

VISM-2004 — Web Theory — Winter 2015/2016

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Name:	Gabby Resch
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Office Hours:	By appointment
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COURSE INFORMATION:

Room:	TBA
Lecture Times:	M 1500-1800
Credits:	TBA
Textbook:	TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course offers students critical, theoretical, and analytical tools to understand contemporary internet issues through study of the history, research methodologies and emerging debates and practices relevant to the World Wide Web. The course will examine web technologies, web aesthetics, the transformation of information in the web, web regulation and copyright, political economy of the internet, web entertainment, and the construction of web identities. Students will develop theoretical and practical tools to help them navigate a number of messy questions that rise to the surface when we begin peeling the multiple layers that constitute the assemblage we've come to understand as today's internet.

REQUIRED TEXTS/COURSE PACKS:

Possibly Dutton's "Oxford Handbook of Internet Studies" or Ess and Gonsalvo's text of same name. Course pack/readings will be provided online.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

In addition to providing students with a grounding in the emerging field of Internet Studies, this course introduces students to an interdisciplinary range of methods of analysis and critique. Students will develop familiarity and facility with a range of terms, theories, technologies, and approaches related to analysis and critique of internet structures and usages. As well, students will apply critical tools to their own interactions with the web through internet-based writing and analysis assignments.

COURSE ORGANIZATION:

The major part of the course consists of weekly classes comprised of a lecture, discussion, and a different hands-on exercise each week. Students are expected to read the required readings, attend all classes, participate in all activities and contribute to discussion! Plan to accommodate a minimum of 4 hours per week of homework for this course. Absences from class must be supported with official documentation; three unsupported absences may jeopardize your standing in the course.

Week 1. January 6

Lecture 1 - History

Readings:

Questions: Where did the internet come from? Why did it emerge? What purpose(s) did it serve? Case Studies:

Exercise: Embodied network

Week 2. January 13

Lecture 2 Information

Week 3. January 20

Lecture 3 Media

Medium Theory, Inniss Bias of Communication, McLuhans Medium and Global Consciousness, Concept of Loose Web, Models of Communication

Week 4. January 27

Lecture 4 Design

Hypertext, Semiotic Analysis, Graphics and Screen Imaging, Website Case Study

Week 5. February 3

Lecture 5 Identity

Cyberculture, Cyberpunk, subjectivity, Concept of Web as Cultural Production, Constructing the Prosumer, Shifting Web Identity, Communities

Week 6. March 23

Lecture 10 Social

Emergence of the social, Communities, Identity, Self-Representation, Profit Driven Social Environments

Week 7. March 16

Lecture 9 Entertainment

Corporate Web Entertainment, Music Industry and Web, Web Distribution, Gaming, remixing, IP and copyright

Week 8. February 10

Mid-term Exam

Web Journal Part 1 Due

Reading Week February 16-20

Week 9. February 23

Lecture 6 - Economy

Gift & Sharing, Web Capitalization, the New Economy, Constructing audience as Commodity, State and Web, Markets and Web,

Week 10. March 2

Lecture 7 Surveillance or Memory

Copyright/Property Rights and the Web, DRM, Content Regulation, net neutrality, deep packet inspection, Access to the Internet, Privacy, Memory

Week 11. March 9

Lecture 8 Attention!

Week 12. March 31

Web Journal Part 2 Due

Week 13. Final Exam, date time, location to be confirmed

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION SCHEDULE:

Grade Distribution

Mid-term	20%
Web Journal 1	20%
Web Journal 2	20%
Final Exam	40%
Total	100%

Web Portfolio Assignments:

Students will make entries in their Web Journal every week. After each class, you will choose a website and examine it using one of the analytical tools presented in the preceding class. Each weekly Web Journal entry should be at least 250 words (1 double spaced typewritten page). Your Web Journal will be submitted for evaluation on two different due dates: February 10 and March 31. You will be evaluated on the relevance of the websites that you choose to analyze and on the effective use of analytical tools presented in class to examine your chosen website.

Examinations:

A primary method of evaluation and assigning grades will be through a mid-term exam on February 10, from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm in Room 7320, and a final exam, date time and location to be confirmed. Exams will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank and essay questions.

FINAL EXAM:

All requests for Deferred Final Exams due to medically documented and emergency issues must be requested through the Office of the Registrar as soon as the exam schedule is published.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS & INCOMPLETE GRADES:

Assignments must be submitted by end of class on the due dates indicated above. Assignments will be deducted 10% of the value of the assignment per week, starting the day after the due date. Assignments will only be accepted up to two classes after the due date. Please note that there are no extensions beyond the last day of class.

CLASS CONDUCT & EXPECTATIONS:

1) You must ensure you are properly registered for the course. If you have any concerns about your registration status, you may confirm on-line, confirm with the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences Office, or contact the Office of the Registrar. Please first check your registration and read the codes carefully (the codes are clearly explained in the Course Calendar which is available on-line at www.ocadu.ca).

2) You are expected to conduct yourself in a manner respectful of your instructor and your fellow students. This includes, at a minimum:

- Arriving on time
- Turning off your cell phone upon arrival
- If late, entering the classroom with the least disruption

- Not interrupting or speaking when someone else has the floor
- Using your laptop appropriately (i.e. not for email)

ABSENCES & MAKE-UP TESTS:

Only under very special circumstances may students hand in late assignments or be absent from classes or tests/exams. If a student is sick, it is incumbent upon the student to notify the Instructor (and the Office of the Registrar, in the case of missed final exams) with proper documentation as soon as possible. Students with special needs must contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities, ext. 339 at least two weeks prior to the test or assignment.

ABSENCES FOR RELIGIOUS PURPOSES:

A student who foresees a conflict between a religious obligation and any scheduled class assignments, including the final examination, must notify his/her instructor in writing and in the case of final examinations must make a written request to the Office of the Registrar within three weeks of publishing of the syllabus and/or the final exam schedule.

PLAGIARISM AND REFERENCING YOUR RESEARCH SOURCES:

Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's ideas, opinions, writings, etc. and representing them as one's own. You plagiarize whenever you borrow another scholar's ideas or quote directly from a work without giving credit through proper citation or acknowledgement. Plagiarism is a serious offense at OCADU (please see OCADU's Policy in the OCADU Academic Calendar). Any assignment in which the ideas of another author are intentionally represented without acknowledgement and/or presented as the student's own work will receive a grade of zero. Please see the following web link for more information: http://www.ocadu.ca/students/academic_integrity.htm

ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Each student has final responsibility for their conduct. Students are expected to be aware of and abide by the regulations as they have been established in OCADU's academic and non-academic policies, which can be found on the OCADU website at the following web link under Student Policies: <http://www.ocadu.ca/students/student-policies.htm>. These policies outline the responsibility of students to conduct themselves appropriately and reflect the highest standards of integrity in non-academic as well as academic behaviour. All allegations of misconduct will be reported and investigated as per the current policies.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES:

Writing and Learning Centre:

Resources specific to this course, for students requiring assistance with the material and with writing or reading comprehension, and for those for whom English is a second language, are provided through the Writing and Learning Centre, room 1501, 113 McCaul, 5th floor (ext. 229); e-mail: jl@writingandlearningcentre.com; One-on-one tutoring is available and confidential. The Writing and Learning Centre (WLC) provides free services for all students including writing, critical thinking, critical reading, and study skills, through one-on-one tutoring, group tutoring, writing and academic skills workshops, resource materials, and ESL assistance. Please see the following web link for more information. Writing and Learning Centre: <http://www.ocadu.ca/services/writing-and-learning-centre.htm>

Services for Students with Disabilities:

Formal and informal student-centred supports, such as counselling, academic accommodations, and specialized services are available year-round to students registered with the Centre for Students with Disabilities. Students who think they may have learning or physical disabilities should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (ext. 339), 51 McCaul St. 2nd level, as soon as possible. Students must be registered with the CSD to receive accommodations and related support. It is important to register early in the semester to ensure the accommodations can be scheduled by the start of the semester.

Please see the following web link for more information. Centre for Students with Disabilities: <http://www.ocadu.ca/services/disability-services/about-the-CSD.htm>

Dorothy Hoover Library:

<http://www.ocadu.ca/library.htm>

OCADU Library, 113 McCaul, 2nd Floor , Room 1215

General Reference Desk: ex. 334

Art and Design Reference, Robert Fabbro: ex. 343

Art and Liberal Arts & Sciences Reference, Daniel Payne: ex. 217

Other University Services:

Health and Wellness Centre: <http://www.ocadu.ca/services/health-and-wellness.htm>

Academic Integrity: <http://www.ocadu.ca/students/student-policies/academic-policies.htm>

Academic Advising: <http://www.ocadu.ca/services/academic-advising.htm>