## **FACULTY OF CREATIVE AND CRITICAL STUDIES**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND CULTURAL STUDIES

## ***Reading, Writing, and Making with Technology in the Humanities (3 credits)***

### *ENGL 155.001 / DIHU 155.001*

***The Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies acknowledges that the land on which we are situated is the unceded territory of the Syilx (Okanagan) People.*** *Dr. Emily Murphy (she/her)*

**Academic Calendar Entry**

Introduction to digital and technological cultures with a focus on humanities methods, drawing on a range of periods in technological development and critical approaches to studying technology. At least 35% of class time involves practice-based instruction in humanities criticism, prototyping, writing, and research.

**Course Overview, Content and Objectives**

In DIHU155, we explore ways of interpreting, engaging with, and critiquing cultures of technology. When analyzing our own experiences with technology—especially digital technologies—how do we move beyond merely subjective responses? When writing about digital literature, how do we understand the way that histories of technology have shaped what media forms can express? When engaging in collaborative digital media, how do we understand our role in producing and consuming digital media? Over the last half century, scholars of media, technology, and culture have developed a number of useful approaches to analyzing and engaging in technologies both new and old, to the point where we have a “toolkit” of critical strategies available to us. In this course, we will engage with a variety of cultural products across media platforms—such as digital, print, or sound media—and learn how to analyze them using some of these critical strategies. This course is designed to enable students to understand and practice the methodological tools that scholars use in the interpretation of technology from a humanities perspective through oral discussion, writing for academic and non-academic audiences, and prototyping critical objects.

The study of any media form requires that students develop some facility in the construction of the media itself. Literary scholars write about literary texts; art historians draw to study visual media. In order to effectively engage with the study of technology, we will acquire some skills in building digital and non-digital media and learn how this act of prototyping is a critical intervention into technology. No technical skills are required for this course, and we will use simple tools to make these interventions. We will discuss issues in composition and argumentation across media: how to construct contestable and substantive arguments, what constitutes evidence and analysis, and composition and grammar skills. We will place particular focus on the development of humanistic observation and argumentation, which will provide a foundation for university-level literary and cultural analysis. Although most assignments will be done individually, students will also do some group work in class with the object of collaboratively building skills. Students may be asked to share the results of this work with their classmates in informal presentations. In-class as well as take-home assignments are designed to build students’ understanding of analytical ways of thinking, writing, and building. The final examination will be written and will require students to make connections among concepts covered in lectures.

**Learning Outcomes**

*Learning outcomes for the DIHU and ENGL sections of this course are identical.*

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

* Examine media objects and technology from a humanities perspective;
* Understand important aspects of the history of technology and media;
* Examine the rhetorical, structural, or semiotic strategies of different media forms to construct audience and usership;
* Create simple media objects that make argumentative claims about social, political, or artistic domains.

Upon completion of any ENGL15X course, students will be able to meet these overarching learning outcomes:

**a. Examine literary texts from a critical perspective:**

* identify and discuss various fictional, poetic, and dramatic genres or literary genres in born-digital media (i.e. framed narrative, soliloquy, short story, novel, comedy, hypertext, narrative games, etc.);
* analyze literary devices, such as speaker, imagery, rhyme scheme, alliteration, metaphor, etc.;
* examine authorial and rhetorical strategies in creating literary and cultural texts;
* when applicable, identify literary periods, general historical context, links to real-world issues, and theoretical frameworks as those relate to the text(s); and
* analyze relationships and patterns within and among texts

**b. Learning Outcomes: Group Work and Oral Skills:**

Work effectively in groups:

* identify and verbalize key ideas from readings in small group discussion settings
* synthesize multiple viewpoints
* present group conclusions to class

**c. Learning Outcomes: Writing and Research**

* employ university-level prose, including appropriate critical terminology.
* develop an argument with a thesis or controlling idea, using accurate, relevant, and sufficient supporting material for a scholarly audience and purpose.
* demonstrate research abilities through proficient use of library resources (i.e. completing interlibrary loan requests, use of the UBC online catalogue and scholarly databases).
* integrate secondary material, including quotations, paraphrases, and summary, purposefully and effectively, providing authority and context.
* document sources fully and ethically (i.e., in adherence to the university’s policy on academic integrity) according to the current MLA style guide (and, when deemed applicable by instructors, the current APA documentation system), informed by Indigenous Style (e.g., as per Gregory Younging’s *Elements of Indigenous style: a guide for writing by and about Indigenous Peoples* or a similar guide); and
* employ a university-level writing process, including revision and editing.

**Additional Course Requirements**

Your personal technology should be in good working order, in line with the general UBC policy for technology to join classes.

While I often dislike the use of cell phones in class, I understand that many students access readings and other course materials on them. I ask that you please reserve your cell phone use for class-related activities, and if you are using a cell phone, I may draw on you to look things up or otherwise contribute to class. Many of the readings for this course will not be accessible through a cell phone, so you should be prepared to use a laptop during class.

**Evaluation Criteria and Grading**

This course is graded on a numerical basis in line with the UBCO grade scale, which you can find here: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/okanagan/index.cfm?tree=3,41,90,1014>. While 50% is necessary to pass this course, you should be familiar with the minimum grade requirements of your own degree programs. Rubrics will be provided for individual assignments.

In order to make deadlines easy to keep track of, unless otherwise indicated the due dates for assignments will simply by 21.00PST on Friday of the due date week. There are some exceptions to this: the Final Exam, and some Participation Grades will all have distinct due dates.

0% Writing Diagnostic (mandatory, no grade)

10% Syllabus Quiz

10% Participation Grades + Quizzes

20% Analytic Writing Assignment (600-800 words)

20% Essay (1000 words)

20% Wikipedia Final Project

20% Final Exam (1200 words)

*Writing Diagnostic –Submit on Canvas, Week 1*

The Writing Diagnostic is a short, written assignment that all 100-level classes take to ensure that you are enrolled in an appropriate first-year class for your writing level. You will find prompts for this assignment on Canvas, and it is designed to take only 40 minutes—so please restrict your work on this assignment to 40 minutes only. As I’m trying to gauge your level of written expression, it will be of no benefit to you to spend longer than the recommended time on this assignment. I will provide *some* feedback for this assignment, but it will not be assigned a grade. If the written level is not sufficient for this class, I will make recommendations to the first-year English coordinator of students who should consider enrolling in a different class.

*Syllabus Quiz –Submit on Canvas, Week 2*

At the beginning of the course you will write a quiz on the syllabus administered outside of class time via **Canvas.** The quiz consists of ten points on the contents of this syllabus, with multiple-choice, true-and-false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. If you are unsatisfied with your mark on your first attempt you may reset the questions and retake the quiz twice.

*Participation Grades—Submit on Canvas, variable due date*

Over the course of the term, there will be opportunities to fulfill participation grades; each of the opportunities will range from 1-3%.

There are three aspects of Participation Grades that are already decided: 1) the ENGL150+ Library Orientation Module Fall 2020 (Week 2) and 2) the Library Citation Module Introduction Quiz (Week 5), and 3) sharing your feedback from Wikipedia with your peers. The rest might include: polls, short quizzes, or discussion questions based on readings, as needed. I may also decide to make housekeeping aspects of the course worth a small percentage. You will know of an eligible opportunity to gain these participation grades at least one week in advance.

*Analytic Writing Assignment—Submit on Canvas* (600-800 words), Week 4

In this assignment, you produce three paragraphs: a “They Say” paragraph, an “I Say” paragraph, and an “Expansion” paragraph, each of which is 200-300 words in length. These paragraphs do not amount to an essay, but they are the fundamental building blocks of university-level analysis and writing and will focus on paragraph construction and logical progression.

*Essay—Submit on Canvas* (1000 words), Week 8

For this assignment, produce a university-level argumentative essay that analyzes an assigned reading or media object, attending to the way it is constructed, what arguments or claims it makes, and why that argument or claim is significant. We may or may not discuss these texts or objects in class before you hand in your assignments. The expectation for this assignment is that you will perform original analytical work, not that you will reiterate analyses and interpretations from class.

*Wikipedia Final Project—Submit on Wikipedia and Canvas* (1000 words reflection + short Wikipedia article), Week 10 and Week 13

This assignment has two portions. First, you will write an article for Wikipedia on a topic that you already know a lot about and submit it to be published (Week 10). Second, you will write a reflection on your article that entails three paragraphs on the process of writing your article, receiving feedback from the Wikipedia editors, and what changes you would make to Wikipedia (Week 13).

*Final Exam—During Exam Period* (1200 words)

**\*See Final Examination policies at the end of the syllabus.\***

The Final Exam will be in 2 sections. In Section A, you will be given a selection of 6 course concepts. From these concepts, you will choose 2 concepts and write two distinct analytical paragraphs applying these concepts to texts or media objects that we have studied in class. Section B will provide 3 to 4 prompts for an exam-style essay. The exam-style essay should be roughly 600 words long, or 6 to 7 double-spaced, handwritten pages if you have small, tidy penmanship.

We will discuss as a group the logistics of how to sit the exam. We may decide between two options. For either option, the content and format of the exam would be identical.

*Option 1:* A timed, in-person exam.

*Option 2:* A take-home exam for which you manage your own time within a 1-week period.

**Assignment Policies**

*Assignment Extensions*Each student will receive two “day tokens” that you can apply without question: you can hand in one assignment that is two days late, or two assignments that are one day late. No questions asked, and no need to clear this with me. Tokens do not apply to the Syllabus Quiz, Participation grades, or Final Exam.

If you need any further extensions, you must request one at least 72 hours in advance of the due date. If, as sometimes happens, you require an extension for a personal or health emergency after this 72-hour period, I will assess need on a case-by-case basis. I will not grant extensions of more than 10 days beyond the due date.

*Assignment Submissions*

For all assignments submitted on **Canvas**, please leave yourself plenty of time in case of any technical difficulties. I will consider the assignment submitted based on the timestamp indicated in Canvas, and technical problems will not be a valid excuse for late submission.

In order to make deadlines easy to keep track of, unless otherwise indicated the due dates for assignments will simply be 21.00PST on Friday of the due date week.

*Late Assignments*

Assignments submitted after the due date without an approved extension will be penalized 3% per day including weekends. Late assignments will only be accepted up to 2 weeks after the due date, after which time the assignment will receive an incomplete grade.

**Required Readings and Videos**

1. Readings listed in Weekly Schedule
2. Asynchronous Lecture Videos
3. Purdue Owl MLA Style Guide. <https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_overview_and_workshop.html>
4. \*Birkenstein, Cathy and Gerald Graff. They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing, 4th Edition. W.W. Norton, 2018. ISBN: 978-0-393-66405-8. https://wwnorton.com/books/9780393631678
5. Joyce, Michael. twelve blue. http://www.eastgate.com/TwelveBlue/
6. \*Okorafor, Nnedi. The Book of Phoenix. DAW, 2016. ISBN: 978-0756410780

\*Hard copies of these texts are available for purchase through the UBCO Bookstore.

**Recommended Readings (available through Course Reserves at UBCO Library)**

Acton, Mary. *Learning to Look at Paintings*. 2009. UBCO Library, call # ND1143 .A38 2009

Mitchell, W. J. T. and Mark B. N. Hansen. *Critical Terms for Media Studies.* UBCO Library, call # PN56.T37 C75 2010

*MLA Handbook 9th Edition*. 2021. UBCO Library, call # LB2369 .M52 2021

Ross Murfin, Ross, and Supryia M. Ray. *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*. UBCO Library, call # PN44.5 .M86 2009.

Youning, Greg. *Elements of Indigenous Style: A Guide for Writing by and about Indigenous Peoples.* 2018. UBCO Library, call # PN147

In most English classes, I would strongly suggest the *Bedford Glossary* as a base text to provide definitions of critical and literary terms while completing writing assignments, and *Learning To Look at Paintings*, which provides similar critical vocabulary for images. I also recommend *Critical Terms for Media* Studies, as other media forms require you to master distinct vocabulary in your analysis of them. The three resources are really useful together: while *Critical Terms* provides perspectives on broad concepts in the study of different media forms, the *Glossary* and *Learning to Look* provide handy analytic terminology that allows you to identify and discuss the strategies that literary texts and images use to make meaning (and are largely transferable to other media). In order to facilitate reaching across media forms, this class will frequently collaborate on a glossary of critical terms that will act both as a guide to analysis and a study guide for the final exam.

The Recommended Readings include two style guides for citation. We will use MLA Style and Citation format in all your assignments for this class. However, I have not ordered copies of the *MLA Handbook* for mandatory purchase: many of you will continue on to disciplines that use MLA format, and many of you will not. For our required reading we will rely on the Purdue OWL resources for MLA formatting, but I very strongly suggest that you familiarize yourself with the process of referring to a style guide while composing any assignments (and written work in your employment, creative work, or other context!). I’ve also included *Elements of Indigenous Style*, which is a very useful guide to writing with Indigenous Peoples and Knowledges.

**Course Schedule**

Students are expected to have engaged thoroughly and thoughtfully with assigned materials **before** class meets and to be prepared to discuss them. As we work primarily with digital texts, many of which are experimental, some class time will be dedicated to discussing strategies for engaging with them.

We’ll keep our schedule predictable from week to week. Monday’s session focuses on literary and cultural material, so have these materials read before our Monday class. Wednesday’s session focuses on writing, argumentation, and making instruction, so please have any writing-related materials read before our Wednesday class. I will release pre-recorded, asynchronous lecture materials on Fridays for the following week (so, lecture materials for Week 2 will be released on Friday of Week 1, and so forth).

***Week 1***

***\*Due date:*** *Writing Diagnostic Friday September 10*

*In-person class Wednesday September 8 (all other meetings TBD)*

*Topics:* Form and Rhetoric

***Week 2***

***\*Due date****: Syllabus Quiz Friday September 17*

**Participation:** *ENGL150+ Library Orientation Module (on Canvas)* *Friday September 17*

*Topics:* Digital Culture; Our Digital Selves; Grammar Pitfalls I; Observing and Gathering Evidence

*Literary and Cultural Readings*

Loyer, Jessie. “Indigenous TikTok Is Transforming Cultural Knowledge.” *canadianart* 23 April, 2020. https://canadianart.ca/essays/indigenous-tiktok-is-transforming-cultural-knowledge/

Parham, Jason et al. “A People’s History of Black Twitter, Part 1.” *Wired* 15 July 2021. <https://www.wired.com/story/black-twitter-oral-history-part-i-coming-together/>

Sherman, Cindy. Instagram account.<https://www.instagram.com/cindysherman/>.

Smith, Sidonie and Julia Watson. “Virtually Me: A Toolbox about Online Self-Presentation.” From *Identity Technologies*. (available through UBCO library)

*Writing Instruction Readings*

We have no writing instruction-related readings for this week. Please complete all literary and cultural readings for Monday’s class, and we’ll cover any spillover on Wednesday.

***Week 3***

*Topics:* Defining Technology*;* Organizing and Arranging Evidence; Grammar Pitfalls II

*Literary and Cultural Readings*

McLuhan, Marshall. Selections from “The Medium is the Message.” From *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man.* (on Canvas)

Marx, Leo. “‘Technology’: The Emergence of a Hazardous Concept.” *Social Research* Vol. 64, No. 3. (available through UBCO library) **\*selections TBD\***

*Writing Instruction Readings*

*They Say/I Say* *(TSIS).* “They Say.”

***Week 4***

***\*Due date:*** *Analytic Writing Assignment Friday October 1*

*Topics:* Speculative Fictions, Speculative Technologies; Making Claims

*Literary and Cultural Readings*

Okorafor, Nnedi. *The Book of Phoenix*. (read first half) **\*Content Warning: Sexual Violence; Discussion of Slavery; Imprisonment; Medical Trauma.\***

*Writing Instruction Readings*

*TSIS*. “I Say” (read numbers Four and Five)

***Week 5***

**Participation:***Library Citation Module Introduction (on Canvas) Friday October 8th*

*Literary and Cultural Readings*

Okorafor, Nnedi. *The Book of Phoenix*. (read second half)

*Writing Instruction Readings*

Acheson, Katherine O. from “Chapter 7: Composing Your Argument.” *Writing Essays About Literature.* (on Canvas)

---. from “Chapter 8: Writing the Body of the Essay.” *Writing Essays About Literature.* (on Canvas)

***Week 6***

*Topics:* Image Analysis; Visual Evidence

*Literary and Cultural Readings*

Mitchell, W.J.T. Selections from “What Is an Image?” (available through UBCO library)

Barry, Lynda. Selections from *What It Is.* (on canvas)

Picasso, Pablo. *Guernica.* 1939. OR Kaheró:ton. *Xinona*. <http://legacies150.nfb.ca/xinona/>

*Writing Instruction Readings*

Sachant, Pamela et al. “4.2: Formal or Critical Analysis.” *Introduction to Art: Design, Context, and Meaning*. LibretTexts, 2021. [*https://human.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Art/Book%3A\_Introduction\_to\_Art\_-\_Design\_Context\_and\_Meaning\_(Sachant\_et\_al.)/04%3A\_Describing\_Art/4.02%3A\_FORMAL\_OR\_CRITICAL\_ANALYSIS*](https://human.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Art/Book%3A_Introduction_to_Art_-_Design_Context_and_Meaning_(Sachant_et_al.)/04%3A_Describing_Art/4.02%3A_FORMAL_OR_CRITICAL_ANALYSIS)

***Week 7***

*Topics:* Hypertext; Logical Progression

*Literary and Cultural Readings*

Hayles, Katherine. “Print is Flat, Code is Deep: The Importance of Media-Specific Analysis.” Available on Canvas.

Porpentine. “Mother.” <http://slimedaughter.com/games/twine/mother/>

* Take a look at some of Porpentine’s other works at slimedaughter.com. They’re all short. And great.

Jackson, Shelley. *my body: a wunderkammer.* 1997. <https://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/jackson__my_body_a_wunderkammer/>

*Writing Instruction Readings*

*TSIS.* “As A Result”

***Week 8***

***\*Due date:*** *Essay Friday October 29*

*Topics: Interface, Interaction, and Remix.*

*Literary and Cultural Readings*

Montfort, Nick. TBD selection of Recombinatory Poetics.

Young Hae Chang Heavy Industries. “Dakota.” <https://www.yhchang.com/DAKOTA_V.html> **\*Content Warning: Violence.\***

*Writing Instruction Readings*

*TSIS.* “He ~~Says~~ Contends”

***Week 9*** *\*All course content from now on is geared towards your Wikipedia Assignment.*

*Literary and Cultural Readings*

“History of Computing.” *Wikipedia*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_computing>

*Writing Instruction Readings*

“Your First Article.” *Wikipedia*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:Your_first_article>

WikiEducation resources: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/96/Evaluating_Wikipedia_brochure_%28Wiki_Education_Foundation%29.pdf>

<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/90/Editing_Wikipedia_brochure_%28Wiki_Education_Foundation%29_%282017%29.pdf>

***Reading Break***

***Week 10***

***\*Due date:*** *Wikipedia Article 19 November*

Light readings on Feminist Wikistorming TBD.

“Wikipedia Art: a collaborative performance and public intervention.” 2009. https://wikipediaart.org/

***Week 11***

***Participation:*** Share your Feedback from Wikipedia

***Participation:*** Meetings with Instructor about Wikipedia Assignment

Light readings TBD.

***Week 12***

Exam Prep

***Week 13***

***\*Due date:*** *Wikipedia Reflection*

Exam Prep