



## **ENGL 6815/7815: Topics in Composition and Rhetoric – Digital Rhetoric and Writing**

**3 credit hours**

### **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Instructor:	Dr. Eric Detweiler
Office Location:	Peck Hall 376
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Office Hours:	Wednesdays and Fridays 1 – 4 p.m. and by appointment (office hours will be held via Zoom)

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

#### **Description**

Students in this course will explore the rich intersections between recent work in the digital humanities and the field of rhetoric, composition, and writing studies (RCWS). RCWS scholars have been working in the area once called “computer-assisted instruction” since at least the 1980s. But over the past decade, the field’s digital work has extended well beyond computers and pedagogical concerns. In this course, students will explore research on digital storytelling, accessibility technologies, social media, and hacktivism, as well as the connections between digital work in RCWS and interdisciplinary fields like sound studies and software studies. In addition to studying digital theories and methods, students will produce projects using digital media: audio, video, data visualization, programming languages, and more.

#### **Objectives**

1. Introduce students to digitally oriented RCWS scholarship’s established theories, methods, and debates,

2. teach students to create scholarship using digital media, and
3. help graduate teaching assistants develop new strategies for incorporating digital technologies into their pedagogical and professional practices.

## Topics Covered

The intersections of digital media and RCWS, including but not limited to computer hardware and software, game studies, digital pedagogy, and theories of digital rhetoric.

## Requirements

Students will need regular access to a computer capable of accessing the course and running basic software. The computer will also need a USB port.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### Required Textbooks

All required texts for this course will be available through the D2L course shell. Students will not be required to purchase any texts.

### Supplementary Materials

In addition to the course texts, you will be provided with an [Arduino starter kit](#). These kits will be provided to you before the course begins and are covered by funds from the Office of the Provost. You will just need to download and install the [Arduino IDE](#), a free piece of software that will let you run programs using the Arduino kit. I will walk you through the download process during the first week of the course, but you are welcome to do so on your own if you want to start experimenting with the kit beforehand.

## ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

### Grading Procedure

Your grade for this course will be tied to four major projects as well as D2L discussion posts. I will assess and respond to your work based on your developing familiarity with digital rhetoric and writing as a field of study, your engagement with course content and technologies, and your writing.

### Grading Scale

The grading scale for this course is as follows:

A: 90-100	C+: 77-79	D: 63-66
B+: 87-89	C: 73-76	D-: 60-62
B: 83-86	C-: 70-72	F: 59 and under
B-: 80-82	D+: 67-69	

### Assignments and Projects

More details about each of the following projects are available in D2L.

- **Digital Literacy Narrative** (10%): A short piece of writing describing your relationships to/experiences with digital technologies, due early in the course.
- **Remediation Project** (20%): Read a book-length scholarly work selected from a list included with the full prompt for this assignment, then remediate that book using a digital medium or platform of your choice.
- **Arduino Project** (15%): Based on our work with Arduinos, students will find and document a scholarly and/or pedagogical application of the technology.
- **Final Project** (30%): A piece of digital scholarship. Final projects can be created individually or collaboratively, and they will be accompanied by a piece of reflective writing. The scope of the final project will differ for MA and PhD students.

In addition to the projects above, you will also be responsible for the following:

- **Reading Discussions** (15%): On 15 days throughout the course, there will be a D2L discussion forum for posting responses to that day's assigned readings. To get full credit for this aspect of the course, you'll need to post at least 2 times in at least 12 of those forums. That leaves 3 forums you can miss with no consequences. Because discussion is a key component of my graduate courses and this course doesn't have a designated time when we can officially meet for real-time virtual conversation, these forums are meant to pick up some of that slack. Your initial posts are due by noon on the day the readings are listed in the course calendar (with the exception of the first day of the course). Those posts should be approximately 500 words. They do not need to be highly polished pieces of writing. They can include questions, connections to other readings or coursework, summary, analysis. As long as these initial posts deal with the reading in a substantive manner, you're good. Your follow-up posts are more flexible. The forums won't close till the course ends, so you can revisit them and make your follow-up posts any time during the course up through 11:59 p.m. on Fri., Aug. 7. The only requirement is that they must be responses to your classmates' posts. You can address their questions or ask your own, elaborate on their analyses, and so on. In these follow-up posts, I am fine with you all engaging in wide-ranging discussions that include a lot of short exchanges or more focused threads with a couple of longer posts. All I ask is that your follow-up posts, whether you post one, three, or five times, total approximately 250 words. To put it succinctly: At least 2 posts, totaling approximately 750 words, in at least 12 of the 15 reading discussion forums on D2L.

## Feedback

- In general, I will provide feedback on your projects within 72 hours. That feedback will be posted in the D2L dropbox where you submitted the project. I

am more than happy to look at and respond to early drafts of projects prior to the final due date. I typically reply to emails within 24 hours.

- Projects should be submitted to the corresponding D2L dropbox and will not be accepted via email. If one of your projects cannot be readily submitted via D2L because of file size restrictions, etc., send me an email and we can figure out a solution.
- Project and discussion deadlines are included in the calendar in D2L. Note that the deadlines for your initial discussion posts correspond to the D2L deadlines for the readings being discussed. That's because the discussion topics themselves will remain open so you can follow up on those discussions throughout the course.

### Late Work

Summer courses move fast, so if you anticipate needing an extension on a project or a discussion post, just let me know and we can determine an appropriate deadline.

## PARTICIPATION

### Course Ground Rules

The following are expected of all students in this course:

- learn how to navigate in the learning management system;
- contact me or ITD to address technical problems as soon as possible; and
- be respectful to your instructor and peers; refrain from derogatory statements.

### Class Participation

Student participation is required in all aspects of the course. Please adhere to the following:

- participation is required; you are expected to log into the course a *minimum* of 3 times per week;
- adhere to all due dates and deadlines as listed in your course calendar;
- utilize the ask the class discussion board when you have questions about course content
- communicate with the instructor as a learning resource;
- check the course homepage for important announcements from the instructor.

### Academic Integrity/Misconduct

Please review the information on [Academic Integrity and Misconduct](#). The instructor will be submitting materials to an online service (Turnitin.com) which will review the work for plagiarism. Students should also review the report generated for each assignment and self-check for plagiarism. Information on how to cite work correctly is provided within the course modules or through the [University Writing Center](#). You may read more about how to avoid plagiarism from the [Office of the University Provost](#).

Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting as one's own work, themes, reports, drawings, laboratory notes, computer programs, or other projects prepared by another person
- Knowingly assisting another student in obtaining or using unauthorized materials
- Submitting assignments previously used in other courses where you received credit for the work
- Improperly crediting or lack of crediting an original author's work

Students guilty of academic misconduct are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. In addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions (including expulsion from the university), which may be imposed through the regular institutional procedures as a result of academic misconduct, the instructor has the authority to assign an "F" or zero for an activity or to assign an "F" for the course. Students guilty of plagiarism will be immediately reported to the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs.

### I am True Blue

As a member of this diverse community, I am a valuable contributor to its progress and success. I am engaged in the life of this community. I am a recipient and a giver. I am a listener and a speaker. I am honest in word and deed. I am committed to reason, not violence. I am a learner now and forever. I am a BLUE RAIDER. True Blue!

### Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades are given rarely and only in extenuating circumstances. The information below can be found in the Graduate Catalog under [Academic Regulations](#).

- The grade I indicates that the student has not completed all course requirements due to illness or other uncontrollable circumstances, especially those which may occur toward the close of the term. Mere failure to make up work or turn in required work on time does not provide a basis for the grade of I unless the extenuating circumstances noted above are acceptable to the instructor. When a student fails to appear for a final examination without known cause, the grade to be reported should be determined as follows: If the student has done satisfactory work to that point, the grade I may be reported on the assumption that the student was ill or will otherwise present sufficient reason for official excuse; if the student has attended irregularly and has not done satisfactory work to that point, the grade F should be reported.
- The "incomplete" must be removed during the succeeding semester, excluding summer. Otherwise, it converts to a grade of F. A student should not make up the "incomplete" by registering and paying again for the same course. The I grade carries no value until converted to a final grade.

## Attendance Reporting

MTSU Administration requires that instructors complete an attendance report for each course each semester. Regular class attendance is required and will be monitored by: the D2L system report; participation in the discussion board; and timely submission of course assignments. If several class assignment submissions are missing, student attendance will be reported as "no longer attending."

## Email

For email communication, please contact me at [eric.detweiler@mtsu.edu](mailto:eric.detweiler@mtsu.edu). In cases where email correspondence includes discussion of student education records protected by the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#), I will follow up with you via D2L email. I am not permitted to respond to student emails via a non-institutional assigned email, so please contact me using your MTMail addresses.

## STUDENT RESOURCES

### Technical Support

[D2L Resources](#) are available to MTSU Online Students. You can also find help for some of the basic functions of D2L used most often directly in your D2L course under the module titled D2L Help for Students.

### Students with Disabilities

Middle Tennessee State University is committed to campus access in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any student interested in reasonable accommodations can consult the [Disability & Access Center \(DAC\)](#) website and/or contact the DAC for assistance at 615-898-2783 or [DAC Email](#).

### Tutoring

MTSU Online supports multiple [Online Student Services](#).

### Grade Appeals

[University Policy 313, Student Grade Appeals](#), provides an avenue for MTSU students to appeal a final course grade in cases in which the student alleges that unethical or unprofessional actions by the instructor and/or grading inequities improperly impacted the final grade.

### Title IX

Students who believe they have been harassed, discriminated against or been the victim of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking should contact a Title IX/Deputy Coordinator at 615-898- 2185 or 615-898-2750 for assistance or review [MTSU's Title IX website](#) for resources.

MTSU faculty are concerned about the well-being and development of our students and are legally obligated to share reports of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking with the University's Title IX coordinator to help ensure student's safety and welfare. Please refer to [MTSU's Title IX website](#) or contact information and details.

## COURSE CALENDAR

All readings will be available as PDFs and/or open-access webtexts. Because this course does not have a designated meeting time, our schedules may not allow us to meet synchronously as a full class. However, because many components of a face-to-face graduate course do not translate easily to an asynchronous online setting, I will host a few synchronous sessions via Zoom. Those sessions are listed in bold below. If you are unable to attend, I will make a video recording available to watch after the fact. (See the "Videos" module in the content section of D2L.)

Readings should be completed by noon on the day they're listed to allow for timely, informed participation in discussion forums. (The exception is July 6. Since it's the first day of the course and we'll still be getting acclimated, I'm not asking you to do anything with those readings till Tuesday.) You can find the readings organized by day and authors' last names in the D2L module for the corresponding week of the course. Below, they are listed in the order I would suggest reading them. This may go without saying, but you're more than welcome to complete readings and participate in discussion forums ahead of time. All times are Central Standard Time.

<b>Week 1</b>	
<b>6-Jul</b>	<p><u><i>What is Digital Rhetoric and Writing?</i></u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Douglas Eyman – Ch. 1 ("Defining and Locating Digital Rhetoric") of <i>Digital Rhetoric: Theory, Method, Practice</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>available as an open-access digital book here:  <a href="https://www.fulcrum.org/concern/monographs/qn59q490d">https://www.fulcrum.org/concern/monographs/qn59q490d</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>Richard Lanham – Ch. 1 of <i>The Electronic Word: Democracy, Technology, and the Arts</i> (pdf)</li> <li>Elizabeth Losh – Ch. 2 of <i>Virtualpolitik</i> (pdf)</li> </ul> <p><b>Zoom Meeting: 2 – 4 p.m.</b> Intro to course and to rhetoric and writing studies. See introductory D2L news item for details on Zoom meetings.</p>
<b>7-Jul</b>	<p><u><i>Digital Rhetoric's Histories and Prehistories</i></u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Damien Smith Pfister – Ch. 2 of <i>Networked Media, Networked Rhetorics</i> (pdf)</li> <li>Mari Lee Mifsaud – "On Network" (pdf)</li> <li>Angela M. Haas – "Wampum as Hypertext: An American Indian Intellectual Tradition of Multimedia Theory and Practice" (pdf)</li> </ul>
<b>8-Jul</b>	<p><u><i>Digital Literacy and Composition</i></u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anne Wysocki and Johndan Johnson-Eilola – "Blinded By the Letter: Why Are We Using Literacy as a Metaphor for Everything Else?" (pdf)</li> <li>Kathleen Blake Yancey – "Made Not Only in Words: Composition in a New Key" (pdf)</li> </ul>



<b>9-Jul</b>	<p><u>Refiguring Digital Rhetoric and Writing</u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jonathan Alexander and Jacqueline Rhodes – Ch. 1 of <i>On Multimodality: New Media in Composition Studies</i> (pdf)</li> </ul> <p><b>Due by 11:59 p.m. on Friday: Digital Literacy Narrative</b></p>
<b>Week 2</b>	
<b>13-Jul</b>	<p><u>Arduinos</u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Jones – Arduino chapter (pdf)</li> <li>Massimo Banzi and Michael Shiloh – Chs. 1 and 2 of <i>Getting Started with Arduino</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>available as an ebook through Walker Library here (may have to log in to access): <a href="https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/make-getting-started/9781449363321/">https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/make-getting-started/9781449363321/</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>David Rieder – Ch. 2 of <i>Suasive Iterations: Rhetoric, Writing, and Physical Computing</i> (pdf)</li> </ul> <p><b>Zoom meeting: 2 – 4 p.m.</b> Discussion and Arduino workshop with Dr. John Jones.</p>
<b>14-Jul</b>	<p><u>Rhetoric, Writing, and Software Studies</u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>James J. Brown, Jr. – “Crossing State Lines: Rhetoric and Software Studies” (pdf)</li> <li>Annette Vee – Introduction and Chapter 1 from <i>Coding Literacy: How Computer Programming is Changing Writing</i> (pdf)</li> </ul>
<b>15-Jul</b>	<p><u>Critical Code Studies</u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nick Montfort – “Exploratory Programming in Digital Humanities Pedagogy and Research” (pdf)</li> <li>Nick Montfort et al. – Chs. 10 (“Introduction”), 15 (“REM Variations in BASIC”), and 30 (“Regularity”) of <i>10 PRINT CHR\$(205.5+RND(1)); : GOTO 10</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>available as an open-access PDF here: <a href="http://www.nickm.com/trope_tank/10_PRINT_121114.pdf">http://www.nickm.com/trope_tank/10_PRINT_121114.pdf</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>16-Jul</b>	<p><u>Movements across Media</u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stefan Helmreich – “Transduction” (pdf)</li> <li>Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin – Introduction to <i>Remediation: Understanding New Media</i> (pdf)</li> <li>Jody Shipka – Ch. 5 of <i>Toward a Composition Made Whole</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Zoom Meeting: 2 – 4 p.m.</b> Optional pop-in to tinker with Arduinos.</p>
<b>Week 3</b>	

<b>20-Jul</b>	<p><u>Methods and Methodologies</u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crystal VanKooten – “Methodologies and Methods for Research in Digital Rhetoric”: <a href="http://enculturation.net/methodologies-and-methods-for-research-in-digital-rhetoric">http://enculturation.net/methodologies-and-methods-for-research-in-digital-rhetoric</a></li> <li>• Laurie Gries – “Iconographic Tracking: A Digital Research Method for Visual Rhetoric and Circulation Studies” (pdf)</li> <li>• John Gallagher – “A Framework for Internet Case Study Methodology in Writing Studies” (pdf)</li> <li>• Sarah Riddick – “Deliberative Drifting: A Rhetorical Field Method for Audience Studies on Social Media” (pdf)</li> </ul>
<b>21-Jul</b>	<p><u>Multimodal Scholarship</u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sara Alvarez et al. – “On Multimodal Composing”: <a href="http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/21.2/praxis/devoss-et-al/index.html">http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/21.2/praxis/devoss-et-al/index.html</a></li> <li>• Alexandra Hidalgo – Introduction, Ch. 1, and Ch. 3 of <i>Cámara Retórica: A Feminist Filmmaking Methodology for Rhetoric and Composition</i>: <a href="https://ccdigitalpress.org/book/camara/">https://ccdigitalpress.org/book/camara/</a></li> </ul>
<b>22-Jul</b>	<p><u>Rhetoric and Game Studies</u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anna Anthropy and Naomi Clark – Chs. 1 &amp; 2 of <i>A Game Design Vocabulary: Exploring the Foundational Principles Behind Good Game Design</i> (pdf)</li> <li>• Ian Bogost – Ch. 1 of <i>Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames</i> (pdf)</li> <li>• Aubrey Anable – Ch. 1 of <i>Playing with Feelings: Video Games and Affect</i> (pdf)</li> <li>• Adam Hammond – Part 1 of “A Complete Beginner’s Guide to Twine 2.1”: <a href="http://www.adamhammond.com/twineguide/#passages">http://www.adamhammond.com/twineguide/#passages</a></li> </ul>
<b>23-Jul</b>	<p>No assigned readings. Individual conferences on final project ideas (schedule TBD).</p> <p><b>Zoom Meeting: 2 – 4 p.m.</b> Optional pop-in session to tinker with Arduinos, Twine, or other technologies.</p>
<b>Week 4</b>	
<b>27-Jul</b>	<p><u>Access</u></p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Melanie Yergeau et al. – “Multimodality in Motion: Disability and Kairotic Spaces”: <a href="http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/18.1/coverweb/yergeau-et-al/index.html">http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/18.1/coverweb/yergeau-et-al/index.html</a></li> <li>• Adam J. Banks – Ch. 2 of <i>Race, Rhetoric, and Technology: Searching for Higher Ground</i> (pdf)</li> <li>• Lisa Nakamura – Ch. 5 of <i>Digitizing Race: Visual Cultures of the Internet</i> (pdf)</li> </ul>

	<b>Zoom meeting: 2 – 4 p.m.</b> Discussion of books read for Remediation Project.
<b>28-Jul</b>	<u><i>Social Media</i></u> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jim Ridolfo and Bill-Hart Davidson – Introduction to <i>Rhet Ops</i> (pdf)</li> <li>• Michael Trice – “Gamergate: Understanding the Tactics of Online Knowledge Disruptors” (pdf)</li> <li>• Jennifer L. Borda and Bailey Marshall – “Creating a Space to #SayHerName: Rhetorical Stratification in the Networked Sphere” (pdf)</li> <li>• Sarah Florini – Ch. 1 of <i>Beyond Hashtags: Racial Politics and Black Digital Networks</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ available as an open-access ebook here:  <a href="http://opensquare.nyupress.org/books/9781479892464/read/">http://opensquare.nyupress.org/books/9781479892464/read/</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>29-Jul</b>	<u><i>Bodies</i></u> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anne Frances Wysocki – Introduction to <i>Composing(Media) = Composing(Embodiment)</i> (pdf)</li> <li>• Christa Teston – “Rhetoric, Precarity, and mHealth Technologies” (pdf)</li> <li>• Simone Browne – Ch. 3 of <i>Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness</i> (pdf)</li> <li>• Safiya Umoja Noble – Ch. 2 of <i>Algorithms of Oppression</i> (pdf)</li> </ul>
<b>30-Jul</b>	<u><i>Infrastructure</i></u> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keller Easterling – Introduction to <i>Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space</i> (pdf)</li> <li>• Casey Boyle – Ch. 5 of <i>Rhetoric as a Posthuman Practice</i> (pdf)</li> <li>• Marissa Elena Duarte – Chs. 1 &amp; 4 of <i>Network Sovereignty: Building the Internet Across Indian Country</i> (pdf)</li> </ul> <p><b>Due by 11:59 p.m. on Friday: Arduino Project</b></p>
<b>Week 5</b>	
<b>3-Aug</b>	<u><i>Design and Interfaces</i></u> Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James E. Porter – “Recovering Delivery for Digital Rhetoric” (pdf)</li> <li>• Kristen L. Arola – “The Design of Web 2.0: The Rise of the Template, The Fall of Design” (pdf)</li> <li>• Daniel Anderson and Jentery Sayers – “The Metaphor and Materiality of Layers” (<i>R&amp;DH</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>4-Aug</b>	No assigned readings. Work on Remediation Project and Final Project.  <b>Zoom Meeting: 12 – 4 p.m.</b> Optional pop-in to ask questions and/or work on projects.
<b>5-Aug</b>	<b>Zoom Meeting: 2 – 4 p.m.</b> Informal presentations on final projects.

<b>6-Aug</b>	Final Exam Day <b>Due by 11:59 p.m. on Friday: Remediation Project</b>
<b>Final</b>	
<b>9-Aug</b>	<b>Due by Noon: Final Projects (<i>please contact Dr. Detweiler if you anticipate needing an extension on your project</i>)</b>