

# LDRS 101: Learning with Technology

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# Contents



# Welcome

This is the course book for LDRS 101: Learning with Technology. This book is divided into 6 units of study to help you engage with the course learning outcomes and prepare for the course assessment.

On the page below you will find a summary of the course syllabus, as well as how to navigate this book. Please also refer the schedule in Moodle, as well as the Assessment section in Moodle for instructions on assignments.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask. We are here to help and be your guide on this journey.

The syllabus includes key information about the course schedule, assignments, and policies. Please read the full course syllabus, which you will find in Moodle. For information on how to navigate through this course on Moodle, see [here](#).

## Course Description

Introduces theories and competencies related to learning and thriving in a digital world. Explores how learners are situated in ‘the digital’ throughout their lives and how they can use digital technologies to enhance and enrich their experience of learning, working, and playing. Learners will begin to build a curated digital footprint, initiate and develop personal and professional learning networks; develop competencies to allow them to evaluate and choose digital platforms and tools that are safe and ethical; and explore how to use digital technologies to discover, curate, connect, and share knowledge with their communities.

## Course Learning Outcomes

1. Build and customize technology-integrated workflows to enhance and enrich your learning journey.

2. Apply digital literacy skills to evaluate the legitimacy, credibility, and reliability of online resources for academic study.
3. Practice evaluative judgment to document your process of learning in complex domains of knowledge.
4. Create a personalized narrative to document and express your learning process.
5. Evaluate digital tools, platforms, and interactions based on ethical principles.
6. Develop personal and professional learning networks to discover and share knowledge, collaborate with others, and become engaged digital global citizens.
7. Create inclusive digital communities which embody a sense of belonging, connection, and Christian hospitality.

## Course Notes

### How To Navigate This Book

Take a moment to experiment with the controls in the toolbar at the top of the page. You can search this book for a word or phrase (for example, to look up a definition). To move quickly to different portions of the book, click on the appropriate chapter or section in the table of contents on the left. The buttons at the top of the page allow you to show/hide the table of contents, search the book, adjust the typeface, the font size, and the background colour to make the text easier to read.



The faint left and right arrows at the sides of each page (or bottom of the page if it's narrow enough) allow you to step to the next/previous section. Here's what they look like:



You can also download an offline copy of this books in a pdf format. If you are having any accessibility or navigation issues with this book, please reach out to

your instructor or our online team at [elearning@twu.ca](mailto:elearning@twu.ca)

## Course Units

This course is organized into 6 units. Each unit of the course will provide you with the following information:

- A general overview of the key concepts and skills that will be addressed during the unit.
- Specific learning outcomes and topics for the unit.
- Learning activities to help you engage with the concepts and practice digital skills. These often include key readings, videos, exploring digital tools, and reflective prompts.
- The Assessment section provides details on assignments you will need to complete throughout the course to demonstrate your understanding of the course learning outcomes.

Note that assessments, including assignments and discussion posts will be submitted in Moodle and in WordPress. See the Assessment tab in Moodle for assignment details and dropboxes.

## Course Activities

Below is some key information on features you will see throughout the course.

### *Learning Activity*

This box will prompt you to engage in course concepts, often by viewing resources and reflecting on your experience and/or learning. Most learning activities are ungraded and are designed to help prepare you for the assessment in this course.

### *Assessment*

This box will signify an assignment you will submit in Moodle. Note that assignments demonstrate your understanding of the course learning outcomes. Be sure to review the grading rubrics for each assignment.

### *Checking Your Learning*

This box is for checking your understanding, to make sure you are ready for what follows.

**Note**

This box signifies key notes, important quotes, or case students. It may also warn you of possible problems or pitfalls you may encounter!

**Course Technologies**

This course is about learning with technology. Digital literacies are closely linked but not limited to digital skills. Consequently, this course will use a number of different online communication and publishing technologies to support your learning.

**An open philosophy of inclusion**

Learning with Technology incorporates a wide range of online technologies and software applications. In this course we want to promote free and open source software because we believe that no learner should be denied access to learning for lack of funds to purchase a proprietary software license. Nor do we believe that you should be forced to sacrifice your freedoms in software choice.

The course resources and interaction technologies are based entirely on free and open source software and you will be able to complete all the learning activities using open source applications without the need to purchase any software. You are free to use proprietary technology applications of your choice, but you can also use this course to explore and experiment with open technology.

**Summary of technologies used on this course**

The following table provides a summary of the main technologies used in this course.

Technology	Details
Moodle	<p>TWU uses Moodle as our Learning Management System. For LDRS 101, your course notes, assignment instructions, assignment dropboxes will be found in Moodle. Note that some assignments require you to complete your work in WordPress and Discourse.</p> <p>Course materials are organized into the Course Book tab in Moodle and Book contain the instructions to guide your learning. Bookmark this page in your browser.</p>
Discourse	<p>Discourse is a free, open source social network which is hosted at <a href="https://twu.discourse.group/">https://twu.discourse.group/</a> (bookmark this page). We use Discourse in this course for discussions. Go to the LDRS101 forums in Discourse to explore some of the topics you might engage with during this course.</p>



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**Technology Details**

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**Obsidian** | Obsidian is a free note-taking and mind-mapping app. We introduce this digital tool early on in the course as you will use it often for your journal reflections, and for your assignments.

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**Litmaps** | Litmaps is a web app that you can use to discover and manage resources. In this course you will use Litmaps to build a map of the literature related to topics you want to research. |

**Hypothes.is** | We use Hypothes.is, an open source web-service that enables users to annotate, discuss and share reflections on web site pages on the Internet. |

**WordPress** | In Unit 4 we introduce WordPress, a free, open-source platform used to create websites and blogs. Learners are invited to establish their own **personal course blog**. In this way you will retain control over your own data even when the course is finished. We recommend WordPress as this tool is supported by TWU, but you may use a blogging platform of your choice. |

**Zoom** | Zoom is a communications platform that allows you to connect via video, audio, phone, or chat. Note the GX Live sessions may use Zoom for the Learning Lab sessions. GX Prime students are encouraged to take advantage of the Learning Hub, which will have weekly Zoom meetings as well. |

**Learn by Doing**

Some learners will be familiar with these technologies, while others will be using them for the first time. We use a learn by doing approach and you will be prompted in the course materials when to interact with these different technologies.

Initially the use of different technologies distributed on the web may be confusing. However, this is a course about learning on the Internet and once you have completed this course, you will become a competent user of these online technologies.

Have fun and enjoy the learning experience!



# Chapter 1

## Introduction to Digital Literacies for Online Learning

### Overview

Welcome to Unit 1 of Learning with Technology! This course will introduce you to some ideas related to living, learning, and working in our digitally-saturated society. It is our intent to provide you with opportunities to start your university career with an emerging set of skills and literacies related to digital tools for learning. Within your academic pursuits, you will encounter a vast amount of information, and integrating digital tools into your learning journey might be difficult. Your chosen discipline will provide ample learning possibilities, and incorporating digital tools to enhance your learning may prove challenging. This course will give you a head start on using digital tools to build a workflow that will allow you to stay organized and to make your process of learning visible for yourself and your instructors. We will also lead you through readings and thoughts about your digital identity, privacy and security, and sharing your new knowledge in ethical ways.

There will be two primary branches of the course and the tools that we will show you. The first branch will be a workflow that is private to you because it takes place primarily on your own computer, and the second branch is shared as publicly as you are comfortable sharing. You will have control over how public your work is, but we will think about the importance of sharing knowledge and how to do that easily and in ways that preserve your ‘ownership’ over your work.

In this first unit, there will be both theoretical and practical work for you to do. In order to build a theoretical understanding of digital tools for learning,

we will explore the idea of *the digital* in the context of contemporary society. At the same time, there are some important practicalities to manage in order to get set up for the course, so we will lead you through installing some apps on your computer that you will use extensively in this course, and which hopefully will become the backbone of your digital workflow throughout your time in higher education and beyond.

## Topics

This unit is divided into the following topics:

1. Learning with Technology at TWU
2. Learning Online
3. Understanding the Digital
4. Starting your Workflow
5. Digital Literacies
6. Digital Privacy and Safety

## Learning Outcomes

When you have completed this unit, you should be able to:

- Explore common digital tools used at Trinity Western University
- Describe your engagement with digital technology
- Apply digital tools to support learning in an academic environment
- Explain what digital literacy means to you
- Examine privacy concerns related to various platforms and tools
- Describe how to protect yourself and others in the digital environment.
- Identify the literacies you plan to improve and what steps you will take to achieve your goals.

## Activity Checklist

Here is a checklist of learning activities you will benefit from in completing this unit. You may find it useful for planning your work.

### Learning Activities

- Reflect on why you chose TWU and share your expectations with your peers.
- Write an introduction post on the Learning Hub in Discourse.
- Search online for learning tools to help with note-taking, project management, writing, etc. Share your findings on Discourse.
- Download and install Obsidian
- Download and open the course vault in Obsidian. Activate the plugins that came with the Obsidian vault.
- View the resources provided on the 21st century learner
- Create a Visitors and Residents diagram
- Get a password manager
- Use the Terms of Service: Didn't Read site to look up each of the apps we will learn in this course.
- Write a reflection on digital literacies in your learning journal.

You will be directed to complete these activities as they come.

**Note:** The learning activities in this course are designed to prepare you for the graded assignments in this course. You are strongly encouraged to complete them.

### Assessment

- **Assignment 1: Learning Journal** - submit after you have completed Units 1-3.

*See the Assessment section in Moodle for assignment details.*

## Resources

- All resources will be provided online in the unit.

## 1.1 Learning with Technology at TWU

### Activity: Why TWU?

Before we dive in to some digital tools you may use in your academic studies at Trinity, let's pause and think about what TWU means to you. Why did you choose TWU? What do you hope to achieve during your time here?

To give you some idea of what life is like at TWU, and why people choose TWU, watch the following video: Discover being an International Student at Trinity Western University

What do you think? Consider the following prompts:

- I'm excited to join the TWU community because ...
- I have questions about TWU: ...
- I am confident that ...
- I am concerned about ...

### Activity: Join the Hub!

Head over to the Learning Hub, which is an app called *Discourse* that we use to build community among learners in the GX program. Find the *Leadership 101* category and respond to the *Welcome* forum. As you introduce yourself, share your thoughts and questions you have about TWU.

In this first topic we focus on the digital tools you should be familiar with as you start university. Let's dive in to some common technology tools in academia.

Below is a checklist of the technical skills, hardware, software, accessories, and other tools required for study at TWU. Click on the titles below for information on the tools and skills you are most interested in:

#### Technology Proficiency

First, let's tackle what technical skills you will need as you start your studies. As you read, check off skills you have acquired and feel comfortable using.

- Basic computer skills
- Sending/receiving email
- Sending and receiving attachments via email
- Using a web browser

- Finding resources through search engines (e.g. Chrome or Firefox)
- Downloading and installing software
- Familiarity with using browser plug-ins (e.g. PDF reader, video, audio)
- Using a word processing, presentation software, or other productivity applications
- Experience/familiarity with a variety of file formats such as: .pdf “Portable Document Format”, .rtf “Rich Text Format”, .doc or .docx “Microsoft Word Document”, or .txt “Text document”
- The ability to be self-directed in learning new technology skills (e.g. following a handout, a step-by-step tutorial, online video help, or access to support to learn necessary skills)

This last skill is essential, as you will likely come across some tech tool that you need to figure out. Consider how much you’ve learned in this course so far. You’ve got this!

### **Basic Hardware, Software & Accessories**

This next section will outline basic hardware and software, and accessories you will likely need as a TWU student. As you read, check off items you have, and/or feel comfortable using.

#### **Hardware**

- Computer - PC, Mac, Chromebook or tablet

#### **Software**

- Windows 10 or newer
- Mac OS 10.14 or newer
- Microsoft 365

#### **Recommended Accessories**

- Speakers, Microphone or Headphones
- Video Camera (Webcam)
- Scanner or Camera

#### **Internet Access, Browsers & Connection Speed**

- Wi-Fi
- High speed Broadband Internet Connection is Required
- Internet Browser: The most recent release of Chrome or Firefox is recommended.

***Recommended Internet speeds:***

- Download speed of at least 25 mbps
- Upload speed of at least 3 mbps
- Ping response of less than 100ms

Test your Internet speed using [speedtest.net](https://speedtest.net)

Please consider the following while participating in online/hybrid courses:

- Using a shared Internet connection will impact connectivity, such as additional household members use of streaming TV, gaming, and other Internet usage.
- Wireless connections may be impacted by the distance from the router and interference from microwaves and other electronics. (Wired connections are recommended.)
- Your Internet Service Provider's performance may vary throughout the day based on community usage.

### **Shared Drive, Sharing & Backup**

#### **Data & Cloud Storage and Sharing**

Cloud storage software provides web access to your online file storage, file sharing, and file synchronization. The only TWU approved Cloud Storage & Sharing services are:

- Microsoft OneDrive - Microsoft SharePoint
- OwnCloud

The responsibility for storing TWU documents and files lies with the person who stores the data. Judgment is required about how and where TWU data will be stored.

TWU has a formal Information Security Policy and related Information Security Guidelines. This article provides some additional direction based on this set of policy and guidelines.

Different data is governed by different regulations, laws, agreements, and rules; each requires different means of protection and reporting.

**What about other 3rd party cloud storage solutions (Dropbox, Google Drive, Box, WeChat etc...)?** In general, the use of unauthorized 3rd party cloud storage is not a good idea. TWU provides faculty and staff with the tools needed to collaborate internally and externally. The reasons below elaborate on the reasoning behind this position.



*Lack of Visibility* - Since these software are not integrated into our network, there is no way we can retrieve data stored in these systems if an employee or faculty member leaves the institution and fails to disclose the usage of that account, or has it attached to a personal email account. If TWU data are present in those accounts, then it can be easily lost or compromised, which can lead to institutional and legal consequences.

*Lack of Accountability* - There is no way to effectively manage information security if a faculty or staff member is using unauthorized cloud storage. Additionally, there is no way to know if those data have been compromised and no ability for our forensics team to conduct analyses on these data in the event of a security incident.

*Lack of Support* - We don't offer technical support to these services. So, if something goes wrong, is lost or compromised, IT will have no way to help users who have lost data or been locked out of accounts.

*Collaboration* - We each have our own preferences when it comes to the various technologies we like to work with. There is not always a best tool for everyone. However, collaboration becomes more difficult when each individual or department selects their own collaboration platforms, prioritizing individual needs above the whole.

*Student Centred* - We will put students first. These guidelines ensure we are protecting information and ultimately protecting our students. We have been entrusted with a great deal of personal and private information and must ensure the decisions we make are protecting that information.

**How to Share Data** With Microsoft OneDrive and SharePoint, you can securely share files internally and externally. However, it is important to understand the different Data Classification levels and acceptable ways to share your files (Data Protection Guidelines).

Guidance Table for Sharing Data

Link Type	Confidential	Sensitive	Public
<b>Specific People Internal User</b>	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable
<b>Specific People External User</b>	Acceptable Use good judgment	Acceptable Use good judgment	Acceptable
<b>People in TWU (Internal Link)</b>	Never	Acceptable Not Advisable	Acceptable
<b>Anyone with the link (Open Link)</b>	Never	Never	Acceptable Use expiration date when possible

#### Other Common Tools Supported at TWU

Some courses may require you to attend virtual class sessions, upload videos, conduct surveys, create e-portfolios, or develop other media. We recommend the following:

- MS Teams
  - MS Stream
  - Zoom
  - Survey Monkey
  - WordPress
- Also see Media Creation tutorials for Audio editing, Video editing, and other media tips.

Note that the *TWU Service Hub* is here to help! Please reach out if you have any questions. TWU also has a Knowledge Base website with guides on technology tools you will likely need to use. Please see the Online Learning section and the Information Technology section for help with the tools mentioned below.

## 1.2 Learning Online

Now that you are aware of some technical tools needed for your studies, what do you need to know about learning online? How can you learn effectively in the online environment? The following tips are from Learning to Learn Online.

Online learning requires additional skills differing from face-to-face learning, and since online learning is typically self-directed, an absence of these skills will make a students' learning experience difficult. These skills include:

- Time management (i.e. effectively managing deadlines, schedules)
- Organization (i.e. creating a dedicated study space, ability to easily access material)
- Self-motivation (i.e. scheduling set times for coursework, peer study accountability)
- Self-regulation (i.e. strategies can include breaks, physical activity, meditation)