

## ATCM 3301 | Digital Content Design | Spring 2020 Online Version

### Course Information

Class No. 28938 / 000820

Meets: Asynchronous Online Learning

Location: <http://dcd1130am.pbworks.com/>

Credit Hours: 3

### Contact Information

Instructor: Ayesha Mulla

Office Hours: by email request only

email: ayesha.mulla@utdallas.edu

### Course Description

This writing intensive course focuses on the genres of writing associated with arts, technology, and emerging communication. ATCM 3301 trains students in the process of writing about media (animation, design, games, and so forth) for a variety of audiences. Writing assignments and presentations prepare students for the types of writing that are common in the media and cultural industries including formal analysis, interpretation, the personal or artist's statement, and project proposals.

### Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

- Improved writing skills
- Demonstrated ability to write in various modes (reflective, descriptive, argumentative, generative)
- Evaluating the student's creative work and that of others
- Communicating to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- Engage in constructive feedback and iteration

### Required Textbooks and Materials

- Various articles and chapters available through online resources.

### Assignments

- **Attendance/Participation (20%):** ~~Participation is not just about being present, but coming to class on time and prepared and, having completed the assigned reading and writing in advance, ready to contribute to class discussions and in class activities. Participation includes attendance, reading quizzes, freewriting activities, participation in discussion, and think pieces.~~ **Think pieces** are short written responses (150-200 words) posted to your course participant page on the course workspace prior class. The responses will address a question or problem posed for that day's assigned readings/topic.
- **Paper 1 – Diagnostic (5%):** A short Artist Statement providing a general introduction to your creative work focusing on enhancing the way a viewer understands your work by providing some context. This statement will be revised for the student's final portfolio submission. [300 words]
- **Paper 2 – Media Analysis (20%):** A formal/technical analysis and interpretation of a media object from a list of suggested work. This assignment will be written in multiple drafts. [1,200 – 1,500 words]
- **Paper 3 – Analytical Reflection (15%):** A formal/technical analysis and interpretation of one piece of the student's own artwork. [1,200-1,500 words]

- **Paper 4 – Proposal (20%):** A conceptual essay that proposes a future project for a specific audience (grant, competition, etc.). The proposal will discuss the background and overview of the piece, provide a description of the process and work itself, and argue for its significance. This assignment will be written in multiple drafts. [900-1,200 words]
- **Presentation (10%):** A short/lightning **video presentation** (5 minute) of your proposed project (Paper 4) for a non-specialist audience followed by **a 2-minute** online questions and answers.
- **Final Portfolio Submission (10%):** Revise and submit the Artist Statement and one other paper assignment to the eLearning portfolio system.

Course Workspace Website: <http://dcd1130am.pbworks.com/>

## COURSE POLICIES

### Attendance and Lateness

~~You have **three** unexcused, no questions asked absences throughout the semester. Missing more than **three** classes will impact your participation grade, and more than **five** could result in failing the course. If you need to miss class for religious or academic/school sponsored extracurricular reasons, please inform me ahead of time. If prior notification is given, these absences will not count against the permitted number. In addition, absence due to illness will not count against the permitted number if a written doctor note is provided.~~

~~Please note, attendance will be taken at the start of each class period. Punctual attendance is expected. Being late to class more than three times will impact your attendance grade. In addition to not showing up for class, the following count as one unexcused absence: sleeping in class, being more than 20 minutes late at the beginning of class, not returning from break, or leaving class early without the professor's approval.~~

### Grades

Course grades are based on a 100-point scale. Final grades fall on the following ranges: A = 94-100, A- = 90-93, B+ = 87-89, B = 84-86, B- = 80-83, and so on. Assignment grades are standard letter to point: A+ = 98.5, A = 95, A- = 91.5, and so on. There is no curve. There are no individual extra-credit or re-take options.

A Range: Excellent	B Range: Good	C Range: Fair	D Range: Needs Improvement	F Range: Failing
Original, exceptional work, excellent performance, demonstrates mastery of material, surpasses expectations, often inventive	Strong, above-average work, achieves goals of assignment in a thorough fashion, solid grasp of course materials and concepts	Satisfactory, meets assignment requirements and demonstrates adequate grasp of course materials and concepts	Assignment requirements and expectations not met, below average, demonstrates misunderstanding of material	*
A, A-	B+, B, B-	C+, C, C-	D+, D, D-	F

\***F-grades** are given to students who fail to meet the expectations and requirements of an assignment, who have submitted plagiarized work (see below), who fail to complete much or all of the assigned work for the course, or who have missed more than five classes.

### Classroom and Online Etiquette

Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on behalf of the student and the instructor. The instructor as well as fellow students should not be subjected to any student's behavior that is in any way disruptive,

rude, or challenging to the instructor's authority in the classroom. The instructor has primary responsibility for control over classroom behavior and maintenance of academic integrity. The instructor can order the temporary removal or exclusion from the classroom of any student engaged in disruptive conduct or conduct violating the general rules and regulations of the institution (see [UT Dallas Title IX Initiatives](#)).

Online participation requires the same atmosphere of respect. Name calling, harassing, flaming, trolling, etc. is antithetical to the course goals and will not be tolerated.

### **Lecture and Technology Policy**

~~All mobile devices and personal media devices must be turned to silent before class begins and left out of sight for the duration of each session. Violation of this policy will result in either surrendering the device until the end of class or a request to leave the lecture. Students may use laptops to take notes only.~~

### **Due Dates and Late Work**

All online assignments are due prior to class on the date listed unless otherwise noted. All major paper assignments will be submitted through eLearning's Turnitin system. It is the student's responsibility to confirm submission of their work. Students cannot make up missed reading quizzes or other in-class work associated with participation.

### **Incllement Weather**

~~In the event of inclement weather, all coursework is still due online by the posted times. Students are responsible for checking their email for instructions regarding activities that may be scheduled during the regular class meeting time.~~

### **Email**

Monday through Friday I check email regularly and I will respond to your message within 24 hours. If it surpasses 24 hours, check your email and resend it. Use UTD email only. Follow [email etiquette](#).

### **Office Hours**

Please email me at [ayesha.mulla@utdallas.edu](mailto:ayesha.mulla@utdallas.edu) to arrange for an online Skype appointment.

### **Student Services and Support**

Students with disabilities who believe they may need formal accommodations in this class are encouraged to register with the [Office of Access Ability](#) within the first week of class. The office is located in SSB 3.200 and can be contacted at 972-883-2098 or [studentaccess@utdallas.edu](mailto:studentaccess@utdallas.edu).

### **Academic Honesty**

A failing grade will automatically be assigned to any student who violates the academic integrity policy of the University of Texas, Dallas. All work submitted must represent your own, individual effort. Use of sources or others' ideas must be acknowledged with proper citations. Please familiarize yourself with the UT Dallas' policy on [Academic Honesty](#).

### **Comet Creed**

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

### **Disclaimer**

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor. Please see the course workspace for any updates.

**Course Schedule**

WEEK 1	
Tue (1/14) <b>Introduction</b>	<p><b>IN CLASS</b></p> <p>Syllabus overview</p>
Thu (1/16) <b>Set-up</b>	<p><b>IN CLASS</b></p> <p>“About Me” Activity Form Interest Groups</p>

UNIT I: THE “ARTIST” STATEMENT	
WEEK 2	
Tue (1/21) <b>Class canceled today</b>	<p><b>NO CLASS TODAY</b></p>
Thu (1/23) <b>Workshop</b>	<p><b>BEFORE CLASS</b></p> <p><b>Think Piece #1</b> Choose an artist or creative practitioner’s statement in your field of interest. For some industries where statements are less common, an interview will suffice. Briefly discuss who the person is and what they do (1-2 sentences) followed by an analysis of how their statement is written. Explain whether it follows the guidelines provided in the prior reading. Make sure to provide the link to the statement before your discussion.</p> <p><b>IN CLASS</b> Artist Statement Activity</p>

WEEK 3	
Tue (1/28) <b>The Artist Statement</b>	<p><b>BEFORE CLASS</b></p> <p><b>Read</b> <a href="#">Artist Statement Guidelines</a></p> <p><b>IN CLASS</b> Paper 1: Diagnostic Overview Brainstorming Activities</p>
Thu (1/30) <b>Intro to Peer Editing</b>	<p><b>BEFORE CLASS</b></p> <p><b>Bring</b> <i>First Version</i> Paper 1: Diagnostic</p> <p><b>IN CLASS</b> How to Peer Review Peer Review</p> <p style="background-color: #fce4d6;"><b>DUE FRIDAY 1/31</b></p>

	Paper 1: Diagnostic (to eLearning by 11:59 pm)
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UNIT II: MEDIA ANALYSIS	
WEEK 4	
Tue (2/4) Form/Content	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Read</b> Chandler, “Signs” and “Codes” from <a href="#">Semiotics for Beginners</a>
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Paper 2: Media Analysis Overview
Thu (2/6) Form/Content	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Think Piece #2</b> Choose one work from an artist or creative practitioner in your field of interest. Apply at least three concepts from the week’s readings to discuss the work’s form and content.
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Workshop

WEEK 5	
Tue (2/11) Interpretation	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Read</b> Sturken and Cartwright, “Images, Power, and Politics” (pp. 1-23) from <i>Practices of Looking</i>
	<b>Optional</b> “Denotations, connotation, and myth” from <a href="#">Semiotics for Beginners</a>
Thu (2/13) Interpretation	<b>Bring</b> <i>First Version</i> Paper 2: Media Analysis, Part 1: Form/Technic
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Peer Review
	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
Thu (2/13) Interpretation	<b>Read</b> <u>Design and Production</u> : Hjelm, “Part One: Terminology” and “Part Two: Meaning” from <i>Semiotics in Product Design</i> <u>Animation</u> : McCloud, “Chapter 2: The Vocabulary of Comics” in <i>Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art</i>
	<b>Think Piece #3</b> Apply concepts and arguments from the week’s readings to further discuss the meaning of the work discussed in the prior think piece.
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Workshop

WEEK 6	
Tue (2/18)	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Bring</b> <i>First Version Paper 2: Media Analysis, Part 2: Interpretation</i>
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Peer Review
Thu (2/20) <b>Thesis Statements</b>	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Think Piece #4</b> Cut and paste a revised introductory paragraph from your Media Analysis Paper. The paragraph should introduce and tie together the two parts and craft a thesis statement that your paper argues with evidence.
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Workshop Paper 3: Analytical Reflection Overview
	<b>DUE Friday 21st</b>
	<i>Polished First Version Paper 2: Media Analysis (to eLearning by 11:59 pm)</i>

UNIT III: ANALYTICAL REFLECTION	
WEEK 7	
Tue (2/25)	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Read</b> Catmull, "Part I: Getting Started" from <i>Creativity, Inc.</i>
Thu (2/27)	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Think Piece #5</b> Compose a brief autobiographical trajectory of your own work. Choose 2-3 past projects/pieces that you believe best define you as an artist or creative practitioner in your field. Explain how you approached each piece and how they influenced each other.
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Workshop: Show and Tell

WEEK 8	
Tue (3/3)	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Review</b> Feedback from instructor and revise and resubmit Paper 2
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Open Lab
	<b>DUE</b>

	<i>Final Version</i> Paper 2: Media Analysis (to eLearning by 11:59 pm)
Thu (3/5)	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Bring</b> Paper 3: Analytical Reflection Outline or Notes
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Open Lab

WEEK 9	
Tue (3/10)	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Read</b> Garrett, " <a href="#">Common Problems in Undergraduate Writing</a> "
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Grammar and Writing Group Lessons
Thu (3/12)	<b>BEFORE CLASS</b>
	<b>Bring</b> <i>First Version</i> Paper 3: Analytical Reflection
	<b>IN CLASS</b> Peer Review
	<b>DUE Friday 13th</b>
	Paper 3: Analytical Reflection (to eLearning by 11:59 pm)

**WEEK 10 + WEEK 11 – NO CLASSES (EXTENDED SPRING BREAK)**

UNIT III: PROPOSAL	
WEEK 12	
(3/30 – 4/3)	<b>Monday-Friday</b>
	<b>Read</b> Rees, " <a href="#">Effective Design Communication Skills</a> " from <i>Toptal</i>
	<i>Recorded Video Lecture will be available</i> Paper 4: Proposal and Presentation Overview
	<b>Think Piece #6 due on pbworks website on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April</b>  Find a grant or competition (past or present) that you can hypothetically apply to with your proposal project. Discuss the program and the audience you would be writing for and why it is a good fit.

WEEK 13	
(4/6 – 4/10) Presentation Prep	<b>Monday-Friday</b>
	<b>Read</b> Reynolds, “Introduction” and “Preparation” from <i>Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery</i>
	Recorded Versions of “So What?” Elevator Pitch Activity [ <i>Presentation Zen</i> , page 66]
	<b>DUE FRIDAY 10<sup>th</sup> April</b> ( <i>First Draft</i> ) Paper 4: Proposal assignment due on Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> on eLearning by 11:59 pm

WEEK 14	
(4/13 – 4/17) Presentation Prep	<b>Monday-Friday</b>
	<b>Read</b> Reynolds, “Design” and “Delivery” from <i>Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery</i>
	<b>Online</b> “Preparing Analog” Activity [p. 45, <i>Presentation Zen</i> ] (Some sample Lightning Talk Presentations but some possibilities are below: Don McMillan, “ <a href="#">Life and Death by PowerPoint</a> ” (YouTube, comedy) Ignite Talk Examples: <a href="http://www.ignitetalks.io/">http://www.ignitetalks.io/</a> (perhaps a relevant one can be found or demonstrate one yourself) Ted Talk from <i>Legends of Design Series</i> <a href="https://www.ted.com/playlists/127/design_giants">https://www.ted.com/playlists/127/design_giants</a> )
	<b>DUE on pbworks on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April</b>
	<b>Think Piece #7</b> Find an oral presentation by an artist or creative practitioner in your field of interest. Define the purpose of the talk, the audience, and the situation. Discuss how both inflect the rhetorical devices used by the speaker. Provide the link to the speech before your analysis.

WEEK 15	
(4/20 – 4/24)	<b>Monday-Friday</b>
	<b>Review</b> Feedback from Instructor on Paper 4 Email the instructor if you have questions about feedback
	<b>DUE on Friday</b> <i>Final Version Paper 4</i> : Proposal assignment due on Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> on eLearning by 11:59 pm

WEEK 16	
Mon-Fri (4/27 – 5/1)	<b>PRESENTATIONS DUE on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April</b>
	Recorded Presentations (submit to shared Box folder on <b>Tuesday 4/28</b> before 11:59 pm)

	<p><b>Watch + Comment</b></p> <p>In place of a formal Q&amp;A session, watch and comment on your assigned group member's presentations. You worked with these individuals for 9 weeks, so leave nice comments and interesting questions on their course participant page for a job well done.</p> <p>Responses to questions should be completed before the end of the week (<b>Friday 4/21</b> before 11:59 pm). This is part of your participation grade.</p> <p>*If you have questions about the final portfolio, email the instructor</p>
	<p><b>DUE Tuesday May 4th</b></p>
	<p>Final Portfolio on eLearning by 11.59pm</p>