

English 5386: Computer Mediated Composition

Spring 2019

Texas A&M University - Central Texas

Instructor: Dr. Jeff Kirchoff

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Office Hours: M/W 1:30-2:30 PM; 4:00-5:00 PM and T 10:00-11:30 AM. Other times available by appointment.

911 Cellular: Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University-Central Texas

911Cellular is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in 911Cellular through their myCT email account.

In an effort to enhance personal safety on the Texas A&M University – Central Texas (TAMUCT) campus, the TAMUCT Police Department has introduced Warrior Shield by 911 Cellular. Warrior Shield [<https://www.tamuct.edu/police/911cellular.html>] can be downloaded and installed on your mobile device from Google Play or Apple Store.

Connect at 911Cellular [<https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management>] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in 911Cellular, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

COURSE OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION

Official Catalog Description

Explores notions of 21st century writing, paying particular attention to digital and multimodal composition; particular attention is given to teaching these text-types.

Dr. Kirchoff's Description

This course introduces students to composing digital multimodal compositions. Specifically, students will learn how to blend a variety of communicative modes that are used in electronic media—including (but not limited to) sound, alphabetic text, images, and motion—to produce powerful rhetorical documents. As such, students will craft a wide range of digital multimodal texts (including a digital comic, podcast, and concept video), all of which will be presented at the end of the semester in an online portfolio (i.e. website).

Given that our course focuses on digital composition, we will also spend significant time discussing digital literacy and what that entails. We will critically analyze the impact of the shift from print to digital on society, conversing about issues ranging from—but not limited to—

privacy, addiction, and identity.

Learning Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course should be able to...

- Define key terms such as multimodal composition, literacy, digital literacy, and digital rhetoric
- Craft rhetorically powerful multimodal compositions using digital tools
- Analyze and critique existing multimodal (digital) compositions
- Critically discuss issues related to and stemming from digital literacy studies
- Capably revise multimodal compositions
- Understand how to integrate multimodal compositions into the college classroom

Required Textbooks

Writer/Designer by Kristin L. Arola, Jennifer Sheppard, and Cheryl E. Ball. ISBN 9781457600456

Other Required Materials

Flash drive devoted to this class for multimedia projects

Regular access to the computer lab if you do not have a home computer

****Note:** your computer must be able to run the following applications: Comic Life, Audacity, VideoPad, and Weebly. If not, you will need regular access to TAMUCT's computer lab, as our computers are equipped to handle the aforementioned application.

Course Requirements

Graded Work

(Digital) Literacy Narrative (15% of Final Grade)

- Students will, in digital comic form, discuss/analyze/reflect on some aspect of digital literacy as it pertains to them. A detailed assignment prompt will be distributed in class at the appropriate time.

Podcast/Radio Broadcast (15% of Final Grade)

- Using interviews, readings from class, and (if pertinent) outside research, students will craft a radio broadcast or podcast that discusses some aspect of digital literacy in the 21st century. A detailed assignment prompt will be distributed in class at the appropriate time.

Concept Video (15% of Final Grade)

- Students will craft a 60 second concept video on digital literacy. A detailed assignment prompt will be distributed in class at the appropriate time.

Website/Online Portfolio (25% of Final Grade)

- Students will revise all three of their prior projects and present them on a website they've crafted. There will be additional components as well (including a short piece of original scholarship), but they will be discussed on a detailed assignment prompt that will be distributed in class at the appropriate time.

Digital Tool Demonstration/Reflection (20% of Final Grade)

- Students will be required to demonstrate how to use the digital tools we'll use to craft and edit our multimodal compositions. A short reflection component will also be included.

Participation (10% of Final Grade)

- Participation is expected of all of us. Please come to class ready to ask questions, share ideas, and provide feedback to others. **To that end, I expect that you will craft a discussion question and a “shrewd observation” for each set of readings that is assigned. We will use these to spark our conversations.** After each class period, through questions asked and ideas shared with others, I should be able to clearly tell that students completed the assigned reading. Quizzes, in-class discussions, free-writing exercises, take-home work, and so forth are all part of participation as well. Attendance is discussed at length in the “course policies” section; simply put, showing up to class on a regular basis is key to your success in this course. When you are not here, you cannot participate meaningfully and thus you lose out on some interaction that can facilitate your digital rhetoric education.

Grading Scale

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

59 and below = F

Grading Standards

As a graduate level class, there is an expectation for high quality work with each project. “High quality,” in this case, means work that is thoughtful, detailed, coherent, and relatively error-free. It should demonstrate critical thinking, genuine engagement with the material, and overall thoroughness. Moreover, it should go without saying that all of the projects should respond to the criteria laid out in the assignment sheet. Projects that fall short of the aforementioned criteria will not earn an A. I should also note that a rubric will be distributed with each assignment.

Communicating with Dr. Kirchoff

As I note above, email is the best way to reach me. I typically check my email at least once a day, and will make a good faith effort to respond to email within 24 hours of my receipt of your message. If you would like to meet in person, I am available during office hours, and am often amenable to appointments outside my regular office hours.

Course Policies

Attendance: Because so much of the learning process takes place in the classroom, attendance is an integral part of this class; we're covering a lot of terrain in a short semester, so missing any class time will be detrimental to your success in this class. Additionally, I value all voices in the classroom and enjoy the dynamic a full class offers. That said, I understand emergencies do

occur and that individuals have a life beyond academia. Thus, students are afforded two “free” absences; please note I do not need to know about the nature of your absence—just let me know ahead of time if you will miss class (a 24 hour notice is appreciated). **If you miss three or more classes, you will not earn a passing mark.**

Tardiness: Try to be on time. I'm a punctual sort of fellow, and I tend to get class started at the scheduled time. When people come in late, it disrupts the flow of class and more importantly, the late individual will miss key information from the beginning of class. If tardiness becomes a problem for a particular student, I will talk with that person individually.

Late Assignments: I do not accept late work unless prior arrangements have been made. This is a non-negotiable policy; however, if you have questions or are worried about completing an assignment on time, talk to me well before the due date and we can come up with a plan of action. Note: "well before the due date" does not mean 24 hours before the assignment is due. I generally like to hold these sorts of conferences a week ahead of the due date. If someone contacts me 24 hours before a project is due, my response may not be very favorable. This policy extends to daily work as well.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when one person presents another person's words or ideas as her/his own. It is a serious offense that can result in an F for the course. Please see me if you have any questions concerning plagiarism.

Respect: My goal is for everyone to feel welcome and comfortable in the classroom, so please treat everyone in this class with respect. This should be a friendly, positive environment open to discussion and feedback. To that end, there is no tolerance for individuals who intentionally disrupt class or contribute to a hostile learning environment. Examples of disruptive behavior include (but are not limited to) talking or texting on a cell phone, speaking out of turn, facebooking, emailing, checking fantasy sport teams, swearing excessively, sleeping, attacking individuals verbally or physically, talking to friends while others are talking/working, or staunchly refusing to participate. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these policies, let me know and I'll be happy to answer any questions.

Food is permissible, as long as it does not become a distraction.

Email is a great tool for communication. However, I ask that when you send me an email to use a proper salutation (e.g. Hi Dr. Kirchoff), complete sentences, and identifying information. This is a matter of common courtesy. As I mention above, I will make a good faith effort in responding to email queries within 24 hours.

Sending documents as *attachments* to an email is a perfectly valid way to get feedback on a project. To ensure readability, please save your documents as a .rtf, .docx, or .pdf.

Lastly, I prefer to be addressed as “Dr. Kirchoff,” “Professor Kirchoff,” or “Jeff” —whichever you

are most comfortable with. I will not respond to nicknames, Mr. Kirchoff, or other variations of my name.

PROGRAMMATIC ASSESSMENT

To ensure the learning outcomes are met in the English Department, there is a program-wide artifact collection process. To that end, some of the projects you complete for ENGL 5386 this semester may be used for programmatic assessment. Please note that all efforts will be made to keep your identity anonymous; as such, all identifying markers will be removed from your work if used for programmatic assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Kirchoff.

DELIVERY OF COURSE MATERIAL

We will often have “hybrid” courses; that is, we will often meet face-to-face for part of the class (usually to discuss readings). However, there may be a component (usually working on your projects) that you will be required to complete at home.

COURSE CALENDAR

Note: This calendar is tentative and subject to change.

January 16th/Week 1: Syllabus, Introductions, and Traditional Literacy

For week two...

- Read the NCTE Position Statement on 21st Century Literacy [Web-link]
- Read Howard Rheingold’s “Why You Need Digital Know-How—Why We All Need It” [PDF]
- Read Yoram Eshet-Alkalai’s “Digital Literacy: A Conceptual Framework for Survival Skills in the Digital Era” [PDF]
- Read Wysocki and Johnson-Eilola “Blinded by the Letter” [PDF]
- Read Chapter 1 of *Writer/Designer*

January 23rd/Week 2: 21st Century Literacy and Multimodal Composition

For week three...

- Read Harrison’s “How Still Images Make Meaning” [PDF]
- Read Serafini’s “Expanding Perspectives for Comprehending Visual Images in Multimodal Texts” [PDF]
- Read Chapter 2 of *Writer/Designer*

January 30th/Week 3: Making meaning from images, finding images, and taking photos

For week four...

- Read sample comic
- Have an idea of your literacy narrative ready to discuss and workshop
- Read Chapter 4 of *Writer/Designer*

February 6th/Week 4: Using MS Word to make comics and Comic Life to make comics;

discussing literacy narrative ideas; analysis of sample comic

For week five...

- Literacy Narrative Due
- Read Braverman's "The Digital Divide" [PDF]
- Read "Mapping the Digital Divide" [PDF]
- ONE MORE ARTICLE NEEDED

February 13th/Week 5: Narrative Due. Discuss the Digital Divide

For week six...

- Read Leung and Lee's "Impact of Internet Literacy, Internet Addiction Symptoms, and Internet Activities on Academic Performance" [PDF]
- Read Turkle's "Can You Hear Me Now?" [Web-link]
- ONE MORE ARTICLE NEEDED

February 20th/Week 6: Digital Addiction

For week seven...

- Read Updike's "Better Writing Through Radio" [PDF]
- Read Blumberg's "Manifesto" [PDF]
- Read Interviewing Article TBD

February 27th/Week 7: Rhetorically Powerful Sounds and Interviewing

For week eight...

- Work on Podcast

March 6th/Week 8: Learning Audio Editing Tools and Testing Recording Equipment

For week nine...

- Finish Podcast

No Class March 13th (Spring Break)

March 20th/Week 9: Podcast Due; Watch *Steal This Film*

For week ten...

- Read Belk's "Extended Self and the Digital World" [PDF]
- Read Ainsa's "College Students' Digital Identity: Perceptions Towards Employment and Career" [PDF]
- ONE MORE ARTICLE NEEDED

March 27th/Week 10: Digital Literacy and Identity

For week eleven...

- Read Beck's "The Invisible Digital Identity" [PDF]
- Bartsch and Dienlin's "Control Your Facebook" [PDF]
- POSSIBLY ONE MORE ARTICLE NEEDED
- Watch *How Facebook Changed the World*

April 3rd/Week 11: Digital Literacy and Privacy

For week twelve...

- Read Cinematography Handout [PDF]
- Read the Tutorial on Video Techniques [Web-link]
- Read storyboarding article [TBD]
- Bring in any footage you have

April 10th/Week 12: Learn How to Use Select Video Editors; In-Class Workshop/Work-Time

April 17th/Week 13: NO CLASS. Work on Concept Film—Due Next Class.

For week fourteen...

- Read Chapter 8 of *Writer/Designer*
- Read TBD article on web design
- Read TBD article on teaching digital composition
- Finish Concept Film

April 24th/Week 14: Concept Film Due; Weebly and WordPress; Teaching Digital Composition

May 1st/Week 15: Individual Work Time

May 8th/Week 16: Portfolios are Due

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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

- Students are encouraged to save work to multiple locations (e.g. computer hard-drive and thumb drive); papers lost due to technological issues will not be a sufficient excuse for failing to turn in work.

Technology Support

For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central.

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must go to the Registrar's Office and complete a drop request form.

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled.

If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

Access & Inclusion

At Texas A&M-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier free education. The Department of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Department of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit <http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/access-inclusion>.

Tutoring

Tutoring is available to all TAMUCT students, both on-campus and online. On-campus subjects tutored include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at 254-519-5796, or by emailing Kim Wood at k.wood@tamuct.edu.

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables TAMUCT students to log-in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over forty subject areas. To access Tutor.com, go to the 'My Courses' tab in Blackboard.

University Writing Center

Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This semester, the UWC is also offering online only hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available) or by making an appointment via [WCOOnline](#). In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu if you have any questions about the UWC and/or need any assistance with scheduling.

University Library

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at

TAMUCT are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On-campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available twenty-four hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the TAMUCT main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit <https://tamuct.libguides.com/>