

**EMAC 4325: Digital Writing
Spring 2013**

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Instructor.

Course Information

Class No. 20358
Meets: W 4:00pm – 6:45pm
Location: CB3 1.306
Credit Hours: 3

Contact Information

Instructor: Kim Knight
Email (preferred method of contact): kim.knight@utdallas.edu
Phone: 972-883-4346 (no voicemail please)
Office Hours:

- Drop In (no appointment necessary) : Thursdays 5:30pm – 6:30pm.
- Schedule appointments via <https://www.timetrade.com/book/5JYFH>

Contact policies:

- I respond to email M-F within 24 hours.
 - If I do not respond within that time frame, check my email address and re-send it.
- Use official UTD email only.
- I will not respond to
 - Emails that request information found on syllabus or assignment sheets.
 - Twitter direct messages.

Kim's website: <http://kimknight.com>

Course wiki: digitaltextuality.pbworks.com

Twitter tag: #digitaltext

Twitter archive: <http://bit.ly/YqjKxK>

Course Description

This class will introduce the forms and strategies of digital composition. Through this writing-intensive course students will learn to write in and about digital networked spaces, focusing on changes that the switch from analog to digital has brought to representation. This course will explore writing in the digital age across a range of technologies, environments, and spaces, including blogs, short-form writing, collaborative writing platforms, and the writing associated with visual and acoustic media.

Prerequisite: RHET 1302.

Course Goals

In this course, students will:

- ✓ Become familiar with shifts in representation in text, image, and sound, including the relationship between them.
- ✓ Investigate a variety of tools of digital production and utilize these tools to communicate ideas.
- ✓ Explore new models of digital production, including short forms and collaboration.
- ✓ Engage in processes of feedback and revision to improve their work.

Required Textbooks and Materials

- McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics*. ISBN-10: 006097625X

Various chapters and essays, available online or through course reserve. The username for protected downloads on kimknight.com is “emac4325” and the password is “media”. The username for protected downloads on course reserves is “” and the password is “”.

You will also need the following: a UTD email account (that you check frequently), a public Twitter account, a PBWiki account.

Course Policies

Attendance: Some of the most valuable take-away from this course will come out of our class discussions. Your participation is necessary for our success. It is important that you come to every class prepared and on time. To be “prepared” means that you have thoughtfully engaged with the reading and are prepared to discuss it in class, and that you have done any creative pre-work necessary. Bring questions, comments, observations, disagreements, examples, etc.

Because your presence in class is important, more than one absence can negatively affect your grade and in most cases, three or more absences will result in a failing grade. If you need to miss class for religious reasons, please speak to me ahead of time. Absences for religious purposes do not count against the permitted number (as long as prior notification is given). Lateness is also unacceptable; if you arrive more than thirty minutes late to class you will be marked as absent. Leaving early also counts as an absence. In addition, please try to be as fully present and engaged as possible – silence cell phones, don’t send or receive texts or emails, etc. Excessive distraction may be counted as an absence.

Coming to class without the necessary prep work (bringing photos, sound clips, etc.) will count as one half an absence.

Accommodation: If you would like to request accommodation due to a disability, please let me know as soon as possible. The disability must be documented with the Office of Student Accessibility at UTD.

Online Due Dates: All online assignments are due by 11:59pm on the date listed, unless otherwise noted.

Late work:

You should make a concerted effort to turn in all work on-time, in the format outlined on the assignment sheets. Work submitted in formats other than that listed on the assignment sheet will not be accepted.

- **Discussion questions:** Weekly discussion questions will not be accepted late.
- **In class presentations:** Work associated with in-class presentations will not be accepted late.
- **Responses:** Late drafts of written/image/video/acoustic work will not receive instructor feedback and each instance of late work will result in a loss of 1/3 of a grade on the final portfolio. If you are not in class for the workshop, the draft is considered late.
- **Final Portfolio:** Final portfolios will be marked down one letter grade for each day (or fraction thereof) that they are late.

It is your responsibility to complete your work early enough to allow time for any technical difficulties. Work that is turned in late due to technical difficulties is subject to late penalties.

Online Etiquette: Our many online assignments will require vigilance to ensure that we are always preserving an atmosphere of mutual respect. Disagreements may arise and consensus may not be possible. We can, however, respect each person's right to an opinion. Name calling or menacing behavior will not be tolerated.

Academic Honesty: From the UT-D Handbook of Operating Procedures: "The university expects from its students a high level of responsibility with respect to academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends on the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student maintain a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work. The dean may initiate disciplinary proceedings under subchapter C against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty upon complaint by a faculty member or a student." (<http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/gspolDishonesty.htm>)

Plagiarism will result in a failing grade on the plagiarized assignment and possible disciplinary action by the university. If you have any questions regarding the proper use of outside sources or the distinction between sampling and plagiarism, I encourage you to meet with me.

University Policies: Please visit <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for the University's policies regarding all courses.

Course Requirements and Grading Policy

Grading Scale:

A Range: Excellent A, A-	B Range: Good B+, B, B-	C Range: Satisfactory C+, C, C-	D Range: Needs Improvement D+, D, D-	F Range: Failing F
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Assignments:

Participation – 50%

Participation includes participation in discussion, both in class and online (twitter, the wiki, etc.), discussion questions, attendance, and class presentations. To receive full participation credit, you should visit me during office hours at least once no later than March 9, 2013.

In order for participation to be meaningful, it has to happen on time. As such, discussion questions and the work surrounding in-class presentations will not be accepted late.

Portfolio – 50%

Each student will produce a multimedia portfolio in response to a topic of their choice. The portfolio will be composed of four pieces – text, image, sound and video. Each piece will be completed as a first version at various due dates throughout the semester. First versions will receive peer and instructor feedback and will be revised for the final portfolio.

General Requirements: This class involves a lot of dense reading. My hope is that you will apply the ideas from that reading “IRL” or “in real life.” You will be most successful in this class if you are able to have an open mind and take a critical approach to our topics. Please note that being “critical” does not necessarily mean being negative, but it does mean that you are willing to question assumptions and explore the implications of the seemingly mundane and minute aspects of contemporary media culture. Openness to experimentation and play and a willingness to try and fail are critical to the study of emerging media. In short, in this class we will be enacting some of the very changes we are studying – collaborative learning, alternative models of scholarship, etc.

Academic Calendar

January 16: Introduction

- Syllabus overview
- Twitter assignment criteria
- Tool Review overview & date assignment

January 23: Signification Across Media

- Chandler, *Semiotics for Beginners*, Ch 1 “Signs”

- <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html>
- Ryan, Marie-Laure, “Introduction” from *Narrative Across Media*
 - <http://kimknight.com/readings/ryan-narrativeacrossmedia-intro.pdf>

January 30: Text

- Reading
 - Foucault, “What is an Author?”
 - <http://www.scribd.com/doc/10268982/Foucault-What-is-an-Author>
 - Barthes, “Death of the Author”
 - <http://evans-experientialism.freewebspace.com/barthes06.htm>
- Tool Reviews

February 6: Text

- Reading
 - Paul, “The Database as System and Cultural Form” from *Database Aesthetics* (15 pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/readings/vesna-databaseaesthetics.pdf>
 - Stefans, “Language as Gameplay” at *electronic book review* (15 pps)
 - <http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/electropoetics/gameplay>
 - Electronic Literature Collection, Volume II
 - <http://collection.eliterature.org/2/>
 - browse various pieces with the principles from the reading in mind
 - Identify one to talk about in class
- Tool Reviews

February 13: Portfolio Workshop – Text Object

- Bring to class
 - **Text object, version 1**

February 20: Still Image

- Reading
 - McCloud, *Understanding Comics*
- Tool Reviews

February 27: Still Image

- Reading
 - Gaviria, “When is Information Visualization Art? Determining the Critical Criteria” in *Leonardo* Vol. 41, No. 5, pp. 479–482, 2008 (use library database to access) (5 pps)
 - <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20206665>
 - Hochman and Schwartz, “Visualizing Instagram: Tracing Cultural Visual Rhythms” from *Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence Technical Report WS-12-03: Social Media Visualization* (4 pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/hochman-schwartz-visualizinginstagram.pdf>

- Cruz & Meyer, “Creation and Control in the Photographic Process: iPhones and the emerging fifth moment of photography” from *Photographies*. (16 pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/readings/cruz-meyer-creationcontrolphotographicprocess.pdf>
- Tool Reviews

March 6: Portfolio Workshop – Image Object

- Bring to class
 - **Still image object, version 1**

March 13: Spring Break, no class

March 20: Sound

- Reading
 - Miller, “In Through the Out Door: Sampling and the Creative Act” in *Sound Unbound* (16 pps)
 - course reserves
 - Hebdige, “Un-imagining Utopia” from *Sound Unbound* (8 pps)
 - course reserves
 - Chion, trans Brewster, “Quiet Revolution...and Rigid Stagnation” from *October* (12 pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/readings/chion-quietrevolutionrigidstagnation.pdf>
 - Waksman, “California Noise: Tinkering with Hardcore and Heavy Metal in Southern California” in *Social Studies of Science* (28 pps)
- Tool Reviews

March 27: Sound

- Reading
 - Sobchack, “When the Ear Dreams: Dolby Digital and the Imagination of Sound” in *Film Studies Quarterly* (13 pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/readings/sobchack-whentheardreams.pdf>
 - Behrendt “Playing the iPhone” In: Snickars, Pelle and Vonderau, Patrick, eds. *Moving Data: The iPhone and the Future of Media*. Columbia University Press, New York. ISBN 978-0-231-15739-1 (9 pps)
 - course reserves
 - Dialtones: A Telesymphony
 - Levin, et al, “Dialtones (A Telesymphony): Final Report” essay (12+ pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/readings/levin-et-al-dialtones-finalreport.pdf>
 - http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=g1G-YesiBB8#!
 - Sonic Memorial Project
 - <http://www.sonicmemorial.org/sonic/public/index.html>
 - Daniel & Loyer, “Public Secrets”
 - http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/daniel_public_secrets.html
- Tool Reviews

April 3: Portfolio Workshop – Sound Object

- Bring to class
 - **Sound object, version 1**

April 10: Moving Image

- Readings
 - Eisenstein, “The Montage of Film Attractions (1924)” from *The Eisenstein Reader* (13 pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/readings/eisenstein-montageoffilmattractions.pdf>
 - Hilderbrand, “Grainy Days and Mondays: Superstar and Bootleg Aesthetics” from *Camera Obscura* 19.3 2004 (36 pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/readings/hilderbrand-grainydaysandmondays.pdf>
 - Haynes, “Superstar: The Karen Carpenter Story” (trigger warning: eating disorder and body image issues)
 - <http://youtu.be/UobR9pvRJRE>
- Tool Reviews

April 17: Moving Image

- Readings
 - Muller, “Where Quality Matters: Discourses on the Art of Making a YouTube Video” from *The YouTube Reader* (13 pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/readings/muller-wherequalitymatters.pdf>
 - Horwatt, “A Taxonomy of Digital Video Remixing: Contemporary Found Footage Practice on the Internet” from *Cultural Borrowings*, ed. Iain Robert Smith (16 pps)
 - <http://kimknight.com/smith-ed-culturalborrowings.pdf>
 - Nideffer, “Game Engines as Creative Frameworks” from *Context Providers* (24 pps)
 - **course reserves**
- Tool Reviews

April 24: Portfolio Workshop - Moving Image Object

- **Moving image object, version 1 due**

May 1: Revision Workshop & Capstone Presentations

- Revision workshop 4pm – 5:15pm
- Spring 2013 graduates capstone presentations 5:30pm – 6:45pm
 - Attendance is only mandatory until 6:45pm. These will go later and I encourage you to stay for the entire set of presentations.

May 8: Presentation of Work, 5pm – 7:45pm

- Portfolio due
- 5 minutes Presentations