RHE 312: WRITING IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS

SYLLABUS

FALL 2018
TTH 12:30-2:00 PM, PAR 104

INSTRUCTOR: SARAH RIDDICK
EMAIL: SARAH.A.RIDDICK@UTEXAS.EDU
OFFICE HOURS: T 2-3:30 PM, W 9-10:30 AM, AND BY APPOINTMENT

COURSE WEBSITES:
WRITINGDIGITAL2018.WORDPRESS.COM

UTEXAS.INSTRUCTURE.COM/COURSES/1235780

312DIGITAL.TUMBLR.COM

TEXTBOOKS:
NICOTRA, JODIE. *BECOMING RHETORICAL: ANALYZING AND COMPOSING IN A MULTIMEDIA WORLD.* CENGAGE, 2018.

WILLIAMS, JAMES. *STAND OUT OF OUR LIGHT: FREEDOM AND RESISTANCE IN THE ATTENTION ECONOMY.* CAMBRIDGE UP, 2018.

WELCOME TO RHE 312: WRITING IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS!

Fake news, bot accounts, trolls, secret sales of personal data, targeted political ads and disiniformation campaigns—the stakes for writing in digital environments have never felt higher. Yet, despite its dangers, digital writing is an undeniably incredible mode of persuasion. Today, it is easier than ever to create and distribute compelling content to the world, and this ease empowers far more people than those who tend to already have it.

In this course we will analyze a variety of venues and rhetors that illustrate the opportunities and pitfalls for digital writing. Meanwhile, you will research a topic of your choice and its rhetorical activity across these venues. Finally, in a series of in-class workshops, you will learn to create different types of digital writings (e.g., visual, auditory); this work will culminate in a final multimodal project that is aimed to persuade audience members for your topic in an online venue of your choice. You don't need to arrive to this class with prior technical or rhetorical knowledge about writing in digital environments, but you will certainly leave with some. In addition, revision will be an integral and celebrated part of this course.

Course Outcomes

- Understand the relationship between text, speaker, and audience in digital media venues
- Assess the use of rhetorical appeals and compositional strategies in digital writing genres
- Use digital technology to create persuasive, multimodal compositions
- Inform others about and advocate for a topic of your choice in a series of digital writings
- Develop and refine your work through regular research and revision

Major Projects	Other Assignments
1. Wiki Essay (revision and peer review are mandatory) 2. News Media Essay 3. Rhetorical Analysis of a Digital Venue (revision is encouraged, and peer review is mandatory) 4. Digital Writing Project (revision is encouraged, and peer review is mandatory)	1. Blog Posts 2. Research Journal Entries 3. Digital Writing Portfolio 4. In-Class Activities

Assignment Guidelines

Specific guidelines for all of these assignments can be found on Canvas in the "Assignments" section and on our course website, **writingdigital312.wordpress.com**.

In general, you will:
1. write three college-level essays (4-6 pages each);
2. create a multimodal digital-writing project
3. substantially revise at least one essay based on my feedback and your peers' feedback;
4. write several brief blog posts on Tumblr about the course reading and content, as well as a few brief research journal entries about your research & writing projects, and
5. present your digital-writing project in a final showcase to me and to your peers.

Grades

In this course I will be employing the Learning Record, a portfolio-based evaluation method. You can expect regular, detailed feedback from me on the work you submit in and out of class. However, instead of receiving grades on each assignment, you will receive a tentative grade mid-semester and a final grade at the end of the semester. Throughout the semester, you are responsible for assessing your work and your development across the course's **Dimensions of Learning, Course Strands**, and grading criteria.

Dimensions of Learning

• Confidence and independence	• Skills and strategies	• Knowledge and understanding
• Use of prior and emerging experience	• Reflection	• Creativity and imagination

Course Strands

Rhetoric	Composition	Research	Digital Literacy

At the start of the semester you will create an initial learning record, which will serve as a baseline for your work and growth in this course. In the middle and at the end of the semester, you will submit a brief argument for which grade you believe you deserve, based on your perceived quality of work and level of development. You will support this argument with reasons and evidence from your work in the class and from the Learning Record criteria. Ultimately, I will compare your case with my own assessment of your work thus far in determining your final grade. You will find complete descriptions of the Dimensions of Learning, Course Strands, and the criteria for each possible letter grade you may earn in this course on our course website. Please read these descriptions carefully and return to them regularly.

Course Schedule

	8/30 FIRST DAY OF CLASS
9/4 DUE: • BRAINSTORM POSSIBLE CONTROVERSIES FOR RESEARCH • WRITE INITIAL LEARNING RECORD	9/6 DUE: • READ WILLIAMS' "THE FAULTY GPS" • READ NICOTRA CH. 1 "THE BASIC RHETORICAL SITUATION" AND CH. 2 "THE EXPANDED RHETORICAL SITUATION" • WRITE BLOG POST #1: INITIAL THOUGHTS
9/11 DUE: • READ NICOTRA CH. 6 "FORMULATING RHETORICAL PROBLEMS" AND CH. 11 "PROPOSING" • WRITE RESEARCH SCRAPBOOK ENTRY #1: CONTROVERSY PROPOSAL	9/13 DUE: • READ NICOTRA CH. 3 "ANALYZING TEXTUAL RHETORIC" • WRITE RESEARCH SCRAPBOOK ENTRY #2: YOUR RESEARCH PROCESS SO FAR
9/18 DUE: • WRITE RESEARCH SCRAPBOOK ENTRY #3: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY	9/20 • READ NICOTRA CH. 8 "EXPLAINING" AND CH. 9 "DEFINING" • WRITE RESEARCH SCRAPBOOK ENTRY #4: 1.1 PROPOSAL
9/25 • READ PASCUAL "LET'S TALK ABOUT TWITTER THREADS" AND KRAMER "THE YEAR OF THE CONVERSATIONAL, EXPLANATORY TWEETSTORM"	9/27 PEER REVIEW. DUE: • READ NICOTRA CH. 13 "CREATING COMPOSITIONS" • WRITE ESSAY 1.1 FOR PEER REVIEW
10/2 DUE: • READ NICOTRA CH. 12 "RESEARCH: COMPOSING WITH MULTIPLE SOURCES" • ESSAY 1.1	10/4 DUE: • READ WILLIAMS' "EMPIRES OF THE MIND" • READ NICOTRA CH. 4 "ANALYZING VISUAL RHETORIC"
10/9 DUE: • CREATE PORTFOLIO ITEM #1: TWEET THREAD	10/11 CONFERENCES
10/16 DUE: • READ NICOTRA CH. 10 "EVALUATING" • WRITE LEARNING RECORD MID-TERM ARGUMENT	10/18 DUE: • WRITE 1.2
10/23 DUE: • READ NICOTRA CH. 5 "ANALYZING MULTIMODAL RHETORIC" • WRITE BLOG POST #3: SOCIAL MEDIA	10/25 DUE: • WRITE RESEARCH SCRAPBOOK ENTRY #5: 2.1 PLAN AND PROGRESS SO FAR
10/30 DUE: • READ NICOTRA CH. 14 "CREATING VISUAL COMPOSITIONS" • CREATE PORTFOLIO ITEM #2: SUBMIT A POLISHED SERIES OF MEMES FOR YOUR CONTROVERSY	11/1 PEER REVIEW FOR 2.1. DUE: • WRITE 2.1
11/6 DUE: • 2.1	11/8 DUE: • READ PETERS' "TOP 10 POWERFUL MOMENTS THAT SHAPED SOCIAL MEDIA HISTORY OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS" AND ANDERSON ET AL.'S "ACTIVISM IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA AGE" • WRITE RESEARCH SCRAPBOOK ENTRY 6: FINAL PROJECT PLAN AND PROGRESS

11/13 DUE: • READ "7 TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS: WHICH TYPE ARE YOU?" AND YORK'S "HOW TO IDENTIFY SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS AND COLLABORATE ON CAMPAIGNS" • CREATE PORTFOLIO ITEM #3: SUBMIT A "MOCK-UP" OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER OR A SOCIAL MEDIA MOVEMENT FOR YOUR TOPIC.	11/15 DUE: • ONGOING: REVISE PORTFOLIO ITEMS FOR FINAL PROJECT (DIGITAL WRITING PORTFOLIO). • WATCH DIGITAL WRITING & RESEARCH LAB'S "EDITING MOVIES IN IMOVIE" • WATCH LYNDA.COM VIDEOS ABOUT HOW TO USE IMOVIE OR WHICHEVER VIDEO-EDITING SOFTWARE IS ON YOUR COMPUTER.
11/20 CONFERENCES. DUE: • OPTIONAL: ESSAY 2.2 (A REVISION OF YOUR RHETORICAL ANALYSIS ESSAY) • ONGOING: REVISE PORTFOLIO ITEMS FOR FINAL PROJECT (DIGITAL WRITING PORTFOLIO).	NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)
11/27 WORKSHOP. DUE: • READ NICOTRA CH. 15 "MAKING MULTIMODAL COMPOSITIONS" • ONGOING: REVISE PORTFOLIO ITEMS FOR FINAL PROJECT (DIGITAL WRITING PORTFOLIO).	11/29 WORKSHOP. DUE: • ONGOING: REVISE PORTFOLIO ITEMS FOR FINAL PROJECT (DIGITAL WRITING PORTFOLIO).
12/4 FINAL PRESENTATIONS. DUE: • FINAL PROJECT: DIGITAL WRITING PORTFOLIO, INCLUDING VIDEO ARGUMENT. GROUP ONE WILL PRESENT.	12/6 LAST DAY OF CLASS. FINAL PRESENTATIONS. DUE: • GROUP TWO WILL PRESENT.
12/11 DUE: • FINAL LEARNING RECORD ARGUMENT	