



WRT200: Introduction to Digital Writing
M,W: 3:45 -5:05

This course examines our interactions with "digital writing" by looking both backward and forward at writing as a socially situated, meaning-making act.

We'll look at a variety of theoretical perspectives on writing in the "internet age" while also considering how new technologies reshape writing as we know it.

Contact:

Email: jlewis04@syr.edu (Preferred. With rare exceptions, I respond to all emails within 48 hours.)

Skype: justalewis

Office Hours: 002 HBC, W 2:30-3:30

Course Goals:

The goal of the course is to provide a foundation for each student's future creative and critical efforts in digital writing. This foundation will be different for each student, who will enter the course with widely divergent experiences with technology. Consequently, the workload in this class will vary with prior knowledge. In a workshop environment, students with more skills will be asked to help advance the foundation for students with less experience. No one will come out of the class an expert, but it is important that each person leaves with a higher level of knowledge and skill than they started with. Much of this will depend on individual student effort. Students should expect to:

- Understand the complexity, culture, benefits and problems of writing in the digital age.
- Learn basic technological skills for creating digital compositions and hosting your own website.
- Develop an understanding of the ways that digital writing transforms "analog" writing.

Texts and Materials:

I'll provide the course readings as downloadable .pdf's from our course website.

Unit Two is all about DIY hosting. As such, you'll need the funds to purchase a URL/domain name and hosting through a company to complete the assignment. I will be recommending Bluehost.com for this purpose and will offer support for their cPanel and web scripts; however, should you feel compelled to shop around, and don't need support, you can choose another webhost. At present, undiscounted¹ 1-year Bluehost hosting and a URL will run ~\$100.

Because we'll be engaging in multiple forms of composing in this class, you will need to have access to various recording technologies: digital video cameras, audio recorders, digital still image cameras, etc. Furthermore, we'll also be using a variety of software. While the Writing Program can make available some video/audio recording equipment and the requisite software for digital composition, you can also take advantage of the ITS Equipment Loan program (<http://its.syr.edu/instructsvc/resources/equiploan.html>). We'll be exploring some free, open source

¹ There are a lot of discounts that we'll explore as a class to bring this price down.

software programs for digital composition in-class; however, if you have the Adobe Creative Suite, you've got everything you need². Finally, many of your mobile phones will provide at least rudimentary video/audio capture abilities to meet (but likely not exceed) the requirements of the class.

Attendance:

Each week we will discuss the readings, give presentations, do short assignments, and have lab time to work on projects or technologies. Consequently, attendance is extremely important and will count towards participation grades. It is also vital that lab time in class be utilized. Others around you can help with your efforts. If you stop coming to class, it will be your responsibility to drop. Failure to do so will result in an 'F'.

Major Assignments (65% overall grade): You will complete 4 major assignments over the course of the semester. They include:

Unit One: Technoautobiography (15%) - In light of the readings we will use to define "digital writing" in the contemporary era, you'll compose a 4-6 page technoautobiography that details how you've come to understand your own relationship with technology and writing in your lifetime.

Unit Two: Web Hosting & Wordpress (20%) - This production-based assignment will ask you to secure web hosting and a custom domain name in order to install Wordpress as the platform over which you'll maintain your own web presence for the duration of our course and beyond.

Unit Three: Technoautobiography Remediation (10%) - This production-based assignment will ask you to use the theoretical concept of "remediation" (Bolter & Grusin 2000) to re-present your technoautobiography in a multimodal digital composition.

Unit Four: Digital Recomposition In-Depth (20%) - This production-based assignment will ask you to compose a digital argument by drawing primarily from repurposed/appropriated content found on the web in order to highlight the perils, pitfalls, and potentials of the "remix" in creating digital writing.

Minor Assignments (35% overall grade): This grade will be reflected by participation. Participation includes:

B/Vlogging (15%): Over the course of the semester you'll be responsible for 5 b/vlog posts. I say b/vlog because you have the option of creating a conventional, text-based blog post or you have the option of making a video log post. Both forms of response will be expected to meet the same requirements:

- The post should have a good title. "Good" means descriptive and original. "Week One Post" is not a good title.
- The post should be insightful, articulate, on-topic, and clearly demonstrate an understanding of the readings. It should also interrogate/question/critique the readings in some way by providing points of entry/discussion that you'd like to raise for the class.
- The post should substantiate assertions and contain citations as appropriate. Parenthetical citation is fine. Ex: (Brady 2).
- The post should be at least 250 words long.

Microblogging (10%): While b/vlogging once constituted the most prevalent form of digital writing, microblogging services like Twitter & tumblr economized the act of meaning-making in digital spaces in interesting ways . . . and in the process, have overtaken traditional b/vlogging in popularity. Over the course of the semester you'll be expected to actively manage and update a microblog on

² Please don't go out and purchase this software preemptively. We'll discuss whether this software is necessary as a class before engaging in writing with video in the second half of the semester.

Twitter or tumblr. You are free to post whatever you find interesting/insightful; however, know that your tweets/microblogs will be used as a source of discussion in the class. Post at least 5 tweets/updates/tumbles per week. The idea here is to become familiar with this new form of digital writing and to explore its potentials/weaknesses.

Class Presence (10%): This portion of your course grade is up to my discretion. I will base it on your "presence" or active, participatory engagement in class. If you're not in class, this portion of your grade will be difficult to achieve. Being "in class" means more than being physically there; rather, it means coming to class having completed the reading/writing assignments and having something interesting to contribute to our course conversation. A portion of this grade will be tethered to your activity as a commenter on other blogs/sites from folks in our class. This grade will be assessed at the end of the semester and will be discussed with you in our final one-on-one conference of the semester.

Schedule of Events		
Class Meeting	Class Focus	Class Readings (to be completed by day of class - NOT HW).
Week One - 1/18	Introduction to Class. Syllabus, Unit One Formal Assignment.	Syllabus, All Formal Assignment Sheets
Week Two - 1/23	Introduction to Social Media Tools (Twitter, tumblr, Facebook)	
Week Two - 1/25	B/Vlog Due Histories of Writing Instruction in the 20th and 21st Centuries	Yancey - "Writing in the 21st Century" MWC - "Social Networking, The '3rd Place,' and The Evolution of Communication"
Week Three - 1/30	Inequalities and Technology - The Problems of Digital Writing	Goode - "The Digital Identity Divide" Pew Research - "The Digital Disconnect"
Week Three - 2/1	In-Class Storytelling Activity - Practicing and Inventing Technoautobiography	Technoautobiography Invention Prompts
Week Four - 2/6 Financial Aid Drop Deadline - 2/7	B/Vlog Due The Promise of Digital Writing	Kellner - "Technological Revolution"
Week Four - 2/8	Technoautobiography peer review.	N/A
Week Five -	***Unit 1 Technoautobiography	WFD - 0 Bluehost.com tutorials

2/13	phy Due*** Introduction to Unit 2, Secure web hosting, domain name, install WP	
Week Five - 2/15	Login to WP, adjust settings, set up profile, create blog post with pictures and hyperlinks	WFD - 1 / WFD - 5 , WFD - 2 / WFD - 6
Week Six - 2/20	Create blog post that includes .doc & .pdf attachments in post. Install and activate at least three plugins for your WP	WFD - 2 / WFD - 6, WFD 4
Week Six - 2/22	Change the appearance of your WP by changing themes and widgets, Create blog post that embeds vido you find on internet as well as yourself responding to video	Justin Video Tutorial
Week Seven - 2/27 Midterm Reports Due - 2/27	Create a static page with a video embed on your WP that answers a couple of questions: What is your name? What is your hometown? Where do you live now? What are your academic interests? What are your interests outside university? What are your hobbies? What are your previous (positive or negative) experiences with writing?	WFD - 3 Unit Two Writing Task: About Me
Week Seven - 2/29	Create a static page with a video embed on your WP that answers a couple of questions: What is your name? What is your hometown? Where do you live now? What are your academic interests? What are your interests outside university? What are	WFD - 3 Unit Two Writing Task: About Me

	your hobbies? What are your previous (positive or negative) experiences with writing?	
Week Eight - 3/5	Respond to a classmates static "About Me" post with a text and video response using the comment function	Justin Tutorial - Video
Week Eight - 3/7	Respond to a classmates static "About Me" post with a text and video response using the comment function	Justin Tutorial - Video
Week Nine - 3/12 No Class - SPRING BREAK	Upload your technoautobiography to a static page ***Unit 2 Web Hosting & WordPress Due***	
Week Nine - 3/14 No Class - SPRING BREAK		
Week Ten - 3/19 Academic Drop Deadline - 3/20	Introduction to Unit 3 formal assignment, pick technology for "Tech Expo" Assignment B/Vlog Due	Bolter & Grusin - <i>Remediation</i> - Introduction and Chapter 1 (pgs. 3 - 50). Give yourself a good deal of time - this is a difficult reading.
Week Ten - 3/21	Discussion of "remediation" as media concept continued. Discussion of <i>Presentation Zen</i> , Intro through Chapter 3.	Readings from <i>Presentation Zen</i> - Intro through Chapter 3
Week Eleven - 3/26	In-Class tech expo assignment production time.	Readings from <i>Presentation Zen</i> - Chapters 5 - 7.
Week Eleven - 3/28	***"Tech Expo" Presentations Due in-class***	Readings from <i>Presentation Zen</i> - Chapter 8 - 9.
Week	In-Class	

Twelve - 4/2	Remediation Production Time	
Week Twelve - 4/4	In-Class Remediation Production Time	
Week Thirteen - 4/9	***Unit 3 Technoautobiography Remediation Due*** Introduction to Unit 4 formal assignment. B/Vlog Due	Paul Miller - Remixing the Matrix (http://www.djspooky.com/articles/erikdavis.php)
Week Thirteen - 4/11	Screen portions of remix documentaries.	Paul Miller - " Loops of Perception " (http://www.horizonzero.ca/textsite/remix.php?is=8&art=0&file=3&tlang=0)
Week Fourteen - 4/16	Intellectual Property and Remix B/Vlog Due	Koman - "Remixing Culture: An Interview with Lawrence Lessig" CSM - "Recut, Reframe, Recycle: Quoting Copyrighted Material in User-Generated Content"
Week Fourteen - 4/18	***Digital Recomposition Share-Around Assignment Due***	
Week Fifteen - 4/23	In-Class Digital Recomposition Production Time	
Week Fifteen - 4/25	In-Class Digital Recomposition Production Time	
Week Sixteen - 4/30	***Unit 4 Digital Recomposition Due*** Presentations of Digital Recompositions	

SU Email

To enhance student services, the University will use your Syracuse email address for communications. I will do so also. Please check your SU email on a regular basis. If you have problems accessing your email account, contact the Help Desk at ITS at <http://its.syr.edu/>.

Where to Find Help: The Writing Center

Experienced writing consultants at the Writing Center (101 HB Crouse Hall, on the Quad) can teach you how to succeed on individual assignments and ultimately become a better writer. They're prepared to work one-on-one with you at *any* stage of your process and with *any* kind of writing you're attempting while attending SU. Whether you need help understanding an assignment, brainstorming ideas, revising subsequent drafts, or developing editing strategies, face-to-face and online appointments are available for 25- or 50-minute sessions throughout the semester and can be reserved up to seven days in advance via their online scheduling program, WOnline. In addition,

drop-in appointments are welcome Monday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and brief concerns or questions can be emailed to consultants via the eWC. For more information on hours, location and services, please visit <http://wc.syr.edu>. This is a *free* resource to all students and highly recommended for every assignment you work on in this class. I've worked in the WC, so be sure to ask me if you have any questions or need a recommendation.

Academic Integrity

All writing submitted for this course is understood to be your original work. In cases where academic dishonesty is detected (the fraudulent submission of another's work, in whole or part, as your own), you may be subject to a failing grade for the project or the course, and in the worst case, to academic probation or expulsion. For a more detailed description of the guidelines for adhering to academic integrity in the College of Arts and Sciences, go to:

<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>

Private is Public Statement

Part of becoming a good writer is learning to appreciate the ideas and criticisms of others, and in this course our purpose is to come together as a community of writers. Remember that you will often be expected to share your scrutiny or what you feel strongly about with others. Unless otherwise noted, all of your work in this class can, and often will, be discussed in class in front of your peers. Please refrain from writing anything you do not wish to become public knowledge in your essays or any other public assignments.

Respect Statement

As we may confront several inflammatory issues during the term, it is essential that we behave as a community in the classroom. While you may not agree with someone else's viewpoint, you also cannot legislate their truth. This means that it is not OK to demean someone's position based on sexual preference, race, ethnicity or gender (or anything else for that matter). Please be respectful and tactful with all members of the class at all times. This does not mean that you are not entitled to an opinion but that you adopt positions responsibly, contemplating the possible effects of your statements on others.

Contacting Me

If you are unable to meet with me during office hours, please see me before or after class or send me an email so that we can arrange an appointment. I expect you to accept a responsible role as a communicator in this class and to keep me informed about your work, your progress, your questions, and your problems. Please do not hesitate to meet with me to talk about your work several times during the semester, preferably **BEFORE** your grade is the central concern. My office phone is 443-8691; additionally, my email address is jlewis04@syr.edu. I will try to respond to your emails in a timely fashion. During the week (Monday-Friday) I will do my very best to respond within 24 hours of your initial email. On the weekends, I will respond within 48 hours.

Special Needs and Situations

If you are a student with a disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) and think that you might need special assistance or special accommodation in this class or any other class, please call the Office of Disability Services at 315.443.4498 or email at odssched@syr.edu. Students who need special consideration because for any other situation should make an appointment to see me right away.