

English 298: New Media Literacies
Spring 2013

Instructor: Joel Wingard
Zinzendorf 304
Office hours: M-R, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Phone: ext. 1511
Email: wingardj@moravian.edu
Website: <http://www.joelwingard.com>
Blog: <http://www.rhetorman.com>

Instructional Assistant: Brittany Wilczewski
SRA, Main Hall
Media Services Technician, Memorial 101
Hours: MWF, 11:30 – 4:30
Phone; 570-517-4979
Email: stbnw09@moravian.edu

Description

Through the careful study of the consumption and production of “new media” texts, students in ENGL298 will examine how *literacy* is affected by the advent of digital media. Students will develop critical sophistication about how texts in various modalities – together with the consumers of those texts – make meaning, which is a collaborative process. Students will explore uses of digital media for communication, persuasion, and creative expression, reading and analyzing theories and examples of works that rely on and even encourage literacies other or different from the simple ability to consume and produce print texts. Students will also use several forms of digital media to produce texts that analyze and communicate literacies. Prior technological experience is helpful but not required.

The study and use of *rhetoric* will also be central to ENGL298. “All mediated communication is rhetorical” is a principle we will employ and test. With new media, Kenneth Burke’s formulation is apt; he called *rhetoric* “the use of symbols to induce cooperation in beings who by nature respond to symbols.” Burke’s choice of “symbols” rather than “words” brings *semiology* into play – the study of symbols, how they are interpreted and how they work for whatever rhetorical ends they are put to.

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

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

Learning outcomes

By the successful completion of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the nuances of literacy across a number of communication modalities
- Demonstrate an understanding of how signs communicate and work rhetorically
- Demonstrate an understanding of the conventions of digital texts and employ those conventions in textual production
- Write by implementing the basic textual, visual, and aural tools of digital publishing
- Become more effective rhetors in digitally mediated spaces

To achieve these outcomes, students will:

- Read theoretical discussions on digital literacies, critically and rhetorically
- Read digital texts, critically and rhetorically
- Blog and participate in a class wiki

- Use and study digital editing applications
- Work *collaboratively* to produce three digital media projects
- Work *individually* to produce a written analysis of a text and to reflect on and articulate the thinking behind finished digital projects.¹

Approach and grades

ENGL 298 will emphasize collaborative learning. “All writing is collaborative”: This idea is manifest in new media writing and in Web 2.0. And collaboration is essential to any course in which projects replace tests as instruments of assessment. At the same time, students will work individually and have some of that work graded. Here is the weighted break-down of all graded assignments:

Because collaboration is central to new media work, the three major projects in the course will be done collaboratively, with groups normally remaining the same throughout the semester.

Written analysis of an alpha-visual text (individual) = 20 percent
 Alpha-visual project (collaborative²) = 20 percent
 Audio project (collaborative) = 20 percent
 Video project (collaborative) = 20 percent
 Class participation³ = 20 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. Otherwise, I expect regular attendance but will excuse absences with proper documentation.

A note on Special Topics: This course is a work in progress. I taught a version of it in 2009 and have worked to improve it for this iteration. One new feature is the presence of a student assistant, as noted on p.1 Brittany Wilczewski will provide technical and tutorial support throughout the semester, and she will collaborate with me to teach the class. Still, student learning is more important than instructor teaching. I cannot be the expert authority passing on information or “knowledge” to you; I am still learning in the digital world myself. With that in mind, the collaboration in ENGL298 will have to extend to your teacher.

Books and materials.

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 required readings (both print and online), listenings, and viewings, as indicated in the assignment schedule (pp. 5-6). Each student will need a portable hard drive to store project work. Some equipment will be provided by the college through the Media Center.

¹ We will work with “free” software in class and on campus. Recording equipment will be provided by the college and in your own possession.

² 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.

³ includes but is not synonymous with attendance, active contributions to class and group learning, and wiki contributions

Academic honesty

Although the College policy as laid out in the Student Handbook will apply in this course, the course will also interrogate notions of intellectual property as affected by the Internet.

Here is the College policy:

Moravian College expects its students to perform their academic work honestly and fairly. A Moravian student, moreover, should neither hinder nor unfairly assist the efforts of other students to complete their work successfully. This policy of academic integrity is the foundation on which learning at Moravian is built.

The College's expectations and the consequences of failure to meet these expectations are outlined below. If at any point in your academic work at Moravian you are uncertain about your responsibility as a scholar or about the propriety of a particular action, consult your instructor.

All work that you submit or present as part of course assignments or requirements must be your original work unless otherwise expressly permitted by the instructor. This includes any work presented, be it in written, oral, or electronic form or in any other technical or artistic medium. When you use the specific thoughts, ideas, writings, or expressions of another person, you must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source. Direct quotes from any source (including the Internet) must be placed in quotation marks (or otherwise marked appropriately) and accompanied by proper citation, following the preferred bibliographic conventions of your department or instructor. It is the instructor's responsibility to make clear to all students in his or her class the preferred or required citation style for student work. Student ignorance of bibliographic convention and citation procedures is not a valid excuse for having committed plagiarism. When you use the specific thoughts, ideas, writing, or expressions of another person, you must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source.

You may not collaborate during an in-class examination, test, or quiz. You may not work with others on out-of-class assignments, exams, or projects unless expressly allowed or instructed to do so by the course instructor. If you have any reservations about your role in working on any out-of-class assignments, you must consult with your course instructor.

You may not use writing or research that is obtained from a "paper service" or that is purchased from any person or entity, unless you fully disclose such activity to the instructor and are given express permission.

You may not use writing or research that is obtained from a "paper service" or that is purchased from any person or entity, unless you fully disclose such activity to the instructor and are given express permission.

You must keep all notes, drafts, and materials used in preparing assignments until a final course grade is given. In the case of work in electronic form, you may be asked to maintain all intermediate drafts and notes electronically or in hard copy until final grades are given. All these materials must be available for inspection by the instructor at any time.

Statement on disabilities:

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street, at 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Office of Learning Services. Students are also encouraged, yet not required, to inform course faculty of those situations that can affect academic performance. Resources may be available to aid students who are experiencing academic difficulty. It is important to contact the office as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Any student who wishes to disclose a disability and request accommodations

under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for this course first **MUST** meet with either Mrs. Laurie Roth in the Office of Learning Services (for learning disabilities and/or ADD/ADHD) or Dr. Ronald Kline in the Counseling Center (for all other disabilities).

The Writing Center:

The Writing Center, on the second floor of Zinzendorf Hall, is there to support the efforts of all writers at Moravian College. The tutors there are students who are good, experienced writers and who are professionally trained to help you improve your writing. They will go over an essay draft with you and guide your understanding of how you might improve that draft. You could also drop by to pick up some of the free handouts on virtually every part of writing: getting started, writing a thesis, developing paragraphs, eliminating wordiness, using commas, and the like. The Writing Center is generally open Monday-Thursday afternoons and Sunday evenings after the third week of the semester. The Writing Center is in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.⁴

⁴ My office is in the same building as the Writing Center, so the same applies to conferences or impromptu meetings there. Except that my office number is 610-861-1511.

Tentative schedule of assignments

Week I M 1/14 – F 1/18	Course introduction. “What is Writing in the 21 st Century?” (video mashup) “A Vision of Students Today” (movie) “Web 2.0 ...The Machine is Us/ing Us” (movie) Key concepts; blogging; inventory of technology Literacy: Daley, “Expanding the Concept of Literacy” (journal article, print) Collaboration: Marley, “In Defense of Wikipedia” (journal article, print) Creative Commons: http://creativecommons.org/ Semiotics: Shlain, “The Alphabet Versus the Goddess” (book chapters, print)
Week II T 1/22 – F 1/25	Introduction to writing in new media: Blogging, wikifying, desktop publishing, working with digital audio and video Selfe, “Glossary Technical Terms” (book chapter, print)
Week III M 1/28 – F 2/1	Workshops: Quick practice in digital editing
Week IV M 2/4 – F 2/8	Semiotics: Rose, “Semiology” (book chapter, print or online): http://site.ebrary.com/lib/moravianlibrary/Doc?id=10080966 Harrison, “Visual Social Semiotics: Understanding How Visual Images Make Meaning” (journal article, print); McDonagh, Goggin, and Squire, “Signs, Symbols, and Subjectivity: An Alternative View of the Visual” (journal article, print) Assignment: Analyzing a (new) media text
Week V M 2/11 – F 2/15	Assignment: Creating an alpha-visual text Workshop: desktop publishing
Week VI M 2/18 – F 2/22	Workshop: desktop publishing Alpha-visual project due

Week VII
M 2/25 – F 3/1

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, print); 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: sound recording
Assignment: aural literacy narrative

Analysis of (new) media text due

Spring break * * * * *

Week VIII
M 3/11 – F 3/15

Workshops: digital audio editing

Week IX
M 3/18 – F 3/22

Workshops: digital audio editing

Week X
M 3/25 – R 3/28

Audio projects due

Kinetic images and sound: movies and mashups
Workshop: digital video editing

Week XI
T 4/2 – F 4/5

Collecting video assests

Week XII
M 4/8 – F 4/12

Workshops: video editing

Week XIII
M 4/15 – F 4/19

Workshops: video editing

Week XIV
M 4/22 – F 4/6

Video projects due

Finals Week
M 4/29 – F 5/3