

READING DIGITAL MEDIA : Syllabus Outline

Course Information	Welcome to Professor Hicks' blended-learning module, "Reading Digital Media." The module will comprise a combination of face-to-face classes and online instruction. All learning materials will be made available online. We will be using the University's Moodle Learning Management System, so all you need is access to a computer and an internet connection. Should you encounter any difficulties, my office hours are Tuesday 9-10am and Thursday 2-3pm or you can send me an email. You can also post your questions in the discussion forum, where you will find a permanent thread relating to technical problems. I encourage you to post questions that you think will be of concern to your classmates as well.
Expected Student Audience	This unit can be taken by students in the 3rd year of the BA program in English and requires that students have successfully completed Years 1 and 2 in English Literature and textual analysis. Some familiarity with the analysis of visual media will be an advantage but is not required. The class will comprise primarily local students, though we may have some study abroad students with us.
Teacher Communication	You can contact me by email me at hicks@uni.edu or by telephone via the English Department office if you are unable to attend my office hour. I will respond to your inquiry within 1 day, Monday to Friday. Please note any non-urgent questions and bring them to our face-to-face class meetings. You may not be the only student with this particular question!
Course Description	In this unit, students will learn to apply the techniques of textual and imagistic analysis to a number of forms of digital media. We will draw on the theory and practice of semiotics, to analyze media such as: the digital landscapes represented in virtual field trips, images of historical monuments and other symbolic landscapes, digital comic books, and online video games.

<p>Learning Outcomes</p>	<p>The learner will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – explain the principles of semiotic analysis to peers within the module with 90% accuracy; – identify appropriate analytical strategies with which to approach a digital artifact with 90% accuracy; – discuss the relationship between written and visual communications with 90% accuracy; – form an educated view of the effect of symbolism in digital media with 90% accuracy; – synthesize information from diverse online sources (provided by the instructor and identified by students) with 90% accuracy;
<p>Topics by Week</p>	<p>WEEK ONE: In-Class session: Introduction to Blended Learning and the Analysis of Symbolism WEEK TWO: The Statue of Liberty and the American Dream WEEK THREE: Symbolic Environments: The Columbian Exposition WEEK FOUR: In-Class session: analysis exercise and discussion WEEK FIVE: The Symbolism of Everyday Objects WEEK SIX: Comics and Interactive Comic Books WEEK SEVEN: In-Class session: analysis exercise and discussion WEEK EIGHT: Symbolism in Video Games: Fictional Settings Objects, and Environments WEEK NINE: Video Games: Symbolic Action Narratives WEEK TEN: In-Class session: Unit Review and Conclusions</p>

<p>Expectations of Student Participation</p>	<p>Students are expected to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Start at least two new discussion threads on the discussion forum each week. A thread represents a new idea or question, which may lead from an existing thread but which takes that thread in a new direction. 2. Reply to at least 3 posts each week on the discussion forum. 3. Post an analytical blog post each week on an assigned topic. 4. Complete the weekly reading and viewing tasks specified for each topic. 5. Complete each weekly module quiz. 6. Work collaboratively in assigned groups to plan and complete the summative assessment in the form of a digital newsletter. 7. Prepare a 15-minute intervention for each synchronous in-class session, as described in the instructions for those sessions.
<p>Student Communication Expectations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be courteous and respectful in all your communications. 2. Proofread your posts and comments. Use the spell check or grammar check functions of your word processing program if you wish. 3. Reply to emails and telephone calls from me within 1 day, Monday to Friday. 4. Reply to emails and telephone calls from classmates within 1 day, Monday to Friday.
<p>Late Work Policy</p>	<p>Late work will only be accepted after an extension has been granted by Professor Hicks. Please contact me to discuss the reasons why an extension of time is required.</p>
<p>Grading Policy</p>	<p>All assignments have equal weighting and are worth 100 points. Formative assignments include quizzes, blog posts, and contributions to the discussion forum. Grades are posted every Monday. The summative assessment for the Unit is a collaboratively-produced digital newsletter.</p> <p>The cumulative grading scale:</p> <p>A: 80%-100%</p> <p>B: 60%-79%</p> <p>C: 40%-69%</p> <p>FAIL: 40% and lower</p>

Assessments	<p>Assessments include:</p> <p>A weekly module quiz that matches the learning objectives for the week. The formative assessment for the module, comprises the quiz, together with the requirement that you post a weekly blog post, and participate in the discussion forum regularly, posting each week 2 new threads and at least 3 responses to posts by classmates.</p> <p>At the end of the module there will be a final summative assessment in the form of a collaboratively-produced digital newsletter.</p> <p>Grading criteria include:</p> <p>Quizzes: automatically graded with answer key</p> <p>Discussion Forums: discussion forum checklist</p> <p>Module quiz: combination computer-graded and teacher-graded with acceptable answers list</p> <p>Project Plans (x3) evaluated using the "Grading Rubric for a Group Project" designed by the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence at Carnegie Mellon University: http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/examples/courselevel-bycollege/hss/tools/jeria.pdf</p>
Academic Honesty	<p>Students are expected to complete their work independently unless otherwise noted and to acknowledge their use of the work of others according to appropriate scholarly conventions. The various forms of acknowledgement are set out in the English Department's "Guide to Academic Writing", which can be accessed from the departmental website.</p> <p>Consequences for academic dishonesty may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Warning for a first offense, and reporting to the departmental Director 2. Academic penalty such as a grade of 0 out of 100 given for the assignment 3. Failure of the Unit 4. Repeated offenses will be reported to the Dean for further action
Acceptable Use Policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All activity over the University network may be monitored. 2. Misuse of University resources will result in disciplinary action.

<p>Student Right to Privacy</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Registered students have the right to inspect and review their own educational records maintained by the University. 2. Students have the right to request that corrections be made to their records which they believe to be inaccurate. 3. Only with the written permission of the student will the University release any information from a student's educational record.
<p>Technology Requirements</p>	<p>Students must have access to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internet connected computer (dial-up service is insufficient) 2. Keyboard and mouse. 3. A University IT account (your login to Moodle is the same as your email login) <p>Technical problems should be directed to the Computing Centre Help Desk (555.55.55). If the problem is not urgent, you can post it as a question in the relevant thread of the discussion forum.</p>
<p>Copyright Statement</p>	<p>While this module is managed by Professor Hicks, the module content is owned by the University. The module and its learning materials may not be copied, edited, or redistributed for any purpose, without prior written agreement. Inquiries should be sent to hicks@uni.edu.</p>
<p>Students with Disabilities</p>	<p>The University is committed to the full integration of students with disabilities. An advisor is available for consultation and assistance; please contact the Student Welfare Service for details.</p> <p>Please contact Professor Hicks if you require special accommodations or flexible arrangements in this module because you have a special need.</p>