

EMAC 4325: Digital Writing
Spring 2014

*Descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.
Additional readings assigned at instructor discretion.*

Mondays: 4325.002 (26270)
Fridays: 4325.001 (20313)
ATC 2.918

Contact Information

Barbara Vance
Twitter: @brvance
Gmail: vancebr@gmail.com
UTD email: barbara.vance@utdallas.edu
Office Hours: Mon 11:20-12:20 and by appointment

Contact Policies:
Unless indicated, use my UTDallas address.

*****I will not reply to emails that ask for information found on the syllabus or assignment pages.*****

If you ask questions over twitter, please DM me.

Course tag: #v4325

Course Goals

In this course, students will:

- Ø Become familiar with theoretical and material connections between analog and digital forms of text, image, sound, and moving image.
- Ø Investigate the social and cultural implications of new forms of text, image, sound, and moving image.
- Ø Investigate a variety of tools of digital production and utilize these tools to communicate ideas.
- Ø Engage in processes of feedback and revision to improve their work.
- Ø Consider analog and digital in terms of authorship, imagination, interactivity, immersion, narrative purpose, ephemerality and retrievability
- Ø Consider the relationship and tensions between narrative and media

Required Textbooks and Materials

- Gottschall, Jonathan, *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*
- Small, David. *Stitches: A Memoir*
- McCloud, Scott, *Understanding Comics*

Additional readings will be available through course reserve.

You must have a public twitter account that you check regularly

Course Policies

Attendance: Some of the most valuable take-away from this course will come out of our class discussions. We have only 14 meetings for this class. Each counts. Your *must* participate to succeed in this course. This means coming **on time** and **prepared**. This means engaging with the discussion and bringing any homework. If you are unable to do so for some reason, it will affect your grade. Bring questions, comments, observations, disagreements, examples, etc. Because your presence in class is important, **more than one absence (i.e. missing more than 1 week of class) will negatively affect your participation grade.** In most cases, **more than four absences (i.e. missing more than 1 month of class) will result in a failing grade.** Essentially, you can miss only one course and not have a negative affect on your grade. This includes excused and unexcused absences. 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 unacceptable; if you arrive more than thirty minutes late to class you will be marked as absent. If you leave more than 30 minutes early, you will be marked absent. 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.

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:

- Homework and media objects are due before class begins.
- Reading responses are due at 11:59 pm Sunday evenings for section 002 and 11:59 pm Thursday evenings for section 001. 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.
- **Reading responses:** Weekly reading responses will not be accepted late.
- **Tool reviews:** Work associated with in-class presentations will not be accepted late.
- **Media objects:** Late first versions 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 media object 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.

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 be referred to the Dean of Students and may result in a failing grade on the plagiarized assignment and/or 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.

Assignments

****ALL DOCUMENTS PLACED IN GOOGLE MUST NOT BE ATTACHMENTS. i.e. we must be able to see them in google. Any documents that I have to open in a text editor will not be read and will therefore not count.****

Participation – 40% Participation includes participation in discussion, both in class and online (twitter, the google folder, etc.), peer reviews, reading responses, homework exercises, and attendance. In order for participation to be meaningful, it has to happen on time. As such, reading responses and the work surrounding in-class participation will not be accepted late.

Tool Review Write Ups and Presentation 10% Students will work in teams to write and present on various tools that may be used in creating digital stories. Because, for the most part, you are presenting on the first day we begin a new medium, you must prepare *well in advance* for these presentations. Presentations should include both tools for manipulation and editing. Try for a mix of unusual tools and “traditional” ones. Presentations are ~30 minutes in length. You must feature 6-8 different tools during the presentation. You may not review a tool that has been reviewed. ****there is one google folder for both sections of EMAC 4325, SO make sure the other section has not reviewed the materials you wish to look at. If another section has reviewed one you feel particularly germane, you may allocate some time to pointing the class to it, but it does not count as one of your 6 reviews.****

Topics to choose from (students will choose these the first day of class)

- Moving Image/Manipulation
- Sound Editing/Manipulation
- Still Image Editing/Manipulation
- Text & Data Editing/Manipulation

The write up is an annotated list of each tool in the following format:

LINKED TITLE OF TOOL (this should be a live link)

Paragraph summarizing tool. This should say what it does and who it is best suited for. Beginners? Advanced? How does it compare to other tools?

Pros (list 3-5)

- Pro 1
- Pro 2
- Pro 3

Cons (list 3-5)

- Con 1
- Con 2
- Con 3

Portfolio – 50% Each student will produce a multimedia portfolio in which the same idea/story/argument is made in different media formats. The portfolio will be composed of four media object – text, image, sound and moving image – and one short research paper. Each media object 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 theoretical reading. My hope is that you will apply the ideas from that reading to your offline and online experiences. 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

Since we only meet once per week, that means we do 2 – 3 times as much reading and homework for that one meeting. Plan accordingly.

Jan 13/17

- Syllabus Overview
- Introduction to Narrative and Media
- Choose Tool Review Groups
- HOMEWORK:
 - Make sure you can log into the google course folder.
 - In the class folder, go to the Peer Reviews folder and make a new folder with your name *last, first*. This is where your peers will place reviews of your work.

Jan 20/24

No Class Jan 20

FOR JAN 24th:

Signification Across Media / Text/ What is a Story

- Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*
- McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pages 170-182
- Saussure, "The Nature of the Linguistic Sign" from *Course in General Linguistics*
- <http://faculty.smu.edu/nschwartz/seminar/Saussure.htm>
- Ryan, Marie-Laure, "Introduction" from *Narrative Across Media*

Jan 27/: Signification Across Media / Text/ What is a Story

- Gottschall, *The Storytelling Animal: How Stories Make Us Human*
- McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, pages 170-182
- Saussure, "The Nature of the Linguistic Sign" from *Course in General Linguistics*
- <http://faculty.smu.edu/nschwartz/seminar/Saussure.htm>
- Ryan, Marie-Laure, "Introduction" from *Narrative Across Media*

Jan 31/ Feb 2: Text

- <http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/electropoetics/gameplay>
- Barthes, "Death of the Author"
- http://www.tbook.constantvzw.org/wp-content/death_authorbarthes.pdf
- **Text Tool Review Presentation**
- HOMEWORK:
 - Browse Electronic Literature Collection, Volume II
 - § <http://collection.eliterature.org/2/>
 - § Choose one to discuss in class
 - Complete 10-20 lessons on Codeacademy.com

Feb 7/10: Text

- **Text Object, Version One due**
- Discuss chosen electronic literature examples

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_storytelling
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interactive_novel

Feb 14/17: Still Image

- McCloud, *Understanding Comics*
- **Still Image Tools Presentation**
- Homework
- Bring your favorite comic book or graphic novel

Feb 21/24: Still Image

- Gaviria, "When is Information Visualization Art? Determining the Critical Criteria" in *Leonardo* Vol. 41, No. 5, pp. 479-482, 20087 (use library database to access) (JSTOR)
- Small, *Stitches: A Memoir*
- "What is Lost in Translation when Print Comics are Digitized?"
- <http://www.popmatters.com/column/165501-a-year-of-digital-comics/>

Feb 28/ Mar 3: Still Image

- **Still Image Object, Version One due**

Mar 7: Sound

OTR Suspense episode "Sorry Wrong Number." <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1r5GZral6zs>

- "Structures of Radio Drama" ~ Anne Dunn (e-reserve)
- Steinberg, How to Make Punch Sound Effects, WSJ (if cannot access on actual WJ site, use library tools)
- <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/460/retraction>
- <http://www.niemanstoryboard.org/2012/08/30/the-best-of-storyboard-whats-that-sound/>
- <http://www.niemanstoryboard.org/2012/05/22/whys-this-so-good-number-43-radio-diaries-on-teenage-drama-by-julia-barton/>
- **Sound Tools Presentation**

Mar 10/14

SPRING BREAK

Mar 17: Sound

- OTR Suspense episode "Sorry Wrong Number." <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1r5GZral6zs>
- "Structures of Radio Drama" ~ Anne Dunn (e-reserve)
- Steinberg, How to Make Punch Sound Effects, WSJ (if cannot access on actual WJ site, use library tools)
- <http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/460/retraction>
- <http://www.niemanstoryboard.org/2012/08/30/the-best-of-storyboard-whats-that-sound/>

- <http://www.niemanstoryboard.org/2012/05/22/whys-this-so-good-number-43-radio-diaries-on-teenage-drama-by-julia-barton/>

- **Sound Tools Presentation**

Mar 22/24: Sound

- <http://www.sonicmemorial.org/sonic/public/index.html>
- http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/daniel_public_secrets.html
- Maus, "Music as Narrative"

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<https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2022/3432/MausMusicAsNarrativeV12.pdf?sequence=1>

- Sound Doodle
- <http://www.soundplusdesign.com/?p=2607>

Mar 28/31: Sound

- **Sound Object, Version One due**

NO CLASS APRIL 4 OR 7TH

Apr 11/14: Moving Image

- **Moving Image Tools Presentation**
 - Everything is a Remix videos 1-4
 - <http://everythingisaremix.info/watch-the-series/>
 - <http://manovich.net/TEXT/digital-cinema-zkm.html>
 - <http://www.manovich.net/TEXT/digital-cinema.html>
Sorry Wrong Number full movie
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ma6SDu0V98Y>

Apr 18/21: Moving Image

- **Moving Image object, Version One due**

Apr 25/28: Last Day of Class

Portfolio Due
Presentations

Homework: Online course evaluations