

Syllabus

SYLLABUS (BETA) FALL 2015

UNIV 200: Inquiry and the Craft of Argument

Digital Engagement Expedition: “Living the Dreams: Digital Investigations and Unfettered Minds”

Fall term, 2015

INTRODUCTION

This is a Course With [Many Names](#).

Our official name is UNIV 200: Inquiry and the Craft of Argument.

Our *special digital engagement expedition* name is “Living the Dreams: Digital Investigation and Unfettered Minds.” The “dreams” are those of the pioneers and architects of the digital age, people like Vannevar Bush, J. C. R. Licklider, Doug Engelbart, Ted Nelson, Alan Kay, and Adele Goldberg. In Phase One of the course, we’ll be reading and working with five essays by these dreamers, learning new concepts that will help us build better questions and better learning networks with our trusty personal, interactive, networked computers (including the one you may have in your pocket right now).

Our catchphrase is *thought vectors in concept space*. It’s the source of our #thoughtvectors hashtag (Twitter) as well as the plain tag thoughtvectors. Our course librarian, Jenny Stout, has a great video about that phrase. [Take a look](#).

As befits a “digital engagement expedition,” this version of the course experiments with the Web, and the Internet, throughout. It also has several moving parts, which you can read all about right here on our syllabus. Note that the syllabus is “beta,” which means that some of the specifics (synchronous events, activities, interactions) may shift a bit from time to time. We want to be able to respond, whenever possible, to the needs of our learning community in this course of study as those needs emerge. We will do everything in our power to avoid truly nasty surprises (for example, you won’t learn that an assignment due the next week is suddenly due the next day).

These kinds of adjustments are normal for most courses of study, but for a fully online course you’ll need to keep a sharp eye on your email, the Twitter hashtag, your section site, and the main course site (the one you’re on right now) for updates. We’ll push the messages out through as many

channels as possible, but it's up to you to keep yourself "tuned in" to the course activity sites. Work in the "spirit of thoughtvectors." Commit!

So let's get started.

OVERVIEW: COURSE OF STUDY

One: Orientation and Exploration

Activities/assignments/topics include:

Last time around / this time around

Turning your site on

How does it feel when you think?

Pick a thinker

Introduction to nuggets

Two: "As We May Think" (Vannevar Bush)

Activities/assignments/topics include:

Nuggets

Associative Trails

Considering Inquiry Projects

Three: "Man-Computer Symbiosis" (J. C. R. Licklider)

Activities/assignments/topics include:

Nuggets

Formulative vs. formulated thinking

Designing Inquiry Projects, part one (and considering teams)

Four: "Augmenting Human Intellect: A Conceptual Framework" (Doug Engelbart)

Activities/assignments/topics include:

Nuggets

Integrated domains, personal learning networks, dynamic knowledge repositories

Designing Inquiry Projects, part two

Five: Computer Lib / Dream Machines (Ted Nelson)

Activities/assignments/topics include:

Nuggets

Curating and sharing ultra-rich environments

Building Inquiry Projects, part one

Six: Building Inquiry Projects

Activities/assignments/topics include:

Shifting into overdrive: Building Inquiry Projects, part two

Using and citing research sources

Seven: Personal Dynamic Media (Alan Kay and Adele Goldberg)

Activities/assignments/topics include:

Going meta with computers, writing, and research

Mindfulness in writing

Building Inquiry Projects, part three

Phase Two Begins October 19

Assignments

Ready for a deeper dive? Here's an overview of the assignments. You'll be posting each assignment to your blog, the same place where you do all your daily writing. Your grades will be posted to your section's Blackboard grade book. Specific writing feedback will be delivered from your professor to you, typically via email. Basically, you're not going to be graded where everyone can see the grade. Worry not.

The Inquiry Project

The final assignment is the *inquiry project*. You'll have to have this finished and published for a grade by the last day of class. It's worth 35% of your final grade. Think of your inquiry project as a research paper for the digital age: although it will have many of the characteristics of academic writing, it'll take advantage of thought vectors in concept space—and lots of creativity—to make something much more involving and rewarding than a typical “term paper.”

The Essays & What You Make Of Them

We're also reading five essays by our “digital dreamers.” For each essay, we'll be doing three assignments. You'll be learning more about these assignments as they come up, but here's a brief summary:

Nuggets: For each reading, we'll ask you to take a passage from the reading that grabs you in some way and make that passage as meaningful as possible. It could be a passage that puzzles you, or intrigues you, or resonates strongly with you. It could be a passage you agree with, or one you

disagree with. The idea here is that the passage evokes some kind of response in you, one that makes you want to work with the passage to make it just as meaningful as possible. A good length for your nugget is about a paragraph or so. Too much, and it becomes unwieldy. Too little, and you don't have enough to work with.

How do you make something as meaningful as possible? Well, use your imagination. You'll probably start by copying the nugget into your post. From there, consider hyperlinks, illustrations, video clips, animated gifs, screenshots, whatever. Make the experience as rich and interesting as you can. And as we go along, you'll have more and more of your classmates' work to link to as well. In fact, linking and commenting are such vital and necessary parts of this course that they have their own definitions page.

Obviously, one of the main goals of this assignment is to get you to read these essays carefully and respond to them imaginatively. Your work with "nuggets" should be both fun and in earnest. It should demonstrate your own deep engagement and stimulate deep engagement for your reader as well.

Concept Experiences: For each of our five essays, we'll ask you to experience and reflect on a particular exercise related to a key concept in the essay. The idea here is to turn concepts into experiences—in other words, to take a key "dream" from the essay and make it something you do, something you make. For each essay, we'll specify the experience and set up the parameters. Each experience will have some game-like elements—some things that are arbitrary, but meaningful. All of them will give you practice in habits of mind and inquiry that will help you create better questions, find better problems, and craft better writing.

Progress Report / Research Reflections: Once a week, typically toward the end of the week (see the schedule below), you should write a blog post reflecting on the week's experience and asking yourself where you are in relation to the inquiry project you are considering, designing, building, and eventually sharing.

Other Committed Activities

In addition to the specific assignments above or others required by your instructor, which will include many rough drafts of, and reflections on, your budding inquiry projects, you will also need to *write write write*. And *create create create*. And *explore explore explore*. In other words, you should participate robustly in *free-range learning and sharing*. What you do should be relevant to the course, of course, but please think of "relevant" as potentially a very large set of things. **A large part of this course depends on consistent, robust, and relevant participation.** Without it, the course is just a bunch of assignments. Good assignments, mind you, but not an [adventure](#) or a journey. What you will make, and the total of what we make together, will be visible to the world and might

even inspire others. Actually, if prior experience is any guide, it *will* inspire others. And we could all use some inspiration.

A specific schedule of assignments and due dates follows. But first, let's have an idea of what each component of the course activity is "worth" in terms of your final grade.

The inquiry project is the biggest goal and the most important destination of the course. **35% of your final grade** will be based on the quality of this project, as judged by your section professor.

The assignments linked to our readings (nuggets, concept experiences) will be worth a total of **35% of your final grade**, because they are essential parts of building strong and unfettered inquiry brains that can actually live the dreams. If you can't live the dreams, your inquiry project probably won't be very interesting or rewarding.

Each section professor can assign **the other 30%** as he or she sees fit. Some may put all or most of that percentage on participation, including the weekly progress report / research reflection. Some may want to put smaller percentages on various stages of drafting and polishing the inquiry project. This part of the weighting will reflect each professor's own strengths and strategies for encouraging and inspiring you to build strong, unfettered inquiry brains.

Course Schedule In Detail

A note about deadlines: EACH DATE INDICATES THE DATE WORK IS DUE. WORK DUE ON A SPECIFIC DATE MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Be sure to check your time zone to see what "11:59 p.m. ET" is where you are living as you take the course.

A note about synchronous (same-place, same-time) events vs. asynchronous events: although most of the course is asynchronous—participation will happen at various times, loosely organized by days—there will be some special synchronous events, mostly live Google Hangouts streamed to the web.

They are noted below. If you cannot make a synchronous event, don't worry: there will be an archived version you can watch later. There will be possibilities for real-time interaction during the synchronous event—for example, asking questions of a guest speaker—that won't be available when you view the archived version, but either way there will be plenty of opportunities to make use of the material and to interact around it.

WEEK ONE (August 19-25)

Orientation / Exploration

Watch this space for additional directions. Your section professor will confirm.

WEEK TWO (dates below are approximate; check with section leader for exact dates)

August 26

ASSIGNMENTS: Read [Vannevar Bush, "As We May Think."](#)

Blog post: a self-portrait in words and more. "How Does It Feel When I Think?"

August 27

Blog post making nugget from "As We May Think" as meaningful as possible

Do "associative trails" concept experience

August 28

Leave a substantive, interesting comment on at least 10 of your classmates' nugget posts.

Blog post on "associative trails" concept experience

August 31

Comment on at least 5 of your classmates' "associative trails" blog posts

Blog post: connect your colleagues! Write a post describing two surprising associative trails in your thoughtvector colleagues' posts, and link them meaningfully. (Exercise your permalink muscles and generate pingbacks.)

September 1

Read [J. C. R. Licklider, "Man-Computer Symbiosis,"](#) and choose a nugget you'll work with.

Free-range blogging

WEEK THREE

September 2

Blog post making nugget from "Man-Computer Symbiosis" as meaningful as possible

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: Live Google+ Hangout with all six professors (8 p.m. EDT)

September 3

Do the nugget post again, revising it with links to at least five classmates' posts from September 2. (In other words, get in the habit of linking out to other blog posts, including your own, frequently and robustly.)

September 4

Do "formulated vs. formulative" concept experience and blog about it.

September 7

Comment on at least 5 of this week's revised nugget posts and 5 of this week's concept experience posts.

September 8

Progress report / research reflection post, with links to at least four other posts (you may link to earlier posts of your own as well).

WEEK FOUR

(TvsZ!)

September 9-10

Read at least these excerpts from Doug Engelbart, "Augmenting Human Intellect: A Conceptual Framework":

Chapter I, "Introduction," parts A ("General") and B ("Objective of the Study")

Chapter II, "Conceptual Framework," parts A ("General") and B ("The Basic Perspective")

Chapter III, "Examples and Discussion," part A ("Background") sections 2 ("Comments Related To Bush's Article") and 3 ("Some Possibilities with Cards and Relatively Simple Equipment")

Nothing from Chapter IV

Chapter V, "Summary" (all)

Chapter VI, "Conclusions" (all)

and of course, pick your nugget.

You should also watch some or all of "[The Mother Of All Demos.](#)" There's a [nice set of highlights made by SRI International that's great as an overview.](#)

September 11

Blog post making nugget from "Augmenting Human Intellect" as meaningful as possible. Don't forget the links (make them interesting, make them revelatory, make them creative)

September 14

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: Google Hangout

Blog post

Begin integrated domain concept experience

September 15

Blog post on integrated domain concept experience. Other concepts to explore: personal cyberinfrastructure, dynamic knowledge repository/ecosystem

WEEK FIVE

September 16

Blog post commenting on and linking to at least 5 classmates' posts on the integrated domain concept experience.

September 17

Progress report / research reflection post, with links.

Inquiry project proposal draft #1 posted with request for comments.

September 18

Comment on at least 5 of your classmates' inquiry project proposal drafts

SEPTEMBER 19-27

Reading Days (UCI World Championships) (Great VCU Bike Race Book)

WEEK FIVE (cont.)

September 28-29

Read [Ted Nelson, *Computer Lib / Dream Machines* \(excerpts. pdf download\)](#) and pick a nugget to work with.

WEEK SIX

September 30

Cancelled

Blog post making nugget from *CL/DM* as meaningful as possible.

Work on creating and curating ultra-rich environment (blog beautification!).

October 1

Blog post making nugget even more meaningful.

Share and discuss ultra-rich environment.

October 2

Continue to share, revise, discuss ultra-rich environment (don't forget the "fantics" or the "thinkertoys").

October 5

Continue to share, revise, discuss ultra-rich environment (don't forget the "fantics" or the "thinkertoys")

Post progress report / research reflection.

Post inquiry project proposal draft #2 with thoughts on design as well as direction and topic.

October 6

Comment on at least 5 of your classmates' inquiry project proposal drafts.

Continue to refine your own inquiry project design.

WEEK SEVEN

October 7-8

Read [Alan Kay and Adele Goldberg, "Personal Dynamic Media"](#) (pdf download). Pick a nugget to work on.

October 9

Blog post making nugget from "Personal Dynamic Media" as meaningful as possible

October 12-13

Concept experience on "meta" and the craft of argument: metamedium, metaphor, metacognition

WEEK EIGHT

October 14

Post to share concept experience

October 15

Comment on classmates' concept experience

October 16

Progress report / research reflection

PHASE TWO BEGINS OCTOBER 19

Gardner's syllabus for Phase Two:

October 19-October 25

Wednesday and Thursday 10/21-22:

Mapping my Dreamers (concept experience): Select three of the new media readings and synthesize at least **five** conceptual bases for comparing them to one another. Select useful concepts or insights, summarize them briefly, and then relate them to each other in multiple different ways. The goal here is not a huge amount of writing, but intelligible notes that will be useful later on for yourself and your peers. Compare, contrast, recognize patterns within, and impute the motives behind the dreamers' work, and you'll be on the right track. This is not an

easy thing to do, and you may find it easier to create a visual version of this process and then either scan it to your blog or use a digital app and then link to it (or embed). Tag the post **synthesis** so that the cMOOC motherblog can filter these posts usefully.

Friday 10/23:

Revise your Mapping my Dreamers post after visiting the sites of at least four students, two from your section and two from outside your section, preferably those who wrote on the same three essays. Link to their synthesis of the dreamers and compare your efforts to theirs. Also, reflect on why you chose the three essays that you chose.

Sunday 10/25:

By the end of the day, post Finalizing my Dream, in which you lock yourself in to a specific line of inquiry. Reflect on the past week, the three new media dreamers you selected, and what your peers have taught you about them. What subject in or of or about the internet will you research for the final inquiry project, and how will your three dreamers help you do that?

October 26-31

Tuesday, October 27

Nuggeting Sources: Find a source you think would be helpful to you in your inquiry project and write a nugget post for it. (Remember that a nugget is a passage from the reading that grabs you in some way and make that passage as meaningful as possible. It could be a passage that puzzles you, or intrigues you, or resonates strongly with you. It could be a passage you agree with, or one you disagree with. The idea here is that the passage evokes some kind of response in you, one that makes you want to work with the passage to make it just as meaningful as possible). Make sure you explain precisely how you think the argument from the source you selected applies to your project as you currently see it. Make sure to link out to the source.

Tag this post with five keywords you think fit the source how you're imagining it working in your paper (Note: These tags will eventually become standardized for all of the sources you will use for your inquiry project and will be the major topics you address in your work).

Wednesday, October 28

Comment on five of your peers' Nuggeting Sources posts (in our section or in any other Thought Vectors section — take a look at thoughtvectors.net. Try to look for similar projects so you can possibly make research friends.

Thursday, October 29 & Friday, October 30

Connecting Nuggets: Find another source and nugget it, explaining its relationship to how you're currently thinking of your inquiry project. Then, discuss the relationship between this source and the source you found and nuggeted for Monday's post. Make sure to link out to the source. **Key questions:** What are the major commonalities and/or distinctions between them, and how do they work together to help you better understand what you want to address in your inquiry project? Once you have this ready, connect it back to one of the dreamer readings from Phase I. (Look back to your Mapping my Dreamers post to help with this.) How do you see one of the dreamers fitting into the conversation you are entering with your inquiry project?

Design this post however you see fit: be creative and thoughtful. Tag this post five keywords you think fit the source how you're imagining it working in your paper. (To do this, think about how the sources work together to build the conversation.) Also tag it **synthesis**.

Saturday, October 31 (Happy Halloween!)

Look to at least four of your peers' connecting nuggets and reflect on the research of your inquiry project so far. **Key questions:** What do you notice about how other projects are forming so far? How do you see your project forming alongside your peers? Link out to at least four of your peers' posts (at least two **outside** of your class section) and explain how you work so far compares/connects in any way.

November 2-7 (Week Three)

Monday, November 2

Nuggeting Sources: Find a source you think would be helpful to you in your inquiry project and write a nugget post for it. (Remember that a nugget is a passage from the reading that grabs you in some way and that you then make as meaningful as possible. It could be a passage that puzzles you, or intrigues you, or resonates strongly with you. It could be a passage you agree with, or one you disagree with. The idea here is that the passage evokes some kind of response in you, one that makes you want to work with the passage to make it just as meaningful as possible.) Make sure you explain precisely how you think the argument from the source you selected applies to your project as you currently see it. Make sure to link out to the source.

Tag this post with five keywords that describe how you imagine your source will work in your Inquiry Project. (To do this, think about how the sources work together to build the conversation with your Connecting Nuggets post.)

Tuesday, November 3

Comment on five of your peers' Nuggeting Sources posts. Try to look for similar projects—these authors may become research friends. Focus your comments on how your peers are conceptualizing their sources (the tags used to categorize the source, what they write about the source, etc.) Ask questions. Get curious!

Wednesday, November 3 – Friday November 5

Investigators Assemble!: This experience is designed to help you understand how your sources will work together as a framework for your inquiry project. It also has multiple parts, so make sure to not sleep on this. Don't wait until the last minute to complete everything!

Part 1: The Gathering

Take stock of the sources you have found on your own: the ones you have nuggeted and the ones you have waiting in the wings for use. Think of these as your party of fellow investigators, equipped and ready to help you in your investigation. Select at least four.

Once you have the party together, look at all of the tags you have created to categorize your sources and decide how they can be standardized. In other words, aim for five tags that are strong summations of major points in all of your outside sources. They can now take the form of fuller thoughts/phrases rather than just a one word description. Think of these as the major categories all of your sources address and that you may include in your inquiry project: the topics of conversation your savvy party of investigators is so, so ready to discuss.

Part 2: The Planning

Get the conversation going. Take your fellow "investigators" and arrange them around the categories from Part 1, then explain how they help you in your investigation. (Your Connecting Nuggets post should help with this.) What does each bring to the table to address the project you established? How do they do this? Don't just chronologically describe what each source contains; provide a strong summation of the core assertions the investigators make to make the discussion as robust as possible. Let them talk and respond to each other, just like any real conversation.

Part 3: The Advising

Think long and hard about the state of the conversation from Part 2. Look back to the three dreamers you wish to include in your inquiry project (your Mapping the Dreamers post should help with this) and bring them into the fold to address all of the categories you see fit. Provide any insight you think the three dreamers may have given the discussion between investigators.

Part 4: The Missioning

Now that your part is complete, explain the state of your investigation and your thoughts on what you will ultimately claim and support in your inquiry project.

Design this post (or any part of it) however you see fit: be creative, detailed, and thoughtful. Tag this post **synthesis**.

Sunday, November 7

Look to at least four of your peers' Investigators Assemble! posts and reflect on the state of your project in light of them. **Key questions:** What seems to be working well as others conceptualize their projects? How do you see your project forming alongside your peers'? Link out to at least four of your peers' posts (at least two **outside** of your class section) and explain how your work so far compares or connects with theirs.

November 9-15 (WHAT DO YOU NEED?)

This week we're going rogue.

This week you have only one assignment, though the work may take many forms.

This week, every day, you should do *what you need to advance your inquiry project*.

So what do you need to advance your inquiry project? Do you need to spend time with the dreamers? Do you need to work with our "exorcist of ignorance," aka our librarian, Ms. Jenny Stout? Do you need to schedule a conference with Dr. C.? Do you need to read more journal articles, write more of your draft, practice hyperlinking, learn how to embed images or video, visit the Writing Center?

This week, every day, you should do *what you need to advance your inquiry project*.

And this week, every day, you should write a blog post that does two things:

1. Details what you did that day to advance your inquiry project, and
2. Discusses why that work mattered.

You should tag all your posts with keywords that mean something to you, but also with the day of the week followed by the word NEED. So Monday's post, for example, would be tagged Monday NEED.

If you have questions—if you have concerns—do not fail to email Dr. C. for help, advice, or clarification.

November 16-December 2

Four assignments during this time:

1. Continue to draft your inquiry projects.
2. Blog each day, even if only a few sentences, to reflect on your progress.

3. By the end of the day on Monday, November 23, send me a draft of your project for his feedback. The draft should be on the Web so I can see how you are composing your project for the digital medium. I will comment privately, via email—not on your draft.
4. For our last class meeting, December 2: be ready to do a five-minute presentation on your project to the entire class.

The Inquiry Project

THE INQUIRY PROJECT

The final assignment is the *inquiry project*. You'll have to have this finished and published for a grade by the last day of class. It's worth 35% of your final grade. Think of your inquiry project as a research paper for the digital age: although it will have many of the characteristics of academic writing, it'll take advantage of thought vectors in concept space—and lots of creativity—to make something much more involving and rewarding than a typical “term paper.” Write for the Web!

I. Topics and stipulations:

Your inquiry must be about something in the networked digital age in which we live. In other words, you'll effectively need to tie your project to the ideas promoted by the dreamers whose ideas you will have read in the first part of the semester. Computers (desktops, laptops, smartphones, tablets, etc.), the Internet, the Web, and the world they empower are all fair game. The inquiry project should be at least 2,500 words and contain at least three scholarly sources, with proper citation (APA or MLA format are fine. If you want to use another format, please clear it with Dr C.

The project should also link to a substantial number of your classmates' earlier posts (don't forget to link to your own earlier posts, too).

Finally, you should connect your inquiry project in a substantial way to at least one of the “dreamers” whose essays we worked with earlier in the term.

II. Some core criteria for assessing the inquiry project:

- Thoroughly researched – support by lots of high-quality evidence
- Well-reasoned – this has to do with the organization and logic of the overall argument
- Intentional – someone reading it ought to see immediately that it has a point and has some polish.
- Purposefully written to and for the Web – students should take advantages of the affordances of the Web for composition (multimedia, hypertext (links), etc.)

III. Where will you publish your inquiry project?

Although your final project should be reachable through your blog, you will probably want to create the final project somewhere else and just post the link. There are no limits about the digital tools you might use to create your project and where your project should reside. However, it must be open to the public. There are any number of potential platforms for the inquiry project, including, but not limited to:

- A stand-alone page (or set of pages) on RamPages
- A new website entirely (e.g. Wix.com or Weebly or anything really...)
- A Google Site or wiki
- Medium.com

Summer 2014 Syllabus (Thoughtvectors 1.0: the pilot episode)

SYLLABUS (BETA) (DEPRECATED) (SEE MAIN MENU FOR FALL, 2015 SYLLABUS)

UNIV 200: Inquiry and the Craft of Argument

Digital Engagement Pilot: “Living the Dreams: Digital Investigations and Unfettered Minds”

June 10 – July 31, 2014

INTRODUCTION

This is a Course With [Many Names](#).

Our official name is UNIV 200: Inquiry and the Craft of Argument.

Our *special digital engagement pilot* name is “Living the Dreams: Digital Investigation and Unfettered Minds.” The “dreams” are those of the pioneers and architects of the digital age, people like Vannevar Bush, J. C. R. Licklider, Doug Engelbart, Ted Nelson, Alan Kay, and Adele Goldberg. We’ll be reading and working with five essays by these dreamers this summer, learning new concepts that will help us build better questions and better learning networks with our trusty personal, interactive, networked computers (including the one you may have in your pocket right now).

Our catchphrase is *thought vectors in concept space*. It’s the source of our #thoughtvectors hashtag (Twitter) as well as the plain tag thoughtvectors. Our course librarian, Jenny Stout, has a great video about that phrase. [Take a look](#).

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So let's get started.

OVERVIEW: COURSE OF STUDY

FIRST DAY OF CLASS: JUNE 10

WEEK ONE: AS WE MAY THINK (VANNEVAR BUSH)

Associative Trails

Considering Inquiry Projects

WEEK TWO: MAN-COMPUTER SYMBIOSIS (J . C. R. LICKLIDER)

Formulative vs. formulated thinking

Designing Inquiry Projects, part one (and considering teams)

WEEK THREE: AUGMENTING HUMAN INTELLECT: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK (DOUG ENGELBART)

Integrated domains, personal learning networks, dynamic knowledge repositories

Designing Inquiry Projects, part two

WEEK FOUR: COMPUTER LIB / DREAM MACHINES (TED NELSON)

Curating and sharing ultra-rich environments

Building Inquiry Projects, part one

WEEK FIVE: BUILDING INQUIRY PROJECTS

Shifting into overdrive: Building Inquiry Projects, part two

Using and citing research sources

WEEK SIX: PERSONAL DYNAMIC MEDIA (ALAN KAY AND ADELE GOLDBERG)

Going meta with computers, writing, and research

Mindfulness in writing

Building Inquiry Projects, part three

WEEK SEVEN: FINISHING AND POLISHING INQUIRY PROJECTS

WEEK EIGHT: PUBLISHING INQUIRY PROJECTS

INQUIRY PROJECT MUST BE PUBLISHED JULY 30

CLOSING CEREMONIES FOR THIS COURSE OF STUDY: JULY 31

ASSIGNMENTS

Ready for a deeper dive? Here's an overview of the assignments. You'll be posting each assignment to your blog, the same place where you do all your daily writing. Your grades will be posted to your section's Blackboard grade book. Specific writing feedback will be delivered from your professor to you, typically via email. Basically, you're not going to be graded where everyone can see the grade. Worry not.

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How do you make something as meaningful as possible? Well, use your imagination. You'll probably start by copying the nugget into your post. From there, consider hyperlinks, illustrations, video clips, animated gifs, screenshots, whatever. Make the experience as rich and interesting as you can. And as we go along, you'll have more and more of your classmates' work to link to as well. In fact, linking and commenting are such vital and necessary parts of this course that they have their own definitions page.

Obviously, one of the main goals of this assignment is to get you to read these essays carefully and respond to them imaginatively. Your work with "nuggets" should be both fun and in earnest. It should demonstrate your own deep engagement and stimulate deep engagement for your reader as well.

Concept Experiences: For each of our five essays, we'll ask you to experience and reflect on a particular exercise related to a key concept in the essay. The idea here is to turn concepts into experiences—in other words, to take a key "dream" from the essay and make it something you do, something you make. For each essay, we'll specify the experience and set up the parameters. Each experience will have some game-like elements—some things that are arbitrary, but meaningful. All of them will give you practice in habits of mind and inquiry that will help you create better questions, find better problems, and craft better writing.

Progress Report / Research Reflections: Once a week, typically toward the end of the week (see the schedule below), you should write a blog post reflecting on the week's experience and asking yourself where you are in relation to the inquiry project you are considering, designing, building, and eventually sharing.

OTHER COMMITTED ACTIVITIES

In addition to the specific assignments above or others required by your instructor, which will include many rough drafts of, and reflections on, your budding inquiry projects, you will also need to *write write write*. And *create create create*. And *explore explore explore*. In other words, you should participate robustly in *free-range learning and sharing*. What you do should be relevant to the course, of course, but please think of "relevant" as potentially a very large set of things. **A large part of this course depends on consistent, robust, and relevant participation.** Without it, the course is just a bunch of assignments. Good assignments, mind you, but not an [adventure](#) or a journey. What you will make, and the total of what we make together, will be visible to the world and might

even inspire others. Actually, if prior experience is any guide, it *will* inspire others. And we could all use some inspiration.

A specific schedule of assignments and due dates follows. But first, let's have an idea of what each component of the course activity is "worth" in terms of your final grade.

The inquiry project is the biggest goal and the most important destination of the course. **35% of your final grade** will be based on the quality of this project, as judged by your section professor.

The assignments linked to our readings (nuggets, concept experiences) will be worth a total of **35% of your final grade**, because they are essential parts of building strong and unfettered inquiry brains that can actually live the dreams. If you can't live the dreams, your inquiry project probably won't be very interesting or rewarding.

Each section professor can assign **the other 30%** as he or she sees fit. Some may put all or most of that percentage on participation, including the weekly progress report / research reflection. Some may want to put smaller percentages on various stages of drafting and polishing the inquiry project. This part of the weighting will reflect each professor's own strengths and strategies for encouraging and inspiring you to build strong, unfettered inquiry brains.

COURSE SCHEDULE IN DETAIL

A note about deadlines: EACH DATE INDICATES THE DATE WORK IS DUE. WORK DUE ON A SPECIFIC DATE MUST BE SUBMITTED BY 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. Be sure to check your time zone to see what "11:59 p.m. EDT" is where you are living as you take the course.

A note about synchronous (same-place, same-time) events vs. asynchronous events: although most of the course is asynchronous—participation will happen at various times, loosely organized by days—there will be some special synchronous events, mostly live Google Hangouts streamed to the web.

They are noted below. If you cannot make a synchronous event, don't worry: there will be an archived version you can watch later. There will be possibilities for real-time interaction during the synchronous event—for example, asking questions of a guest speaker—that won't be available when you view the archived version, but either way there will be plenty of opportunities to make use of the material and to interact around it.

WEEK ONE

June 10: The Course Begins

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: Live Google+ Hangout with all six professors (8 p.m. EDT)

ASSIGNMENTS: Read [Vannevar Bush, "As We May Think."](#)

Blog post: a self-portrait in words and more. "How Does It Feel When I Think?"

June 11

Blog post making nugget from “As We May Think” as meaningful as possible

Do “associative trails” concept experience

June 12

Leave a substantive, interesting comment on at least 10 of your classmates’ nugget posts.

Blog post on “associative trails” concept experience

June 13

Comment on at least 10 of your classmates’ “associative trails” blog posts

Blog post: first “progress report / research reflection”

OVER THE WEEKEND: Read [J. C. R. Licklider, “Man-Computer Symbiosis,”](#) and choose a nugget you’ll work with.

WEEK TWO

June 16

(Hangout rescheduled for later in the week—stay tuned)

Blog post making nugget from “Man-Computer Symbiosis” as meaningful as possible

June 17

Do the nugget post again, revising it with links to at least five classmates’ posts from June 16. (In other words, get in the habit of linking out to other blog posts, including your own, frequently and robustly.)

June 18

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: VCU cMOOC Live in Concert at the New Media Consortium! (4:00-5:15 PM EDT)

Do “formulated vs. formulative” concept experience and blog about it.

June 19

Comment on at least 5 of this week’s revised nugget posts and 5 of this week’s concept experience posts.

June 20

Progress report / research reflection post, with links to at least four other posts (you may link to earlier posts of your own as well).

OVER THE WEEKEND (a big one!): Read at least these excerpts from Doug Engelbart, "Augmenting Human Intellect: A Conceptual Framework":

Chapter I, "Introduction," parts A ("General") and B ("Objective of the Study")

Chapter II, "Conceptual Framework," parts A ("General") and B ("The Basic Perspective")

Chapter III, "Examples and Discussion," part A ("Background") sections 2 ("Comments Related To Bush's Article" and 3 ("Some Possibilities with Cards and Relatively Simple Equipment")

Nothing from Chapter IV

Chapter V, "Summary" (all)

Chapter VI, "Conclusions" (all)

and of course, pick your nugget.

You should also watch some or all of ["The Mother Of All Demos."](#) There's a [nice set of highlights made by SRI International that's great as an overview.](#)

WEEK THREE

June 23

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: Google Hangout

Blog post making nugget from "Augmenting Human Intellect" as meaningful as possible. Don't forget the links (make them interesting, make them revelatory, make them creative)

June 24

Blog post

Begin integrated domain concept experience

June 25

Blog post on integrated domain concept experience. Other concepts to explore: personal cyberinfrastructure, dynamic knowledge repository/ecosystem

June 26

Blog post commenting on and linking to at least 5 classmates' posts on the integrated domain concept experience.

June 27

Progress report / research reflection post, with links.

Inquiry project proposal draft #1 posted with request for comments.

OVER THE WEEKEND: Read [Ted Nelson, *Computer Lib / Dream Machines* \(excerpts. pdf download\)](#) and pick a nugget to work with.

Comment on at least 5 of your classmates' inquiry project proposal drafts

WEEK FOUR

June 30

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: Google Hangout

Blog post making nugget from *CL/DM* as meaningful as possible.

Work on creating and curating ultra-rich environment.

July 1

Blog post making nugget even more meaningful.

Share and discuss ultra-rich environment.

July 2

Continue to share, revise, discuss ultra-rich environment (don't forget the "fantics" or the "thinkertoys").

July 3

Continue to share, revise, discuss ultra-rich environment (don't forget the "fantics" or the "thinkertoys")

Post progress report / research reflection.

Post inquiry project proposal draft #2 with thoughts on design as well as direction and topic.

July 4

Independence Day holiday (USA)

OVER THE WEEKEND: Comment on at least 5 of your classmates' inquiry project proposal drafts.

Continue to refine your own inquiry project design.

WEEK FIVE

July 7-11

Intensive work on inquiry project topic, direction, design

Blog every day! Comment every day! Tweet often! Link frequently!

July 7

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: Google Hangout

July 11

Progress report / research reflection

OVER THE WEEKEND: Read [Alan Kay and Adele Goldberg, "Personal Dynamic Media"](#) (pdf download). Pick a nugget to work on.

WEEK SIX

July 14-18

Intensive work on inquiry project topic, direction, design

Blog every day! Comment every day! Tweet often! Link frequently!

July 14

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: Google Hangout

Blog post making nugget from "Personal Dynamic Media" as meaningful as possible

Begin concept experience on "meta" and the craft of argument: metamedium, metaphor, metacognition

July 15

Concept experience continues

July 16

Post to share concept experience

July 17

Comment on classmates' concept experience

July 18

Progress report / research reflection

OVER THE WEEKEND: Review current state of inquiry project—what work remains to be done?

WEEK SEVEN

July 21-30

Intensive work on inquiry project.

Blog every day! Comment every day! Tweet often! Link frequently!

July 21

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: Google Hangout

July 28

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: Google Hangout

JULY 30

INQUIRY PROJECT DUE

JULY 31

SYNCHRONOUS EVENT: CLOSING CEREMONIES