the ways in which the multimodal texts you have chosen use their different modes to make particular arguments for particular audience(s). This description will take the form of an argument, where “argument” means a claim supported by specific evidence from the text(s) along with whatever additional information is needed to connect the evidence to the claim. Whether you choose a primarily textual or audio-visual project, by “analysis,” I mean a coherent, well-organized essay, with an introduction, effectively-structured body section, and conclusion.

When choosing the modes for your project, keep in mind that the final product should serve an analysis of the modes and genre of the texts you have chosen for the project. For example, it will be impossible for you to adequately analyze a series of web videos without showing your audience screen shots or clips from those videos.

The project should be 1,250–1,750 words for primarily textual projects or 4–6 minutes for audiovisual projects. If you feel that either of these requirements is not appropriate for your chosen medium, please contact me and we can discuss a medium-appropriate length for your project.

Specific instructions for posting your analysis to your portfolio page will be addressed in class.

## Multimodal analysis grading

This assignment will be submitted, in full, on two separate occasions. The first submission will be worth 25% of the assignment grade while the second submission will be worth the remaining 75%.

The purpose of these multiple submissions is to give you practice in revision and responding to feedback. Consequently, you should not think of these two submissions as a draft and a final project, but rather a complete project that you will subsequently have the opportunity to revise and resubmit for a potentially higher grade.

I will evaluate each submission across the following categories:

- **Requirements:** The analysis meets all of the requirements laid out in this assignment description.
- **Content:** The analysis demonstrates an awareness of rhetorical analysis and multimodal genres and affordances by crafting an effective argument, with examples, that addresses the audience, purpose, context, and genre of the chosen texts along with the modal affordances and design choices of the author or authors.
- **Style:** The analysis demonstrates an awareness of professional tone, style, and essay structure.
- **Format/Conventions:** The analysis demonstrates an understanding and application of layout, visual design, audience awareness, and information structure appropriate to the chosen medium and meets basic accessibility standards for that medium.
- **Citation:** The analysis cites all sources and materials not created by the author in a manner appropriate to the chosen medium (see W/D ch. 4). There should be clickable links to all sources that exist online.

## Video remix (20 points)

### Video remix description

For this assignment, you will identify a short, primarily text-based article or book chapter on a topic related to multimodal communication or digital culture and create a video that remixes the major themes and arguments from that piece in audiovisual form. For example, you could choose a short piece on accessibility, and then create a video that remixes and illustrates this text. I will work with you to identify suitable topics and essays.

Here, I use the term “remix” to mean taking an original creative work and putting it to a new or innovative use. Just as an audio remix takes samples from different songs—a vocal track from one and a bass line from another, for example—and arranges them together into a new piece of music, your goal will be to take the original materials of the reading—the argument, the themes, the media—and combine them with your own ideas to make something new.

Although you will have a large amount of freedom in the final form of your videos, these videos must in some way translate the ideas of the original into new modes with the goal of more effectively illuminating the original

content. Your video *should not* take the form of you simply reading or otherwise summarizing the source text, although you can quote from or reference your source as necessary; rather, it should re-present or remix the content in a way that both makes something new out of the source material and is suited to audiovisual media.

This project will require a number of steps: First you will need to *understand* and successfully *summarize* the main themes of the reading that you choose. You will then need to *create a script* for the project, planning out the ways in which you will incorporate the features of the medium to present these themes to best effect. You will turn that script into a *storyboard* that will serve as a visual roadmap for your project. You will need to *research* the resources you will include—audio and video clips, still images—and *plan* how you will record your new material—both shooting video and recording audio. Finally, you will need to record and then edit your video into a *rough cut*, then integrate feedback on that rough cut into the final video.

## Video remix requirements

There are many different forms your project could take. You could use the documentary form to present the ideas of the author(s), illustrating their purpose with news clips and other media. You could create a narrative around the reading, using fictional characters or settings to illustrate information in the book. You could animate the source material, or otherwise illustrate its contents.

I am open to any of these options or others you can think of; the only firm requirement is that your project should take advantage of the resources of video—editing and the grammar of video, the use of still images and video clips, narration, and sound effects—to engage the argument of the source media. To this end, pick a reading that is interesting or challenging to members of the group; the more interested and engaged the group is by the reading, the better your final product will be.

The video should have a *descriptive title* (not acceptable: “ENGL 303 Video Remix”; better: “Accessibility”; best: “Why Accessibility Is Important for Multimedia Texts”), both in the body of the video and on any streaming service where it is hosted, and *identify you by name as its author*. It should be *5–7 minutes long*. It should clearly indicate that it is a remix of the original text, *naming the text and the original author(s)* in the title or introduction as well as in the credits sequence. It must contain a *credit sequence* that clearly identifies the contributions of the author and provides sufficient information for viewers to identify and locate all outside sources. That is, in addition to citing sources in the credits, you must include citations in the body of the video to indicate when you are citing materials that were not created by you.

## Video remix grading

You will submit the video in stages. The *storyboard* will be worth 5% of the total project grade. The *rough cut* will be worth 20% of the total project grade, and the *second cut* will be worth the remaining 75%. Both cuts of the video should be uploaded to a video sharing site (such as [YouTube](#) or [Vimeo](#)) and then an embedded version of the video, with a title and description, will be added to the on the portfolio section of your personal website.

As with your other projects, the purpose of these multiple submissions is to give you practice in revision and responding to feedback. Consequently, you should not think of these submissions as a series of drafts leading to a complete video, but rather a complete project that you will subsequently have the opportunity to revise and resubmit for a potentially higher grade. For example, an incomplete storyboard or rough cut will be graded using the same standards as the second cut.

I will evaluate your rough cut and final videos using the following categories:

- **Quality:** The video makes effective use of the affordances of video, including the use of visuals, audio elements, and text—both on screen and in narration—to present its argument in a way that would not be possible in another medium.
- **Accessibility and requirements:** The video includes accessibility features appropriate to audiovisual material and meets all of the requirements laid out in the assignment description.
- **Readability and effectiveness:** The script and other elements of the video are free of major and minor errors in structure and syntax and display the quality of writing and presentation appropriate for a professional publication.
- **Remix:** The video does not simply summarize or narrate the source material, but in its content and style effectively remixes its themes, arguments, etc. into something new.
- **Citation and research:** All media and outside sources used in the video that are not the sole creation of the author are fully cited using standards appropriate to the medium (see W/D ch. 4).

## Issue/cause website (20 points)

## Issue/cause website assignment description

For this project, you will work in groups of 3–4. Groups will pick an issue or cause that is important to them or their community (clean water initiatives in West Virginia; safety on college campuses) and identify a particular audience that is likely uninformed about that issue or cause. You will then research, design, and build a multipage, multimodal website that informs your audience about your chosen topic. You will create the site separately from your own or any of the group members' [personal websites](#). You are free to design your own site in HTML or CSS or to host the site on WordPress.com or any other webhosting platform. If you choose a platform besides WordPress, I may not be able to troubleshoot problems you may encounter (see the list of services for which I will provide tech support [here](#)).

## Issue/cause website requirements

The website should consist of at least *four separate pages or sections*, including

1. a *static home page* that introduces the site and its cause;
2. an *about page* that describes the purpose of the site and gives a short introduction to the site's author(s);
3. *two additional pages or sections*, such as: a description of the history of the issue or cause, a video introducing the topic, controversies surrounding the issue or cause, a series of blog posts surrounding the topic, or any other pertinent information related to the topic and purpose of the site or its audience; and
4. a *works cited page* that contains full citations in the APA format for all sources referenced on the site.

Groups are free to use a range of multimodal elements and creative organizational structures for this site. One of the dimensions by which the site will be evaluated will be its use of effective, web-aware organization.

The site as a whole must contain **a minimum of 2,000 words of text (or the equivalent) and ten images or other of audiovisual media**. Apart from the site's template, **all images or audiovisual materials used on the site must be the original creations of the group**. This media can take the form of photographs, illustrations, infographics, or audio or video files.

Any text or outside research contained or referenced on the site not that is created by the group members must be fully cited both when it is mentioned, to indicate when material is not your own, along with a complete citation in the APA format on a separate *works cited page*. As is standard with web-publication, in-text mentions of web-based sources should be links to those sources (in the APA citations all URLs to web sources should be functioning links as well).

*The works cited page will not count as one of the four required sections of the site or toward the required word count.*

## Issue/cause website grading

All groups will submit a formal proposal for the project along with a group contract that outlines group members' responsibilities. The proposal/contract will be worth 5% of the total project grade. The project will then be submitted, in full, on two separate occasions. The first submission will be worth 20% of the total grade for the project and the second will be worth 75% of the total.

As with your other projects, the purpose of these multiple submissions is to give you practice in revision and responding to feedback. Consequently, groups should not think of these two submissions as a draft and a final project, but rather a complete project that group members will subsequently have the opportunity to revise and resubmit for a potentially higher grade.

I will evaluate your issue/cause websites using the following categories:

- **Design:** The site adheres to the best practices for Web and multimedia design as discussed in the course texts, course meetings, and other required readings.
- **Accessibility and requirements:** The site is logically ordered and structured and adheres to best practices for linking (using text links instead of plain URLs, linking to all online sources, placing links where they are needed) and image use (using descriptive alt tags). The site meets all of the requirements laid out in the assignment description above.
- **Readability and effectiveness:** The text and other multimedia elements are free of major and minor errors in structure, syntax, or grammar and display the quality of writing appropriate to the topic and target audience.
- **Multimodality:** Multimodal elements are effectively incorporated into the site to complement, comment on, and/or extend the written text.
- **Citation and research:** All sources used on the site that are not the sole creation of the authors are fully

cited using the APA citation format. In addition to the APA citations, the site should demonstrate best practices for linking to web-based sources.

Group members will have the opportunity to comment on their own and their fellow members' contributions to the project at the time of each submission. In most cases, all group members will receive the same grade on this assignment. If a group wishes for me to make any additional considerations regarding grading, those considerations must be agreed upon by all members of the group and clearly spelled out in the group contract.

## H01 students only

### Reading forum posts (15 points)

#### Reading forum posts assignment description

For this assignment, you will read a combined five chapters from *Digital Detroit* and *It's Complicated* and engage in a forum discussion of those readings with the instructor and your classmates. Students will take turns leading these online discussions.

Here is how it will work. For each week when you are the designated discussion leader, you will create a new forum on Ecampus starting the weekly discussion. This initial post should identify the key arguments and themes in the chapter, and then provide a prompt or series of prompts for the other participants to respond to. You may choose to address a series of questions about the text, or identify debateable or controversial claims made by the authors. As discussion leader, your goal is to identify those areas in the text that are beneficial for further thought or conversation, so the approach you choose should have this outcome as its goal.

#### Reading forum posts requirements

*Discussion leaders:* Discussion leaders will begin discussions by posting a new thread to the forum. These initial posts by discussion leaders should be a minimum of 400 words and are due before **11:59 PM EST on Tuesdays** of the week the reading is assigned. The discussion leader should then respond at least once to a post from each of other participants before **11:59 PM EST on Thursdays** of the week the reading is assigned.

*All other participants:* Initial posts by all other participants should respond to the thread created by the discussion leader, be a minimum of 200 words, and are due before **11:59 PM EST on Wednesdays** of the week the reading is assigned.

I expect that these conversations will be varied and complex. The requirements above are minimums designed to encourage engagement with each other and the material, but you may find that you frequently want to continue these discussions beyond these minimums.

I have one other expectation for this assignment that is related to the main sequence of course assignments—I would like for you to choose one of the assigned readings to serve as the basis for your [video remix](#). We will discuss this additional requirement before we begin the unit on the video remix assignment.

#### Reading forum posts grading

Students will receive a weekly grade on their participation in the reading forum discussions. Students who meet all of the requirements above with average quality of posts will receive no less than a B for their posts. Students who meet the requirements above and exceed average quality for work at this level—for example, by writing particularly perceptive responses to the readings or their classmates' posts, going beyond the minimum expectations for engagement, etc.—can receive a higher grade. Students who miss deadlines, fail to meet word count or other requirements, or do not show evidence of deeply engaging with the readings or their classmates will receive a lower grade. The final grade for the assignment will be the average of these weekly grades.

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## Multimedia Writing

West Virginia University, Spring 2017

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### Policies

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### Professional conduct

ENGL 303: Multimedia Writing is a course in the [Professional Writing and Editing](#) (PWE) program at WVU. The PWE program is designed to prepare students for careers as professional communicators, and for this reason many aspects of PWE courses are designed to replicate professional experiences.

In this course you are expected to conduct yourself as a professional both in your work as well as in your interactions with the professor and your fellow students. As is the case with professionals, you are expected to complete all of your assigned work and take part in all activities, to reply to course communication in a timely manner, and to respond to all course activities and assignments as you would to comparable work activities and assignments.

### Social justice policy

The English Department and the Professional Writing and Editing Program support WVU's commitment to social justice. In this course, you will work with your classmates to create a positive learning environment based on open communication and mutual respect.

### Inclusivity

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. 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 Accessibility Services (304-293-6700). For more information on West Virginia University's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives, please see <http://diversity.wvu.edu>.

### Work visibility

Due to the nature of the course, you will be sharing your work with your fellow classmates as part of workshops and peer review sessions. Additionally, you will share your work publicly on the Web (for example, on your [personal website](#)). By taking this course, you are indicating that you accept these requirements. *If you have any questions or concerns about this policy please contact me immediately.*

### Official communication

I will contact students in the course in two primary ways. First, I will initiate official communication to the class or individual students via my WVU email account. I will send these messages to your MIX email addresses and include "[ENGL 303]" in the subject line of the email.

I will also use the [course blog](#) to document announcements and updates to the course site—such as changes to the course schedule, or additional information about assignments. In order to make sure you do not miss important information, *you should regularly check your MIX accounts as well as the [course blog](#) for updates about the course.*

My tendency in course communication initiated by students is to respond in the medium in which the message was sent. For example, if you ask me a question via email, I will email you back, etc.

I will do my best to respond to student messages within 24 hours during the workweek (M-F); on the weekends and during breaks my responses may take longer.

## Office hours

If you have questions about the readings, assignments, or any other issues related to the course, come talk to me; I will be happy to answer them. The best times to meet with me will be during my office hours. My office is located at 231 [Colson Hall](#). My scheduled office hours for spring 2017 can be found on the home page of this site.

If you would like to meet with me but are not free during my scheduled office hours, please contact me directly via email and I will be happy to arrange an alternative meeting time that fits both of our schedules.

If for some reason it becomes necessary for me to cancel or reschedule either my regular office hours or a meeting with an individual student, I will notify the class or the student as soon as possible. Similarly, if it becomes necessary for you to cancel a meeting with me, [it is your responsibility](#) to email me to let me know about the cancellation as soon as you are able to do so.

## Course participation

This course is designed to be a participatory learning experience, combining discussions with in-class workshops and other learning activities. As such, it is important that you fully participate in all in-class activities, committing yourself to the learning community consisting of your classmates and myself.

So, what does class participation look like? Participation can take different forms for different people. However, some participatory behaviors hold true for everyone.

First, you cannot participate if you do not attend class or if you regularly show up late or otherwise interfere with course activities. For these reasons, [course attendance](#) is a necessary prerequisite for participation. Conversely, *attending class does not equal participation*, for it is possible to be in every class meeting without engaging with or contributing to the learning that occurs in class.

Second, it will be impossible for you to participate in course learning if you come to class unprepared or leave class with no record of our discussions or activities. You can prepare in the following ways:

1. **Complete all assigned readings and homework** before each class meeting.
2. **Bring or be able to access all course materials during each class.** This includes course texts, additional readings, your notes, homework, assignment files and research sources, notes from previous meetings, and any other relevant materials.
3. **Take notes** during all course discussions and activities.
4. **Actively engage with your classmates and myself** during all discussion, peer-review, workshopping, or proposal meeting sessions, giving your full attention to discussions and taking notes (as appropriate).

All of these activities allow you to engage with and make the most of your learning experience in the course, and, consequently, improve the course experience for everyone. *While preparation times may vary depending on our weekly schedule, you should generally plan to spend 6 hours a week—or, 2 hours for every hour of class time—working on course assignments and preparing for class meetings.*

## Technology policies

There are no prerequisite skills courses required for ENGL 303. The course is designed to teach students how to master basic genres of multimedia communication, such as videos. However, the course assumes that all students have basic skills in word processing as well as in accessing and navigating the Internet.

### Working with new technologies

In this course, we will be experimenting with many different technologies for writing and reading, from editing HTML in a text editor to editing videos. In this course you may be introduced to a new way of communicating that you find indispensable. Alternatively, you may find yourself using technologies that you cannot imagine yourself using again outside of the course. You may at times experience these technologies as being difficult to master or unrelated to your career goals.

That is ok.

You are not required to love the technologies we experiment with in the course or to embrace them without question. What is required of you is that you approach all of our assignments with an open mind and your best effort, as a future professional experimenting with different modes of communication.

The course will contain some specific instructions on technology use and software. For example, we will cover basic video creation in programs like IMovie and Windows Movie Maker. When we do, I expect that you will *take notes* so you will have a guide to follow when it comes time for you to use these technologies on your own. In the event that your particular project requires you to use a software tool not addressed in class, this will require you to do additional research and adopt additional skills that you will learn on your own (although I will help you as much as I can).

As experimenters, our method will be trial and error. In all cases, when faced with new tools and technologies you should expect to devote some time to experimenting with and learning these technologies, researching (or discovering) their possibilities and limitations, and, when possible, sharing what you have learned with your classmates when they need help.

### Troubleshooting technology problems

While I am always available to answer your questions and help you troubleshoot technology issues, if you need assistance with a particular technology you will find that, in most instances, if you have a question about how to accomplish a particular task—for example, resizing an image on your WordPress site—other people have had the same question and the answer is available in the course readings or on the Internet. For this reason, *your first recourse when facing a problem should be to search for a solution on your own.*

If examining the course readings and searching for help online does not solve your problem and you need to consult me, please remember that the more detail I have about your problem, the easier it is for me to help you solve it. If you email me saying

*I can't get my personal website to work. Help!*

I will not have much to go on and this will lead to delays in you finding a solution to your problem. I better email request is

*My "About" page won't show up on the menu of my WordPress site. Help!*

In some cases, it will be helpful for you to not only describe your problem, but also share with me the files that you are having trouble with.

### Using technologies in class

During class you are welcome to use the computers in the lab for note-taking and activities that are relevant to the tasks at hand; you are also welcome to bring your own devices for these purposes. However, there may be some occasions when I will ask you to turn off computers and other devices for a period of time.

In general, most technology is welcome in class as long as it is used to aid student learning. Technology that does not serve this purpose—or that actively distracts you or your classmates from learning—is not welcome, and I reserve the right to restrict the use of these technologies in class.

## Grading

The descriptors below will give you an indication of the the expectations that I bring to evaluating work in the course.

I will use +/- **grades** for assignments and for the final course grades. The +/- grades correspond to the numeric ranges below.

Grade descriptors	+/- grades
<b>A (90–100): Excellent</b> represents excellent participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with very high quality in all course work.	A+: 97 and above A: 93-96 A-: 90-92
<b>B (80–89): Above average</b> represents above average participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with consistently high quality in course work.	B+: 87-89 B: 83-86 B-: 80-82
<b>C (70–79): Average</b> represents good participation in all course activities; all assigned work completed, with generally good quality overall in course work.	C+: 77-79 C: 73-76

<b>D (60–69): Below average</b> represents uneven participation in course activities; some gaps in assigned work completed, with inconsistent quality in course work.	C-: 70-72
<b>F (59 and below): Inadequate</b> represents minimal participation in course activities; serious gaps in assigned work completed, or very low quality in course work.	D+: 67-69
	D: 63-66
	D-: 60-62
	F: 0-59

## Attendance

In this class we will cover a large amount of information in our face-to-face meetings that will be essential to how you understand the content of the course and ultimately inform how you complete your assignments. We will also frequently engage in workshops and other in-class learning activities designed to teach you a number of skills that you will be expected to develop incrementally over the course of the semester. For these reasons, it is important that you attend class, arrive on time and bring any assigned work and necessary materials, take

detailed notes, and participate in all in-class writing, workshopping, and discussion sessions.

For this reason, **there are no excused absences in this course**. This includes absences for illnesses, university-sponsored events, or any other unavoidable conflicts, so all students should reserve their absences for truly unavoidable emergencies. If you participate in university-sponsored events that will require you to miss class, you should reserve your absences for these events.

*You will be allowed four (4) absences without it affecting your grade. If you are absent five (5) times, your grade will be lowered by 10 percentage points. For each absence over five (5), your final grade for the course may be lowered by 5 additional percentage points.*

Additionally, *if you arrive to class more than 5 minutes late or leave class more than 5 minutes before it is dismissed, you may be counted absent.*

If you come to class unprepared on the day of a peer-review session, conference session, or workshop—that is, without a draft to discuss with your classmates or myself or in any other way unprepared to workshop or discuss your project—you may be counted absent.

Finally, as is common in professional settings, if you find that an unavoidable conflict prevents you from attending class or being on time, you should discuss this conflict with me prior to the absence (if possible). Otherwise, you should contact me about any absences as soon as possible.

As with other aspects of the course, you should keep a record of your absences and the reasons for them in case there is a discrepancy in our records.

## Submitting course work

Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due before the start of class on the day they are listed in the course schedule. Unless otherwise noted, all course assignments will be submitted electronically. I will inform you of the method and procedures for submitting an assignment before it is due.

## Late work

If you cannot attend class on the date an assignment is due, you should discuss a make-up date with me before the absence (if possible). With the exception of unavoidable emergencies, if you fail to turn in an assignment before it is due and do not contact me before the due date, the assignment will be considered late.

Major assignments—each submission of the personal website, multimodal analysis, remix video, and issue/cause website—turned in after they are due *will be penalized by ten percentage points for each calendar day they are late.*

Except for extreme cases, quizzes, homework, and all other in-class assignments will not be accepted late.

If you are absent on a day when you are scheduled to lead a class discussion or give a presentation, you should expect to receive no credit for that assignment.

In general, a problem with technology will not be considered an acceptable excuse for late or incomplete work. If your computer malfunctions, it is your responsibility to find an alternative one to work on (see these [links to campus computing resources](#) to find alternatives); if your Internet goes out, you will need to find a different space and you should create multiple redundant backups of your work in case you accidentally lose

access point; and you should create multiple redundant backups of your work in case you accidentally erase, overwrite, or otherwise lose your files.

## Academic integrity

Don't plagiarize in this course.

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 [West Virginia University Student Conduct Code](#). 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* submitting the assignment to discuss the matter.

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**Multimedia Writing**

West Virginia University, Spring 2017

**Schedule****Abbreviations**

In the list of readings below, I will use the following abbreviations for the course texts.

- **BWH:** Alred, Brusaw, & Oliu. *The Business Writer's Handbook*. 11th Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.
- **MM:** MacDonald. *WordPress: The Missing Manual*. 2nd ed. O'Reilly, 2014. ([online access via WVU Libraries](#))
- **W/D:** Arola, Sheppard, & Ball. *Writer/Designer: A Guide to Making Multimodal Projects*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2014.

**HO1 students only**

- **IC:** boyd. *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. Yale, 2015. ([online access via WVU Libraries](#))
- **DD:** Rice. *Digital Detroit: Rhetoric and Space in the Age of the Network*. Southern Illinois University Press, 2012. ([online access via WVU Libraries](#))

Unless otherwise noted, *all assignments listed on the syllabus are due before the start of class on the day they are listed.*

**Unit 1: Personal Websites: HTML and WordPress**

*Unit goals:* Create a website using the WordPress platform; understand and be able to relate basic concepts related to multimodal communication.

Date	Topic/Readings	Assignments
1/10	<b>Topic:</b> Course Introduction: What is multimedia writing?  <b>Readings:</b> NA	
1/12	<b>Topics:</b> Syllabus questions; introduction to modes of communication  <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Course syllabus: <a href="#">Description and Requirements, Policies, Assignments</a>, and <a href="#">Schedule</a>.</li> <li>■ W/D: Introduction and Ch. 1, What Are Multimodal Projects?, pp. 1–13 (<a href="#">pdf</a>)</li> </ul>	Come to class with two written questions about the syllabus or any other matter related to the course.  <a href="#">Typo bounty claims</a> are due via email before 5 p.m. on Friday, 1/13.
1/13	Last day to register, add new courses, make section changes, change pass/fail, and audit	
1/17	<b>Topics:</b> Creating a website in WordPress (WP): WP basics and editing HTML  <b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ W/D: Ch. 1, What Are Multimodal Projects?, pp. 14–19 (<a href="#">pdf</a>)</li> <li>■ MM: <i>Introduction</i> (skim to get an idea of the outline of the book), <i>Ch. 1: The WordPress Landscape</i>, <i>Ch. 2: Signing up with WordPress.com</i> (skim); <i>Ch. 4: Creating Posts</i> (<a href="#">online access via WVU Libraries</a>)</li> <li>■ Read the following sections of the W3Schools <a href="#">HTML Tutorial</a>: <i>HTML Introduction, Basic, Elements, Attributes, Headings, Paragraphs, Styles, Formatting, Quotations</i>,</li> </ul>	<b>Create your course folder</b> ( <a href="#">instructions</a> ) and <b>place a copy of your “Hello, World” HTML file</b> ( <a href="#">instructions</a> ) in it.  <b>Complete the “Process!” activity on p. 9 of W/D.</b> ( <a href="#">Link to video</a> )

<i>Colors, Links, Images, and Lists</i>		
1/19	<p><b>Topics:</b> WP pt. 2: Page layout on the web and intro to accessibility</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MM: Chs. 5-7, (skim for information for creating pages on WP, managing menus and site structure, and advanced posting)</li> <li>W3C Web Accessibility Initiative, "<a href="#">Introduction to Web Accessibility</a>"</li> </ul>	<p><b>Be able to access your WordPress site</b> in class.</p> <p><b>Complete the "write/design assignment" on p. 19 of W/D</b> and be prepared to share your answers with the class.</p>
1/24	<p><b>Topic:</b> Professional website analysis</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adams, "<a href="#">6 Steps To Managing Your Online Reputation</a>"</li> </ul> <p><i>HO1 only:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DD: Ch. 1, Networks, Place, and Rhetoric</li> </ul>	<p>Find the personal website of a professional in your field. Write a brief description of its content, organization, and design.</p>
1/26	<p><b>Topic:</b> Introduction to multimodal analysis</p>	<p>Bring at least 2 written questions about the Multimodal Analysis assignment to class.</p>

## Unit 2: Multimodal Analysis

*Unit goals:* Understand and be able to relate concepts such as the rhetorical situation and design features of multimodal texts; cite sources in multimodal texts so that readers are able to identify and verify those sources and the information you obtain from them; develop a revision process that allows you to integrate constructive feedback from your peers into your work

Date	Topic/Readings	Assignments
1/31	<p><b>Topics:</b> Rhetorical analysis: Audience and purpose</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BWH: "Five Steps to Successful Writing" and the sections on <i>Purpose, Audience, and Context</i></li> <li>W/D: Ch. 2, Analyzing Multimodal Projects, pp. 20–30</li> </ul> <p><i>HO1 only:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IC: Introduction (skim) and Ch. 1, Identity</li> </ul>	<p>Your <b>Personal Websites</b> are due. To submit this assignment, <i>email a link</i> to your site to me at john [dot] jones [at] mail [dot] wvu [dot] edu.</p> <p>Identify a potential series of multimodal texts for your analysis and be prepared to share them with the class along with some brief notes on the purpose, audience, and context of each.</p>
2/2	<p><b>Topics:</b> Rhetorical analysis: Context and Genre; Multimodal research</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p>	<p>HW: Identify the audience and purpose for the interactive feature on</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">“What Makes Simone Biles the World’s Best Gymnast?”</a> (interactive feature)</li> <li>▪ BWH: <i>Research, Note-taking, Documenting Sources, Brainstorming, Outlining, and Proofreading</i></li> <li>▪ W/D: Ch. 2, Analyzing Multimodal Projects, pp. 31–39</li> </ul>	Simone Biles and write 1–2 short paragraphs explaining how it uses different modes and media to achieve this purpose.
2/7	<p><b>Topic:</b> Structure and organization of multimodal texts</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BWH: Read the <i>Methods of Development</i> section of BWH along with all the sub-points listed under it in the “Organization, Writing, and Revision” section on the inside front cover.</li> </ul> <p><i>HO1 only:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ IC: Ch. 5, Bullying</li> </ul>	
2/9	<p><b>Topics:</b> Writing process; peer review</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ W/D: “Preparing a Rough Draft for Feedback” and “Providing Feedback as a Stakeholder,” pp. 110–115</li> <li>▪ (skim if necessary) MM: Ch 10, Adding Picture Galleries, Video, and Music</li> </ul>	<b>Complete draft of Multimodal Analysis</b> due on portfolio page (along with printout of short answers to questions on pp. 111–112 of W/D) before start of class
2/14	<p><b>Topic:</b> NO CLASS</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	<b>1st submission of Multimodal Analysis</b> due (follow submission instructions here)
2/16	<p><b>Topic:</b> Putting it all together</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BWH: <i>Unity, Coherence, Introductions, Conclusions, Layout and Design, Visuals, and Headings</i></li> </ul>	
2/21	<p><b>Topic:</b> Multimodal Analysis Workshop</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MM: Chs. 8, 12</li> <li>▪ BWH, <i>Revision</i></li> </ul> <p><i>HO1 only:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DD: Ch. 4, The Michigan Central Train Station</li> </ul>	Be prepared to work on MA in class
2/23	<p><b>Topic:</b> Introduction to Video Remix assignment</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	Bring at least 2 written questions about the Video Remix assignment to class.
2/24	Mid-semester	

### Unit 3: Video Remix

*Unit goals:* Understand the process for designing, drafting, and revising complex multimodal projects and apply this process to the creation of a video; apply principles of genre and rhetorical purpose to audiovisual media.



and process to the creation of a video, apply principles of genre and rhetorical purpose to audiovisual media, successfully cite sources in manner appropriate to audiovisual media.

Date	Topic/Readings	Assignments
2/28	<p><b>Topics:</b> Preparing to work as a team; introduction to video creation: <a href="#">“Hello, World!” videos</a></p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ W/D: pp. 93-99, Designing Your Project</li> </ul> <p>HO1 only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ IC: Ch. 7, Literacy</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final submission of Multimodal Analysis</b> due (follow submission instructions here)</p>
3/2	<p><b>Topics:</b> Team meetings; managing video sources</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ W/D: pp. 57–63, Working with Multimodal Sources</li> </ul>	<p>“Hello, World!” videos due in course folder before the start of class. (See link for video tutorials and export instructions.)</p>
3/4– 3/12	Spring Recess	
3/14	<p><b>Topics:</b> Introduction to film grammar; planning your video</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ W/D: pp.63–76, Working with Multimodal Sources</li> <li>▪ W/D: pp. 100–105, Designing Your Project</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">“Affordances of Video“</a></li> </ul>	<p>Find an example of a video that you find stylistically compelling and be prepared to share it with the class</p>
3/16	<p><b>Topic:</b> No class meeting: Online peer review of storyboards</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	<p><b>Storyboards</b> for Remix video <b>due</b> to peer review partners by 11:30 am</p>
3/21	<p><b>Topics:</b> Revision of multimodal documents; accessibility in audiovisual media</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ W/D: Ch. 7, Drafting and Revising Your Project</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">“Captioning Youtube Videos“</a></li> </ul>	
3/23	<p><b>Topic:</b> TBA</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> TBA</p>	<p><b>Rough Cut of Video Remix and Group Evaluation Form</b> are due (submission instructions for Rough Cut can be found here)</p>
3/24	Last day to drop a class	
3/28	<p><b>Topic:</b> Workshop final cut of video remix</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> Skim MM: Chs. 9, 13</p>	
3/30	<p><b>Topic:</b> Introduction to Issue/Cause Website project</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	<p>Bring at least 2 written questions about the Issue/Cause assignment to class.</p>

## Unit 4: Issue/Cause Website

*Unit goals:* Understand and apply principles for effective group collaboration; adapt skills for multimodal composition and rhetorical analysis to the creation of a multimodal, rhetorically effective website

Date	Topic/Readings	Assignments
4/4	<p><b>Topic:</b> Design basics</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ BWH: <i>Headings, Layout and Design</i>, and <i>Lists</i></li> <li>▪ WSINYE ch. 4 (<a href="#">pdf</a>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Final cut of Video Remix and Group Evaluation Form</b> are due</p> <p>(submission instructions for Final Cut can be found here)</p>
4/6	<p><b>Topic:</b> Proposal meetings</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	<p><b>Proposals</b> (and <b>team contracts</b>, if necessary) due at meeting</p>
4/11	<p><b>Topic:</b> Website Organization</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Web Style Guide 3rd Ed.</i>, <a href="#">Organizing Your Information</a></li> <li>▪ <i>Web Style Guide 3rd Ed.</i>, <a href="#">Site Structure</a></li> </ul>	<p>Find a website that you think is easy to navigate, and list all of the items in its main menu. Make at least three observations about what this menu says about the site's organization.</p>
4/13	<p><b>Topic:</b> Peer review of Issue/Cause sites</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	<p><b>Complete draft of Issue/Cause Site</b> due for peer review</p>
4/18	<p><b>Topic:</b> Workshop Issue/Cause sites</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	
4/20	<p><b>Topic:</b> TBA</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	<p><b>First submission of Issue/Cause</b> websites due</p> <p>(submission instructions)</p>
4/25	<p><b>Topic:</b> Workshop Issue/Cause sites</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	
4/27	<p><b>Topic:</b> Final workshop for Issue/Cause sites</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> NA</p>	<p><b>Final submission of Issue/Cause Website</b> due before noon on Friday, 4/28.</p>

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