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**English 317: Networked Composition**

**Spring 2016**

**Overview:**

What does it mean to ‘write’ in the age of digital data, screens, Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat and smart phones? How do we find information in this era of digital abundance? How does the construction and organization of digital data affect what and how we know? How do digital technologies and the Internet affect the way we read, write, and think? This course is designed to explore these complex questions by growing our knowledge base in digital literacy and rhetoric. We will come to understand digital literacy as a concept and a practice, a topic and a skill-set. Our goal is to gain the critical perspective and literacy tools needed to understand, critique, and actively participate in—rather than just blindly and passively use—our contemporary digital media.

To this end, we will begin by reading and writing about major theories in digital literacy and rhetoric in the first part of the course. In the second part of the course, we will use and perhaps challenge these theories to complete a major collaborative project with Yale University. In this project, we will bring a set of ‘life histories’ that are part of the Federal Writers’ Project housed in UNC’s Southern Historical Collection (<http://www2.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/f/Federal_Writers%27Project.html>) into Yale’s newly created Photogrammar project (<http://photogrammar.yale.edu/>). The [Federal Writers’ Project](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Writers%27_Project) was funded by the federal government under the New Deal during the Great Depression in order to support written work. As part of this project, ‘life histories’ were collected to document the lives of everyday people from all walks of life from across the country. These life histories detail the complexities of race, gender, class, and the general turmoil of the Great Depression. Yale’s Photogrammar visually maps out the tens of thousands of photographs taken by the Farm Security Administration also during this same time period. We will generate metadata from the life histories by using XML encoding that will be used to create another visualization layer to the existing Photogrammar map. While this language may seem new or even intimidating to us at the outset, by the end of the course we will have learned the necessary skills to complete and even challenge these practices. Moreover, we will have helped to merge and visualize two distinct archives relating to the Great Depression that will help scholars and public audiences to better understand what it was like to live through this desperate time in American history.

**Learning Outcomes:**

* recognize and engage new modes of reading and writing in digital environments
* be able to apply basic theoretical concepts of digital media, literacy, and rhetoric
* practice basic XML, specifically TEI, and data analysis
* understand the production and use of metadata for data visualization
* recognize how to validate online sources
* reflect critically on your ability to employ different modalities of composition
* engage in the collaborative production of knowledge
* learn about the significance and complexities of the Federal Writers’ Project

**Course Design**

The course will be organized around the following principles:

**Workshop format**: Classes will be taught using a workshop approach that emphasizes the role of writing in learning and promotes interactive, experiential learning (as opposed to a presentational lecture format). My instruction will emphasize process: how to read, write, analyze, interpret, understand, and create oral, written or multimedia texts. Your voices and texts will be central to this class through large and small group discussion, oral presentations, class leadership, and project demonstrations.

**Social networks**: Each of you will become a member of a small working group during the second part of semester. These groups will serve as writing groups, discussion groups, as smaller cohorts in the larger community. Your groups will function inside and outside the course.

**Open-Source sharing**: We will be centering technology in our learning process. To that end, we will post all our assignments, homework, and other contributions on our class’s Sakai site or our Trello board, making them viewable to everyone in the class. This open-source sharing fosters collaborative learning as your peers can learn from what you posted. Because we will be relying on our Sakai site and Trello board both in and outside of the classroom, **it is imperative that you bring your laptop or tablet to every class**.

**Sites/Programs used:**

**Trello** <https://trello.com/>

Trello is a project management software that we will use to manage class assignments –

You will sign-up for this free software in class. (Note: you are welcome to create an anonymous account if you desire).

**Course Webpage** <https://digitalrhetoricandnetworkedcomposition.web.unc.edu/>

Our course website will be used to post our blogs, storehouse for helpful resources, and a way to communicate with each other in and outside of class.

**Sakai**

Our Sakai site will primarily be used for posting assignments, grades, and signing up for office hours.

**Required Texts:**

We will be reading a number of articles which I will post on the homework trello card.

**Grading:**

Blogs and captures 10%

Participation – blog response, discussion presentation, group work, general participation 15%

Midterm paper 20%

Final project 35%

Clean/marked up text files (5)

Presentation (10)

Paper (20)

Final Exam 15%

Attendance 5% 100%

**Blogs and Captures:**

Instead of writing an essay or two for a single reader (i.e. me), you will instead write throughout the term on the course and write for your learning community (your classmates). These 300-500 word online writing activities will serve as a stimulus for in-class discussion and as well as a means of practicing the components of critical writing. You should use the blogs to respond to readings and work out ideas (which you can then use in your midterm and final essays).

We will experiment in different types of digital writing genres and formats, but 2of the central topics for blog posts are:

1. **Discover and Close Read**: “discover” something to supplement our week’s reading and conversation. This can be an article, image, song, website, tool, etc. Post this item (or a link to it) into your blog and explain *how and why* this item expands or challenges the topic at hand by close reading it. Analyze or *close read* the object to explain its relevance and relation to the week’s reading.
2. **Study Questions:** state a question that the week’s reading prompted for you. Be sure to identify where in the text (author, page number, and passage) that question arose. Then, explore that question by doing online research about it so that it’s not just about the specific text read for class but addresses a larger research question. Here you might include example media types, what we will call ‘captures’.

\*\*Specific blog assignments will be posted to the course website. Blog assignments are due at 11:59 *pm EVERY SUNDAY (with the exception of the first two weeks)*.

\*\*Blog posts will not receive individual grades but a holistic grade for completion and quality: A-A+= 10 posts, B-B+= 9-8 posts, C-C+= 7-6 posts, D-D+= 5 posts, F= 4 or less

\*\*Late blog posts receive no credit!

**You will add your posts to our class website - make sure to click on the appropriate category title, so that your post gets sorted properly!**

**Blog Comment Response**

\*\*You will be required to substantively comment (at least 100 words) on *at least one* of your peer’s posts each week (due 11:59 pm Tuesday with the exception of the first two weeks). This is part of your participation grade.

**Participation:**

Together with your general participation, group work, and attentiveness, your participation grade will also include your blog comment response (see above) and your performance as a discussion leader for one week in the semester (see below).

**Weekly Discussion Leader**

Each week 1-3 students will be assigned as the week’s discussion leaders. In this role, students will be responsible for taking detailed notes of the in-class conversations, points of convergence or intrigue on the blog posts and comments, definitions of key terms and concepts discussed or not understood on Monday and Weds. On Friday, the discussion leaders will present their notes together with 5-7 discussion questions for the class, which could include readings that we have not yet substantively discussed the two previous days. They will post a cleaned version of these notes and questions on our class website. I will pull from these notes to create the final exam.

**Late work:**

Late work—whether it is homework, a draft for a workshop day, or a project—will be penalized. Your participation grade will include being prepared with all materials and homework completed for each class, as well as actively engaging with your working group and in whole- class activities.

### Attendance Policy:

The unique workshop format of English 317 necessitates constant attendance and participation. If you miss a class, your absence will have a detrimental effect on the ability of our group to function. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. You are allowed **4** absences without it negatively affecting your grade. After 4 absences, your attendance grade is lowered by 15% for each class missed. ***I make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences, barring emergencies.***

**If you miss a class, you must email me beforehand to let me know of your absence. In this email, you must inform me which of your classmates will serve as your note taker (of course you must also get their permission to do so). Additionally, you will be responsible for all missed work.** In this email, please do not ask me if we “missed anything important” while you were absent – I believe that each class is important.

**Email Correspondence:**

This class focuses on how technologies and technical formats for writing effect rhetorical content, so you need to be mindful of your own use of email. Consider email for what it is— an epistolary form of text-based communication. Craft your emails to me and to other students accordingly: with respect and with respectful use of language. This means that the email must include a subject line, an address, thoughtful and respectful prose in the body paragraph, and a signature. Also, although email is a nearly instantaneous mode of communication, do not expect my responses to be so. Do not expect me to respond within 24 hours to any email and certainly not one sent on the eve of a deadline; this means that you need to plan in advance in order to receive the kind of feedback and attention you need before deadlines approach.

### The Honor Code:

The honor code applies to everything that you—and I—do at this university, including our use of outside sources in our research and writing. Our work in this class will conform to the principles and procedures defined in the *Instrument of Student Judicial Governance* (<http://instrument.unc.edu/>). The research that we do this semester, whether primary or secondary, print or online, formal or informal, will require careful documentation on your part. We will review citation guidelines early and often throughout the semester. The need to cite your sources applies to all your work, including drafts as well as final versions of your feeders and projects. When in doubt: CITE.

If I suspect you of plagiarizing all or part of a paper, even unintentionally, I am required to report the offense to the Honor Court. If you think you are running into trouble with a paper, PLEASE come and speak with me. ***It is much, much better to take a late penalty on an assignment than to risk Honor Court proceedings.***

### Students with Disabilities

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ensures that no qualified person shall by reason of a disability be denied access to, participation in, or the benefits of, any program or activity operated by the University.  In compliance with UNC policy and federal law, qualified students with disabilities are eligible to receive “reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to education opportunities, programs, and activities” (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/lds/faculty-policies.html>). If you anticipate such accommodations, please notify me as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Additionally, you may seek out student support services at the Department of Disability Services (DDS) (<http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/>) and through the Learning Center (<http://learningcenter.unc.edu/>)

**Non-Discrimination Policy:**

This classroom should be a safe space. This university does not discriminate against its students or employees based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In this class we will strive to maintain an open atmosphere with shared respect for all differences.

### Writing Center:

The UNC Writing Center, located in SASB North and in Greenlaw Hall #221, offers free tutoring services for students. You may visit the Writing Center to ask for help with a specific paper, whether you are concerned with developing ideas and content, organizing your assignment, or working on style issues. To make an appointment, browse the Writing Center's online resources, or send a draft online, please go to (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/>). To make best use of your time there, please bring a copy of your assignment sheet and your draft with you. The Writing Center will not proofread papers or talk with you about grades.

### Course Policies:

Please remember that the syllabus functions as a contract between instructor and students. We will go over these policies during the first few days of class, but you are responsible for knowing and abiding by these policies.

You should come to class having prepared the assigned reading, writing, or other homework, and you should be ready to engage with your classmates and the text(s) at hand.

### Formatting

All of your papers (drafts and final copies) must adhere to appropriate style and format guidelines for the genre and discipline you are writing. We will discuss these guidelines and examine models in class. **Additionally, when saving documents (when you first ‘save as’ on your computer) for homework and papers make sure to title it Last Name – Assignment – draft #.**

### Technology

At a minimum, you must check your email and our class trello site daily for messages and updates. Bring your laptop or table *to every class*. **Please make sure that your laptop is working properly, with the battery charged, *before* coming to class.** Make good choices about appropriate laptop use during class. If I see you working on work from another class or visiting sites not relevant to class, you will lose participation points.

**Course Schedule:**

\*\*\*Below is our course schedule. It includes the general topics we will cover in class and important due dates for major assignments. It does not include all reading homework and blog assignments. **You must look at the Homework Trello card to see the homework assignments**. You should count on having homework assignments for each day. They are subject to change, as is true for the entirety of the course schedule. (Please note that this is a general guideline; a more detailed and up-to-date schedule will be on Trello).

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Week  | Monday | Wednesday | Friday |
| 1 | Jan. 11Introduction | Jan. 131st blog post – due Tues. Jan 12 11:59pmReadings:* Nicolas Carr, “Is Google Making us Stupid” Atlantic, 2008)
* “This is How Internet is Rewiring your Brain”
* Hayles, “Hyper and Deep Attention” *(Profession*, 2007)
 | Jan. 15Blog comment response due Thurs. Jan 14 11:59pm |
| 2 | Jan. 18**No Classes** **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day** | Jan. 20**Networks**2nd blog post – due Tues. Jan 19 11:59pm* Readings:
* Howard Rheingold, *Net Smart*: Chp 5
* Chris Anderson and Michael Wolff, “The Web is Dead”
* Enayati, “Facebook: The Encyclopedia of Beauty?,”
 | Jan. 22Blog comment response due Thurs. Jan 14 11:59pmClass Discussants: |
| 3 | Jan. 25**Digital Rhetoric**3rd blog post – due Sun. Jan 24 11:59pmReadings:* Baron, from pencils to pixels
* Douglas Eyman – Digital Rhetoric: Theory, Method, Practice – Chapter One - Defining and Locating Digital Rhetoric
* Johnson - Information Infrastructure as Rhetoric: Tools for Analysis
 | Jan. 27Blog comment response due Tues. Jan 26 11:59pm | Jan.29Class Discussants: |
| 4 | Feb. 1**History and Digital Rhetoric**4th blog post – due Sun. Jan 29 11:59pmReadings:* White, Hayden. “The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality.”
* Caswell, Michelle. “Seeing Yourself in History:
* Noriega, Chon A. “Preservation Matters.”
 | Feb. 3Blog comment response due Tues. Feb. 2 11:59pm | Feb. 5Class Discussants: |
| 5 | Feb. 8**Metadata**5th blog post – due Sun. Feb. 7 11:59pmReadings:* Anne Gilliland, “Setting the Stage,”
* National Information Standards Organization, “What is Metadata?”
* Ed Folsom, “Database as Genre”
* Stephen Ramsay, “Databases,”
 | Feb. 10Blog comment response due Tues. Feb. 9 11:59pm | Feb. 12Class Discussants: |
| 6 | Feb. 15**Coding and searching**6th blog post – due Sun. Feb. 14 11:59pmReadings:* Sample and Vee, “The Role of Computational Literacy in Computers and Writing"
* Lev Manovich, “The Algorithms of Our Lives”
* Weinberger, “The New Order of Order,"
* *Blown to Bits*, Chap. 4, “Needles in the Haystack,"
 | Feb. 17Blog comment response due Tues. Feb. 16 11:59pm | Feb. 19Class Discussants: |
| 7 | Feb. 22**Sorting, Classifying, Interpreting**7th blog post – due Sun. Feb. 21 11:59pmReadings:* Duarteand Belarde-Lewis. “Imagining: Creating Spaces for Indigenous Ontologies.”
* Madrigal, Alexis C. “How Netflix Reverse Engineered Hollywood.”
* *Sorting Things Out -* selections
* Yau, Nathan. Data Points: Visualization That Means Something
 | Feb. 24Blog comment response due Tues. Feb. 23 11:59pm | Feb. 26Class Discussants:**Midterm paper due** |
| 8 | Feb. 298th blog post – due Sun. Feb. 28 11:59pmFederal Writers’ ProjectReadings: TBD | March 2Blog comment response due Tues. March 1 11:59pm | March 4Class Discussants:Selecting Life Histories  |
| 9 | March 79th blog post – due Sun. March 6 11:59pmWhat is XML?Readings: TBD | March 9Blog comment response due Tues. March 1 11:59pmWhat is TEI? | March 11Class Discussants:Using EditeyTEI continue |
| 10 | March 14**No Classes – Spring Break** | March 16**No Classes – Spring Break** | March 18**No Classes – Spring Break** |
| 11 | March 2110th blog post – due Sun. March 20 11:59pmCreating TEI heading for each text | March 23Blog comment response due Tues. March 1 11:59pmCleaning documents | March 25**No Classes - Holiday** |
| 12 | March 28 Cleaning documents | March 30 Marking up documents | April 1Issues of Interpretation in Mark-up |
| 13 | April 4Workshopping texts and paper prep | April 6Workshopping texts and paper prep | April 8Workshopping texts and paper prep |
| 14 | April 11Peer review for presentations | April 13presentations | April 15presentations |
| 15 | April 18presentations | April 20Peer review paper | April 22No Class individual meets with me about paper |
| 16 | April 25Close reading review | April 27**Final Paper Due**Final Wrap and Evaluations | Final Exam: TBD |