

English 298: New Media Writing

Fall 2009

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Zinzendorf 304

Office hours: M & W, 1:10-2 p.m.

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Description

In this course, students will explore uses of digital media for communication, persuasion, and creative expression. We will read and analyze theories and examples of works that use these media images (both static and kinetic), sound, and print--as well as have hands-on experience using hardware and software to produce works in these media. Prior technological experience is helpful but not required.

The above description is print-based and bland. For a better representation of this course see

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgsBFVAwJWI>

Learning outcomes

By the successful completion of this course, students will:

- understand key concepts in digital communication
- understand the conventions of digital digital texts and employ those conventions in textual production
- write by implementing the basic textual, visual, and aural tools of digital publishing
- explore and understand rhetoric in its aural and visual dimensions
- become more effective rhetors in digitally mediated spaces

To achieve these outcomes, students will:

- read selected texts that investigate digital rhetoric
- critique examples of digital texts
- participate in a class blog
- apply editing software to the manipulation of audio and visual texts
- work individually to produce a written analysis of a text and to reflect on and articulate the thinking behind finished (collaborative) media projects
- work collaboratively to produce three media projects (alphabetical, aural and visual, still and moving)

Books etc.

There is no required book for this class, which is appropriate for a course that moves beyond print as a medium. However, there will be readings (both print and online), listenings, and viewings that are to be done for class or, in some cases, in class. You will need a 4 g. flashdrive, however, to store your project work, and you may be asked to contribute toward the purchase of digital audio recorders for class use.

Approach and grades

Because collaboration is central to new media work, the three major projects in the course will be done collaboratively, with groups remaining the same throughout the semester. Grades on collaborative projects will ordinarily be the same for all members of a group; however, slackers or people who don't pull their weight can expect to receive lower, individual grades. Here is the weighted break-down of all graded assignments:

Written analysis of an alpha-visual text (individual) = 15 percent

Alpha-visual project (collaborative) = 20 percent

Audio project (collaborative) = 20 percent

Video project (collaborative) = 20 percent

Director's commentary on video project = 10 percent

Class participation (includes but is not synonymous with attendance, active contributions, and blog posts) = 15 percent

A note on attendance: Do not miss workshop days! These are clearly denoted in the assignment schedule below. Absence from workshop days, unless absolutely necessary and excused in advance, will constitute slacking or failure to pull one's weight in group work.

Academic honesty

The College policy as laid out in the Student Handbook, pp. , will apply in this course. At the same time, this course will interrogate notions of intellectual property as affected by the Internet.

Tentative schedule of assignments

Week I
M 8/31 – F 9/4

Course introduction: “What is Writing in the 21st Century?” (video mashup)
“Multimodality in 60 Seconds” (video mashups)
“A Vision of Students Today” (movie)
“Web 2.0 ... The Machine is Us/ing Us” (movie)
Key concepts; blogging; inventory of technology

Creative manipulation of reality: “Broadcast News” (movie)¹

Week II
T 9/8 – F 9/11

Semiotics: Shlain, “The Alphabet Versus the Goddess” (book chapters, print)
Rose, “Semiology” (book chapter, print or online:
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/moravianlibrary/Doc?id=10080966>)

Semiotics: Towards interpretation of texts

Week III
M 9/14 – F 9/18

Rhetorical/semiological interpretation of alpha-visual texts: Harrison, “Visual Social
Semiotics: Understanding How Visual Images Make Meaning” (journal

¹ We will have to arrange a time to watch this movie together, probably outside of class

article, print); McDonagh, Goggin, Squire, “Signs, Symbols, and Subjectivity: An Alternative View of the Visual” (journal article, online: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleListURL&_method=list&_ArticleListID=995896535&_sort=r&_view=c&_acct=C000053278&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=1515546&md5=71751d40ee547a7aa29ec1dace6b34e2)

Practice analysis of alpha-visual texts

Week IV
M 9/21 – F 9/25

Alpha-visual text creation: MS Paint; MS Publisher; GIMP; Creative Commons; Google images; <http://creativecommons.org/>

Written analysis of alpha-visual text due; workshop: creating an alpha-visual text

Week V
M 9/28 – F 10/2

Workshop: creating an alpha-visual text

Alpha-visual project due²

Week VI
M 10/5 – F 10/9
midterm

Aurality and Sound: Tagg, Reading Sounds” (print excerpt from Website); “Pulling Back the Curtain” (transcription of radio program); Rice, “The Making of Ka-Knowledge Digital Aurality” (journal article, online: http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6W49-4KKNJ5F1&_user=1515546&_coverDate=12%2F31%2F2006&_alid=995891779&_rdoc=2&_fmt=high&_orig=search&_cdi=6537&_sort=r&_docanchor=&_view=c&_ct=2&_acct=C000053278&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=1515546&md5=f9805a045814f07cd32e2de2ff3bd5ae)

Selfe, “The Movement of Air, the Breath of Meaning: Aurality and Multimodal Composing” (journal article, print or online: <http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/CCC/0604-june09/CCC0604Movement.pdf>)

Workshop: *Audacity* and digital audio; Freemusic.com

Week VII
W 10/14 – F 10/16
fall break

Collecting audio assests

Week VIII
M 10/19 – F 10/23

Workshops: digital audio editing

² All projects in this schedule are to be done collaboratively, in groups of 3 or 4

Week IX
M 10/26 – F 10/30

Audio projects due

Week X
M 11/2 – F 11/6

Kinetic images and sound: <http://www.mashme.info/>

Workshop: digital video recording

Week XI
M 11/9 – F 11/13

Collecting video assests

Week XII
M 11/16 – F 11/20

Workshop: Windows MovieMaker

Workshop: video editing

Week XIII
M 11/23 – T 11/24
Thanksgiving break

Workshop: video editing

Week XIV
M 11/30 – F 12/4

Video projects due

Week XV
M 12/7 – W 12/9

Directors' commentaries due; outtakes