

Course: Literature_Information_Computation
ENG1102, Section D8

Writing and Communication Program
School of Literature, Media, and Communication
Georgia Institute of Technology
Spring 2019

Class Meeting: Skiles 171 | TTh 1:30-2:45

Instructor Contact Information

Brad Rittenhouse, PhD

Email: bcrittenhouse@gatech.edu

Office Hrs: Thurs 2:45 – 3:45 or by appointment

Location: Skiles 318

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will be primarily working through a single text—Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick*—to help us think through issues of information literacy, overload, and management, and to consider the role of art in information design. While this is the theme of the course, the aim is to develop competencies in multimodal communication, research, and critical thinking.

No single course can teach you all there is to know about becoming a “good communicator.” Instead, this course will teach you to inquire, to read, to understand, to question, and to come to one’s own conclusions on a variety of different subjects and mediums, and communicate these ideas well. While we will be working through *Moby-Dick* and other complimentary readings, the main objective is to learn to think and communicate in an effective manner. Unlike many “writing” courses you may have taken in the past, this course stresses GA Tech’s *WOVEN* concept, incorporating written, oral, verbal, electronic, and nonverbal forms of communication.

EXPECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES:

In addition to course outcomes for all English 1102 courses listed in the Common Policies section of the WCP website, this course includes the following outcomes:

- Students will develop their sophistication in the ways they acquire, evaluate, and analyze meaning in literary texts.
- Students will develop their ability to make meaning of literary worlds through both traditional and technological methodologies.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Required reading/viewing/listening/observing:

- *WOVENText*
- [*Moby-Dick: Third Norton Critical Edition*](#) (hard copy so we can reference page #s)
- *Benito Cereno* (any edition or online)
- *The Return of the Obra Dinn* (available through Steam. You can also play for free in my lab if your computer is not capable of running this game.)

SUMMARY OF MAJOR UNITS/PROJECTS/ASSIGNMENTS

1. Common First Week Assignment: 3%

2. UNIT 1: What is Literary Information?

Project 1 – Multimodal Research Essay: 15%: In your first assignment, you will do research, academic and otherwise, to try to figure out what information is and whether or not it can be literary. This is an academic essay, so you will be required to use at least two academic sources in your paper. We will discuss in class how to obtain/use these sources. In addition to developing an interesting, cogent academic argument, you will be asked to incorporate elements of multimodal communication in the papers. Are you arguing that sound is information? Maybe embed an audio clip. Tabular data is information? Let's look at an example.

Papers will be ~1,500-2000 words and will be completed in either Mahara or Wordpress (I haven't decided yet). As with all assignments, there will be a proposal/feedback phase to help ensure you will be meeting these requirements. More details will be given in the project assignment.

3. Project 2 – Reading Blog: 10%: For the duration of the class, you will write a weekly blog post in which you will talk about the current materials we are discussing in class. You should focus on offering a cogent analysis of the piece in question, while also thinking about *WOVEN* principles. While the posts aren't strictly graded, they do offer a space to practice low-stakes, multimodal writing. Post should be around 250 words, and should incorporate multiple mediums as needed.

4. UNIT 2: Database vs Narrative

Project 3 – Group Project: 20%: As we read in class, Lev Manovich has declared database and narrative to be natural enemies. In this project, you will test his argument. Your task is to embed data by narrativizing it in one of the *WOVEN* modes, excluding electronic. You may, as does Melville, attempt to encode data in written narrative. Or, you may want to make a film adaptation of a scene in the book that also transmits the ancillary information in those pages. These are just examples; feel free to be creative. You should consider *WOVEN* principles of communication to craft a product that both transmits data *and* engages viewers through story/narrative. Because the premise of the assignment is that this is theoretically impossible, projects will not be graded primarily on the success of the vision, but on the group's attempt to solve a tough problem.

5. UNIT 3: Data/Text Analysis

Project 4 – Project Presentation: 25%: For the final project, we will actually be turning text into data, and analyzing it through quantitative means. You'll be introduced to a variety of entry-level text analysis tools that allow us to read literature in different ways, and make a meaningful, cogent argument from computer-assisted means of reading.

6. Final Portfolio: 10%

7. Participation and coursework: 17%

DEADLINES & LATE PENALTY

Papers will be reduced by a $\frac{1}{2}$ grade every day they are late. Being absent does not allow you an extension. If you must be absent, email me your draft or arrange to have your work turned in by the due date. If unforeseen circumstances arise and you won't be able to meet the deadline, please talk with me *before* the due date.

MISSING OR MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Make-up work. Students may make up work they miss in class. You are responsible for scheduling a meeting with me as soon as you are able to return to class in order to establish a plan for completing all make-up work. Missing work is counted as a "zero."

REVISION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Though we will work to incorporation revision into our regular writing and creation process, you will also have the opportunity to revise a final version of a single project or essay, at your discretion, for a chance to improve your grade. Revision should be just that: a "re-visioning" of the artifact. This means that simply going through and "accepting" the line edits I have made is not likely to affect your grade positively. Good revisions will add new relevant content, remove things that didn't work, and generally look to substantively improve the project's vision. The most successful revisions can improve your grade for the project by a whole letter grade; others will improve incrementally within this range. You may only revise one of the major projects listed above.

Scale	Basic	Beginning	Developing	Competent	Mature	Exemplary
Rhetorical Awareness Response to situation, including purpose, audience, register, and context	Overlooks two or more aspects of the situation or assignment, and thus does not fulfill the task	Overlooks at least one aspect of the situation or assignment and thus compromises effectiveness	Attempts to respond to all aspects of the situation or assignment, but the attempt is incomplete	Addresses the situation or assignment in a complete but perfunctory or predictable way	Addresses the situation completely, with unexpected insight	Addresses the situation in a sophisticated manner that could advance professional discourse on the topic
Stance Argument, significance and implications ("so what" factor)	Involves an unspecified or confusing argument; significance is not evident	Makes an overly general argument; significance is difficult to discern, or not appropriate to the rhetorical situation	Makes a simplistic or implicit argument, or multiple arguments that have no clear connection to one another; gestures towards significance, but does not fully develop it	Makes an explicit and straightforward argument that does not oversimplify the problem or question; explores at least one implication of the argument in depth	Makes a complex, unified argument that clearly articulates a position or stance; explores multiple implications of the argument	Offers an inventive, expert-like argument that clearly articulates a sophisticated position/stance ; explores multiple implications of the argument in a compelling manner
Development of Ideas Evidence, analysis, and substance	Claims requiring support are not backed by necessary evidence; lacks analysis of major pieces of evidence;	Evidence and/or analysis is weak or contradictory; does not account for important	Evidence provides minimal but necessary support to each point; attempted analysis is not	Evidence and analysis are substantive; they support the argument and related claims, but	Evidence fully supports and proves the argument and all related claims; evidence is	Evidence and analysis are precise, nuanced, fully developed, and work together to

	content is not substantive	evidence that could support or disprove the argument	sufficient to prove the argument	are mostly predictable	always paired with compelling analysis	enhance the argument,
Organization Structure and coherence, including elements such as introductions and conclusions as well as logical connections between points	Lacks unity in constituent parts; fails to create coherence among constituent parts; contains major argumentative Moby-Dickies or fallacies	Uses insufficient unifying statements; uses few effective connections; some logical moves necessary to prove the argument are absent	Uses some effective unifying claims, but a few are unclear; inconsistently makes connections between points and the argument; employs simplistic organization	States unifying claims with supporting points that relate clearly to the overall argument and employs an effective but mechanical scheme	Asserts and sustains a claim that develops logically and progressively; adapts typical organizational schemes for the context; achieves substantive coherence	Artifact is organized to achieve maximum coherence and momentum; connections are sophisticated and complex when required
Conventions Expectations for grammar, mechanics, style, citation	Involves errors that risk making the overall message distorted or incomprehensible	Involves a major pattern of errors	Involves some distracting errors	Meets expectations, with minor errors	Meets expectations in a virtually flawless manner	Exceeds expectations and manipulates conventions to advance the argument
Design for Medium Features that use affordances of the genre to enhance factors such as usability and comprehensibility	Lacks features necessary or significant for the genre; uses features that conflict with or ignore the argument	Omits some important features; distracting inconsistencies in features; uses features that don't support argument	Uses features that support the argument, but some match imprecisely with content; involves minor omissions or inconsistencies	Supports the argument with features that are generally suited to genre and content	Promotes engagement and supports the argument with features that efficiently use affordances	Persuades with careful, seamless integration of features and content and with innovative use of affordances

ASSESSMENT

This rubric is primarily intended as a conversation piece. It is a way for me to tell you what you are doing well and what I think you could improve. The different levels do not correspond to grades: this means that “Exemplary” is not an “A” and “Basic” is not an “F.”

COMMON POLICIES

Georgia Tech’s Writing and Communication Program has common, program-wide policies regarding these areas:

- 1 Georgia Tech General Education Outcomes for English 1101 and English 1102
- 2 Learning Outcomes for English 1101 and English 1102
- 3 Evaluation Equivalencies
- 4 Evaluation Rubric
- 5 Course Completion
- 6 Attendance
- 7 Dean of Students and Counseling Center

- 8 Safety
- 9 Participation in Class
- 10 Non-Discrimination
- 11 Communication Center
- 12 Accommodations
- 13 Academic Misconduct

Policies can be found at <https://b.gatech.edu/2Bu1VFR>.

OTHER POLICIES

Attendance requirement. Missing six (6) classes in a T/Th course or eight (8) classes for a M/W/F course may result in failure of the class, as determined by the instructor of the course in consultation with the Director and Associate Director of the Writing and Communication Program.

Reasons for absences. The attendance policy does not make any distinction about the reasons for your absences. Only absences officially exempted by the Institute (e.g., due to participation in official Georgia Tech athletics, to religious observance, to personal or family crisis confirmed by documentation from the Dean of Students) will not be counted among your allotted absences. These exemptions are difficult to get.

Responsibility for missed work. Students are responsible for finding out what they may have missed while absent from class and what policy the instructor has for making up missed work.

Absence penalties. Each additional absence after the allotted number deducts one-third of a letter grade from a student's final grade. Missing six (6) classes in a T/Th course or eight (8) classes for a M/W/F course results in automatic failure of the class.

A FEW TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Do reading and bring materials (laptop, readings, books, etc.) to class.
2. Much of this class is centered on your thoughts and participation. Failure to attend or participate in class will adversely affect your grade.
3. If you are having an issue, talk to me immediately. I'm more than willing to make alternative arrangements with you if you give me fair warning. Obviously, I will also make accommodations for unforeseen emergencies as well.
4. This class (as do all ENG 1102 courses) will have a final portfolio, so you need to plan for its completion.
 - a. Practice version control (save each new draft in a new file)

Schedule

WEEK 1 – **Jan 11 Registration/Schedule Change Deadline**

Tuesday Jan 8: COMMON FIRST WEEK: Introduction, Syllabus; **Assign:** Diagnostic Assignment, sign and return syllabus form, Read *WOVENText* pp. 30-49.

Thurs Jan 10: COMMON FIRST WEEK: Discussion on multimodal literacy; Mahara introduction; work on diagnostic projects. **Assign:** *WOVENText* pp. 90-103, Diagnostic projects due.

WEEK 2

Tuesday Jan 15: **No Class;** **Assign:** Manovich, [“Database as Symbolic Form”](#)

Thurs Jan 17: Discuss Manovich; **Assign:** Hayles, “Database and Narrative: Natural Symbionts”

WEEK 3

Tuesday Jan 22: Discuss *Moby-Dick*; **Assign:** *Moby-Dick*, 1-39

Thurs Jan 24: Discuss *Moby-Dick*. **Assign:** *Moby-Dick* 40-81

WEEK 4

Tuesday Jan 29: Discuss *Moby-Dick*; **Assign:** 81-120

Thurs Jan 31: Discuss *Moby-Dick*; **Assign:** 121-144

WEEK 5

Tuesday Feb 5: Discuss *Moby-Dick*; **Assign:** 144-172

Thurs Feb 7: Discuss *Moby-Dick*; **Due Tuesday:** Essay

WEEK 6

Tuesday Feb 12: Discuss *Moby-Dick*; **Assign:** 172-213; Groups for Project 3;

Thurs Feb 14: Discuss *Moby-Dick*; **Assign:** 213-261

WEEK 7

Tuesday Feb 19: Discuss *Moby-Dick*; Discuss Project 3; **Assign:** 261-303.

Thurs Feb 21: Discuss *Moby-Dick*; **Assign:** 303-353

WEEK 8

Tuesday Feb 26: Discussion of and work on projects; **Assign:** 353-end

Thurs Feb 28: Discussion of and work on projects; **Assign:** *Obra Dinn*

WEEK 9

Tuesday Mar 5: Discussion of and work on projects; **Assign:** *Obra Dinn*

Thurs Mar 7: Discussion of and work on projects; **Assign:** Prep for DH Practicum;

Due Tues: Group projects

WEEK 10 – **Mar 13 Last day to drop class**

Tuesday Mar 12: Discussion of and work on projects; DH Practicum; **Assign:** *Obra Dinn*; Prep for DH Practicum

Thurs Mar 14: Discussion of and work on projects; DH Practicum; **Assign:** Final projects; “Benito Cereno”

WEEK 11

Tuesday Mar 19: No class: Spring Break

Thurs Mar 21: No class: Spring Break

WEEK 12

Tuesday Mar 26: Final project lab

Thurs Mar 28: Final project lab

WEEK 13

Tuesday Apr 2: Discussion of and work on projects;

Thurs Apr 4: Discussion of and work on projects;

WEEK 14

Tuesday Apr 9: Discussion of and work on projects;

Thurs Apr 11: Final Project Presentations

WEEK 15

Tuesday Apr 16: Final Project Presentations

Thurs: Apr 18: Final Project Presentations

Portfolio Due. May 2 by 5:30 (No exceptions: this is set by GA Tech final exam schedule)

Statement of Understanding

Please read, sign, and return this statement to INSTRUCTOR NAME by Wednesday, 8/23 OR Thursday, 8/24 (or the next class period after your first day in the course, if you add later).

I affirm that I have read the entire syllabus and Common Policies for English 1101, English 1102, or LMC 3403 and understand the information and the responsibilities specified.

Print full name

Legible signature

Date

DIRECTIONS: Read carefully and check all that apply.

- I give my instructor, INSTRUCTOR NAME, permission to use copies of the work I do for this course, ENGL 1101, ENGL 1102, or LMC 3403, as examples in presentations and in print and electronic publications.
- I do not want my work used as examples in any situations.

If you give permission for your work to be used, please indicate how you want to be acknowledged:

- Please acknowledge me by my full name
- Please use my work, but do not acknowledge me by name.

The following information enables me to contact you if your work is used.

Print full name

Legible signature

Print permanent home address

Print campus address

Cell and home phones

School and home email addresses

Date