

INTRO TO DIGITAL LITERACIES

ENG 213 | section 16281
MWF 11–11:50am | Robert Bell 284



Dr. Allison Hitt
she/her/hers



ahhitt@bsu.edu
765-285-8539



Robert Bell 379
MW 1-2:30pm

WHAT IS THIS COURSE?

BSU course catalog: Introduction to Digital Literacies teaches ways of reading, analyzing, researching, & composing in emerging media. prereq: ENG 104 or 114

FROM DR. ALLISON:

Literacy is traditionally defined as reading and writing proficiency, but it's more complex than that. For example, rhetoric and writing studies scholars study visual and digital literacies, multiliteracies, and the ways in which cultures and identities shape our communication practices. Defining literacy only as reading/writing ignores these larger contexts within which we consume, create, and circulate information.

In ENG 213, we will read literacy theories, explore how technology has shaped composing practices; and analyze the historical, social, and ethical implications of technology and its impact on public and personal discourse. To increase your own digital literacy, you will compose multimodal texts for different rhetorical situations.

We will grapple with questions about what literacy means in a digital context:

- How have digital technologies affected critical reading and writing skills?
- What communication habits have you developed from access to different technologies and digital writing platforms?
- How is knowledge created and circulated in the digital realm? What happens when fake knowledge is created and circulated?

WHAT WILL WE READ?

There is no textbook for this course. Instead, I will make readings available as PDFs through Canvas, which you will access regularly throughout the semester to submit work and to access the calendar, readings, assignment prompts, and course notes.



Although there isn't a textbook, I expect you to access readings in class, so you need to print them or bring a laptop/tablet to class.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

By the end of the course, students will be able to do the following:

- think critically and rhetorically with and about technology
- critique and interrogate traditional notions of literacy (reading/writing) and offer a nuanced understanding of literacy in digital environments
- identify important genres of new media communication and their contexts, affordances, and constraints
- use digital tools to conduct research and to compose multimodal texts
- analyze texts, sites, communities, and/or programs to understand social, cultural, ethical, and political implications of digital communication practices
- assess the rhetorical possibilities of different modes (text, image, graphics, video, audio, etc.) and make sound rhetorical choices when combining them
- apply principles of fair use, copyright and documentation conventions for print and digital texts/media

WHAT WILL WE BE DOING THIS SEMESTER?

PROJECT 1: MULTIMODAL LITERACY NARRATIVE (20%)

You will compose a multimodal narrative that documents and reflects critically upon an experience with (digital) literacy, e.g., using social media, texting, or misreading digital content. You will make choices about content and which modes and media will be most effective in communicating your narrative. Your narrative essay must be specific, critical, and reflective of your digital media literacies. (1000-word digital text)

PROJECT 2: INTERFACE ANALYSIS (20%)

Whether it's connecting your car stereo to Spotify, completing homework on Canvas, or using an ATM, you interface with technologies all the time. This assignment asks you to analyze the interface of a web-based service or mobile app, noting its basic functionality, how the app controls user interactions, and the affordances and constraints of its design. You will compose a digital text and incorporate screenshots of the interface to support your analysis. (1000-word digital text)

PROJECT 3: HASHTAG MOVEMENT RESEARCH (25%)

For the final project, you will work in pairs to research a social movement that has been mediated through Twitter hashtags and present that research in class accompanied by a slide deck and handout. You will research how people use media to create social change and trace how information is created, circulated, and read in digital

ASSIGNMENTS

Project 1: Literacy Narrative	200 pts
Project 2: Tech/Interface Analysis	200 pts
Project 3: Hashtag Research	250 pts
Reading Responses	250 pts

environments. Each presentation will introduce the rhetorical situation of the social issue and emergence of the hashtag; outline the methods for data collection; analyze the discourse(s) that are represented in and/or denied access to that space; and address how the movement is written across media platforms. (7-10-minute visual presentation, slide deck, 1-page handout)

READING RESPONSES (25%)

You will write five responses throughout the semester that respond to and reflect critically on the ideas raised in the course readings. (500-word responses x 5)


COLLABORATIVE NOTE-TAKING (10%)

Five times throughout the semester, you will contribute to the note-taking document posted in the discussion board on Canvas. There are two options: You can take notes on class discussions and/or post reading notes. All notes will be posted in the same document to create an accessible archive of class content. (5 posts)

HOW WILL WE BE EVALUATED?

For each project, you will be assessed on your rhetorical choices: audience awareness, genre conventions, clear arrangement, accessible style, effective delivery, and persuasive rhetorical strategies. Reading responses will be graded on content, effort, and thoughtfulness. Each assignment will be accompanied by its own specific instructions and evaluation criteria, which we will decide together.

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
930–1000	900–929	870–899	830–869	800–829	770–799	730–769	700–729	670–699	630–669	600–629	590–0

 I will provide written feedback on each major assignment that you submit. Please read that feedback carefully prior to emailing me about your grade.

WHAT ARE DR. ALLISON’S POLICIES?

ACCESSIBILITY >> I am committed to creating a classroom environment that is respectful of and inclusive to different learning and writing processes. If we can work together to make the class more accessible, let me know.

ATTENDANCE >> Ideally, you won’t miss class, but there are often circumstances beyond our control. **You are allotted four absences this semester without any impact on your grade.** I also recognize excused absences: documented illness (yours or your children), deaths in

the family, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official university activities.

BASIC NEEDS SECURITY >> Any student who lacks access to sufficient food to eat or a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. If you are comfortable in doing so, let me know and I will help you find resources. <http://www.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/dean-of-students>

LATE WORK >> Assignments are due by the time specified on Canvas. **You can request an extension for one reading response** by emailing me: ahhitt@bsu.edu

RESPECT >> I expect you to be respectful when participating in class discussions, interacting with me in class and through email, and working with your peers. You do not have to agree with someone to treat them, their ideas, and their work respectfully.

TECHNOLOGY >> I expect you to be responsible with your technology use. You are welcome to wear headphones during individual work but not during lectures or group work. If you need to take a phone call, please step outside to take the call. If I have to ask you repeatedly to stop doing something on your phone, laptop, or one of the class iMacs, you will be asked to leave.

WHAT ARE BALL STATE'S POLICIES?

ACCOMMODATIONS >> If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

DIVERSITY >> Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews

represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as expressed in our Beneficence Pledge and through university resources. <http://www.bsu.edu/campuslife/multicultural-center/resources>

WRITING CENTER >> Writing Center at Ball State is a place where students can get free feedback on their writing for any class or project. Face-to-face or online appointments can be made on our online schedule, by emailing writing@bsu.edu, calling 765-285-8370, or stopping by Robert Bell 295. <http://www.bsu.edu/writingcenter>

DIGITAL WRITING STUDIO >> The Digital Writing Studio, located in Robert Bell 116, provides a working and tutoring space where students can 1) access and learn how to use digital composing tools and/or 2) receive feedback on digital work in progress.

The DWS can help students with a variety of digital and multimodal projects, e.g., constructing a website, producing a video or podcast, developing a digital portfolio, creating a blog, leveraging social media, organizing an informational campaign, designing an infographic, selecting and editing images, and crafting a presentation. The DWS is equipped with five workstations that house digital composing tools, e.g., Photoshop, InDesign, MovieMaker, and iMovie.

FALL 2019 COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK 1: GEN Z & MEDIA

Mon., Aug. 19: Introductions to the course, Canvas, and each other

- homework: Read [“Meet Gen Z: The Social Generation”](#).

Wed., Aug. 21: Gen Z (centennials) & digital media

- **due today: introduction**
- homework: Read [“Please, like my shame. Why do we feel compelled to tweet about our most embarrassing moments?”](#)

Fri., Aug. 23: [Social media use](#) and [rhetorical situations](#)

- homework: Read Bitzer “The Rhetorical Situation” (PDF on Canvas).

WEEK 2: RHETORICAL SITUATIONS

Mon., Aug. 26: Rhetorical situations

- homework: Read Vatz “The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation” (PDF on Canvas).

Wed., Aug. 28: Bitzer v. Vatz

- homework: Draft a 500-word reading response that assesses the differences between Bitzer and Vatz, applying an example from social media to support your discussion. Post to Canvas.

Fri., Aug. 30: Introduction to Project 1 Multimodal Literacy Narrative

- **due today: reading response #1** – 50 pts
- homework: Read Sheils “Why Johnny Can’t Write” (PDF on Canvas).

WEEK 3: LITERACY

Mon., Sept. 2: NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

Wed., Sept. 4: Literacy crises

- homework: Read Lunsford “Our Semi-Literate Youth? Not So Fast” (PDF on Canvas).

Fri, Sept 6: Literate youth

- homework: Read Selfe “Technology and Literacy: A Story about the Perils of Not Paying Attention” (PDF on Canvas).

WEEK 4: DIGITAL & MULTIMODAL LITERACIES

Mon., Sept. 9: Digital literacy acquisition & education

- homework: Read Yancey “Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key” (PDF on Canvas).

Wed., Sept. 11: Multimodal literacies

- homework: Read Kerschbaum “Modality”:
<http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/18.1/coverweb/yergeau-et-al/pages/mod/index.html> (excerpt from “Multimodality in Motion: Disability and Kairotic Spaces”).

Fri., Sept. 13: Accessibility & multimodality inhospitality

- homework: Draft a 500-word reading response that reflects on our readings about digital and multimodal literacies, incorporating specific passages from the readings to support your discussion. Post to Canvas.

WEEK 5: LITERACY NARRATIVES

Mon., Sept. 16: Storytelling through gifs, memes, & emoji – “Are GIFs the Future of Communication?”

http://www.slate.com/blogs/lexicon_valley/2015/05/11/are_gifs_the_future_of_communication_will_they_replace_words.html

- **due today: reading response #2** – 50 pts
- homework: Brainstorm ideas for the *content* of your literacy narrative.

Wed., Sept. 18: Digital media narratives – Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives (<http://www.thedaln.org/>)

- homework: Develop your literacy narrative. Remember to consider what story you’re telling and which details—and media—are important for communicating that story. Post your draft to Canvas.

Fri., Sept. 20: Peer review & in-class drafting

- **due today: Project 1 draft**
- homework: Continue to develop multimodal literacy narratives, taking into consideration the feedback you received. Project 1 Multimodal Literacy Narratives are due by class (11am) on Monday, 9-23.

WEEK 6: WRITING AS TECHNOLOGY

Mon., Sept. 23: What counts as technology?

- **due today: Project 1 Multimodal Literacy Narrative** – 200 pts

- homework: Read Brooke and Grabill “Writing Is a Technology through which Writers Create and Recreate Meaning” (PDF on Canvas).

Wed., Sept. 25: Writing as a technology

- homework: Read Baron “From Pencils to Pixels: The Stages of Literacy Technologies” (PDF on Canvas).

Fri., Sept. 27: Evolution of writing technologies

- homework: Read Haas “Wampum as Hypertext: An American Indian Intellectual Tradition of Multimedia Theory and Practice” (PDF on Canvas).

WEEK 7: CULTURAL LITERACIES

Mon., Sept. 30: Cultural theories of technology

- homework: Read Arola “Indigenous Interfaces”:
<https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/social/chapter11.pdf>.

Wed., Oct. 2: Indigenous modes of meaning-making

- homework: Complete reading response #3.

Fri., Oct. 4: Introduction to Project 2 Interface Analysis

- **due today: reading response #3** – 50 pts

WEEK 8: INTERFACES/INTERFACING

Mon., Oct. 7: NO CLASS – FALL BREAK

Wed., Oct. 9: Interface analysis: BSU home page

Fri., Oct. 11: Interface analysis: Canvas

- homework: Brainstorm some interface possibilities for Project 2: will you choose a website? a mobile app? Something digital or physical? We will vet ideas in class next week.

WEEK 9: BRAINSTORMING PROJECT 2

Mon., Oct. 14: Social media interfaces: Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook

Wed., Oct. 16: Vetting ideas and modes of delivery for Project 2

- **due today: ideas for Project 2**
- homework: Once you have selected an interface, spend time exploring it. Sign up for an account (if applicable), explore its functionality, the affordances and

constraints of its design, and how prior technologies are re/mediated through this interface.

Fri., Oct. 18: **NO CLASS - Dr. Allison is out of town.**

WEEK 10: DRAFTING

Mon., Oct. 21: Organizing notes and media

- **due today: notes**
- homework: Start to develop your notes into sections for your analysis.

Wed., Oct. 23: In-class drafting

- homework: Develop your analysis, and post a draft to Canvas for peer review.

Fri., Oct. 25: Peer review

- **due today: Project 2 draft**
- homework: Revise and develop your interface analysis, taking into consideration the feedback you received. Project 2 Interface Analyses are due by class (11am) on Monday, 10-28.

WEEK 11: DIGITAL AWARENESS

Mon., Oct. 28: Assessing (digital) news sources

- **due today: Project 2 Interface Analysis** – 200 pts

Wed., Oct. 30: “Beware Online ‘Filter Bubbles’”:

https://www.ted.com/talks/eli_pariser_beware_online_filter_bubbles/

Fri., Nov. 1: Bias online – “The Moral Bias Behind Your Search Results”

https://www.ted.com/talks/andreas_ekstrom_the_moral_bias_behind_your_search_results

- homework: Read Noble “A Society, Searching” from *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* (PDF on Canvas).

WEEK 12: (MIS)INFORMATION CIRCULATION

Mon., Nov. 4: Algorithms

- homework: McIntyre, “What Is Post-Truth?” and McComiskey, *Post-Truth Rhetoric and Composition* excerpt (PDF on Canvas).

Wed., Nov. 6: Post-truth

- homework: Read McIntyre, “The Rise of Social Media and the Problem of Fake News” (PDF on Canvas).

Fri., Nov. 8: Social media & critical literacies

- homework: Complete reading response #4.

WEEK 13: ACTIVISM & SLACKTIVISM

Mon., Nov. 11: introduction to Project 3 Hashtag Movement Research assignment

- **due today: reading response #4** – 50 pts
- homework: Read [“Social media made the world care about Standing Rock—and helped it forget”](#) and [“Slacktivism is over. The #NeverAgain Movement is about What’s Next.”](#)

Wed., Nov. 13: Social media activism & slacktivism

- homework: Read Dadas, “Hashtag Activism: The Promise and Risk of ‘Attention’”: <https://wac.colostate.edu/docs/books/social/chapter1.pdf>

Fri., Nov. 15: Hashtag activism

- homework: Complete reading response #5.

WEEK 14: RESEARCH

Mon., Nov. 18: Twitter research & digital tools

- **due today: reading response #5** – 50 pts
- homework: Divide the work between you and your partner. Gather information from Twitter and outside sources.

Wed., Nov. 20: Secondary research

- homework: Continue to research and take notes on your social movement.

Fri., Nov. 22: In-class research

- homework: Continue to research and take notes on your social movement.

WEEK 15: SLEEP!

Mon., Nov. 25: In-class conferences

- homework: Develop visual presentations.

Wed., Nov. 27: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Fri., Nov. 29: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 16: DRAFTING

Mon., Dec. 2: Finalizing presentations, handout, scripts

Wed., Dec. 4: Slide and handout design peer review

- homework: If you present Friday, please be on time (a few minutes early is ideal) to set up your presentations. Remember to practice together beforehand so you know how much time it takes. Please post your visual presentation and one-page handout to Canvas, and print 19 copies of your handout.

Fri., Dec. 6: Hashtag research presentations

- homework: If you present Monday, please be on time (a few minutes early is ideal) to set up your presentations. Remember to practice together beforehand so you know how much time it takes. Please post your visual presentation and one-page handout to Canvas, and print 19 copies of your handout.

WEEK 17: INFORMAL PRESENTATIONS

Mon., Dec. 9: Hashtag research presentations

- homework: Based on feedback, revise your visual presentations and/or handouts.

Thurs., Dec. 12: Final projects must be submitted to Canvas by [time]. We will *not* meet in the classroom during our final exam slot.

- **due today: hashtag movement research** - 250 pts