

English 3844 introduces the fundamental practices and emerging theories of writing with, and for, digital media, including basic computational authoring in HTML and CSS syntaxes, critical interpretation of online sources, social media management, and topics of computational abstraction for writers.

Objectives

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- write with, and for, digital media, working both independently and in teams.
- produce and use digital images, video, and audio.
- identify, analyze, and respond to the theoretical assumptions underpinning the development and use of digital media.
- develop a critical understanding of online content.
- navigate, set up, and optimize social media channels for developing and distributing digital content.
- recognize and use basic computational syntaxes of HTML and CSS.

Required Resources

- Course website: <http://3844f15.tracigardner.com/>
- Kristin L. Arola, Cheryl E. Ball, & Jennifer Sheppard. [*Writer/Designer: A Guide to Making Multimodal Projects*](#). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2014.
- Additional required and recommended readings and resources will be available on the course sites.
- A blog for your academic portfolio (a [WordPress.com](#) blog, a self-hosted blog or a [Blogs@VT](#) blog).
- Dependable computer and Internet access. All work is submitted online for this course. Earbuds or headphones can be useful in class.
- A Virginia Tech email address and access to Canvas.
- Access to general software for text and image editing. Depending upon your choices, you may also need access to video and/or audio editing software, cameras, and audio recorders. Most of what you need is available in [InnovationSpace](#).

Policies

Communication Guidelines: Email is the best way to contact me. You can email me at tengrrl@vt.edu. I do not respond to students at any other address. I try to answer student email within 24 hours on weekdays and within 48 hours on weekends and holidays. Never include your student ID number in your email message.

Absences: Class attendance and participation are important to doing well in this course. I take attendance at the beginning of each session. If you are late for class, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have not been marked absent.

If you miss a deadline because of an illness, death in the family, or family emergency, see the [Student Advocacy page](#) from the Dean of Students Office for details on how to document the situation.

If you have an issue that affects your ability to complete the course, you may qualify for Academic Relief. For personal medical issues, contact the [Schiffert Health Center](#), and for psychiatric or psychological issues, contact the [Cook Counseling Center](#).

Work Guidelines: All work and participation in this course is governed by the [Undergraduate Honor System](#) and the [Virginia Tech Principles of Community](#). All work submitted for this course must be your own; the work of other must be cited in your project documentation.

Late Policies:

In-class work: Every week, you will complete writing activities that you will submit online. This work is due by the end of your class period. *If you cannot complete the work in class, you have until 5 PM the next day to submit it; however, you may lose the benefit of getting feedback from your peers.*

Projects: You will compose four projects, which you will submit online. Each major project will have a due date, a grace period, and a deadline:

- **The due date** is the day that your major project is due. Every student has a one-week grace period after the due date during which the project can still be submitted.
- **The grace period** occurs between the due date and the deadline. Work submitted during the grace period will be marked as *late* in Scholar; however, there is no grade penalty for work submitted during the grace period. You do not need to ask in advance or explain why your work is late. Note that we will not work on the projects in class after the due date nor will I be available to provide feedback on your work after the due date.
- **The deadline** comes one week after the due date and is the final day that a project will be accepted. There are no extensions on deadlines. You must submit your work by the deadline to receive credit for your project. In Canvas, this is the date that the assignment will close.

Project Presentations and Final Exam: Oral presentations and the final exam are due on the days announced on the course blog. There are no make-ups on these activities. There is also no grace period. If you miss your presentation or final, you earn a zero.

Religious Holidays: Please take advantage of the grace period explained in the Late Policy section above if the due date for any work in this class coincides with a religious holiday that you celebrate. Please let me know *before* the event if the grace period will not be adequate.

Equal Access and Opportunity: If you need special accommodations in this course, please contact [Services for Students with Disabilities \(SSD\)](#) in 310 Lavery Hall (above the Turner Place Dining Center) as soon as possible to ensure that you have the resources you need to participate in the class. The procedures and forms you need are also available on the [SSD website](#). I am happy to work with the SSD staff to make sure that you have the support you need. Documentation from the SSD office should be sent to me by the end of the first week of class.

Backups: Save backups of all your work for this class and maintain backups in multiple places (your laptop, a flash drive, Google Docs, etc.). Printed backups can also be useful. Do not discard any files, notes, or other work until the term is over and you have received your final grade. If you need assistance with your computer, check with [InnovationSpace](#) or [Customer Support Center \(4Help\)](#).

Program Assessment: Please note that the Department of English may use your written work in its assessment of its teaching and learning goals. In such cases, your name will be removed and your work assessed anonymously. Your work will not be shared with any individual outside of the department. It will be used strictly to help the department offer students the best possible academic experience.

Class Logistics: Please hold your questions until I have the computer logged in and set up for the session. I begin each class sessions with attendance. Once everyone is accounted for, I go over any announcements and the plans for the day. I can answer any general questions during this time as well. I try to talk for less than 15 minutes (I hate lectures). After talking about the day's plan, I will ask you to work in class, either in groups, in pairs, or independently. Be prepared to work every class session by having your files and relevant resources with you or available online. You will respond to a simple in-class writing (using the Quizzes tool in Canvas) at the end of most sessions.

Office Hours: If you want to talk with my privately about your work in the course, please make an appointment 24 hours in advance, using the [Office Hour Sign-Up page](#). I am available by appointment on most MWF afternoons. Departmental meetings will cause some office hours to be canceled. The [Sign-Up page](#) shows only the slots that are available.

Tentative Course Requirements

You must complete all assignments and requirements in order to pass this course. Your final grade includes the following requirements:

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| 60% | <p>Four projects, along with related drafts and other artifacts. You will work on four projects (listed below) that focus on different modes of expression and go beyond words on a page (or screen) to include audio, video, and images. There are no rewrites or revisions after work is graded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project 1: Create a Statement of Your Online Identity (Digital Image with Presentation). Due September 2; presentations September 2 and 4. Worth 10%. Project 2: Build an Academic Portfolio (HTML/CSS). Due September 25. Worth 10%. Project 3: Interrogate a Story Source (Web Essay). Due October 26. Worth 15%. Project 4: Remix a Story (Digital Narrative with Presentation). Due November 30; presentations December 2 to 9. Worth 25%. |
| 25% | <p>Participation, quizzes/in-class writing, and Discussion posts. You will write and create smaller projects each week. These weekly activities include reading responses, text analysis, and reflections, as well as working on your major assignments and exploring digital composing tools. You will also read and provide thoughtful, substantive feedback on your peers' work.</p> |
| 15% | <p>Take-Home Final Exam. You will revise and update your Academic Portfolio. The official due dates are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRN #83206 (10:10 MWF course): Due by 9:45 AM on Wednesday, Dec 16. CRN #88984 (11:15 MWF course): Due by 5:25 PM on Monday, Dec 14. |

Grading

I use the default Virginia Tech grade scale for Letter Grades with +/- . The Canvas gradebook manages all the mathematics. I do not round grades. I do not provide extra credit for people who have not met satisfactory performance goals.

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| A 93–100 | B+ 87–89.99 | C+ 77–79.99 | D+ 67–69.99 | F 59.99 & below |
| A- 90–92.99 | B 83–86.99 | C 73–76.99 | D 63–66.99 | |
| | B- 80–82.99 | C- 70–72.99 | D- 60–62.99 | |

Specific grading expectations will be posted with each major project. Generally, project expectations fall into these descriptions:

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| Unsatisfactory (C- and lower) | This work is incomplete, has errors, was submitted after the deadline, or was not submitted at all. It may have significant errors in content, design, style, and/or organization. It shows that the writer didn't put in much effort and wasn't doing her best work. |
| Satisfactory (B and C) | This work is complete and generally error free. It meets the requirement of the assignment fully, and it shows strong effort on the writer's part. |
| Exemplary (A) | This work meets and goes beyond the requirements of satisfactory work. It is strong, amazing work that dazzles. |

Important Dates and Tentative Class Schedule

University dates are shown in orange.

August

- August 28: Last day to add classes

September

- **September 2: Statement of Your Online Identity Due Date**
- September 2 and 4: Online Identity Presentations
- September 9: Statement of Your Online Identity deadline (end of grace period, no work accepted after 11:55 PM)
- **September 7: Labor Day (no class meeting)**
- September 23: Academic Portfolio Peer Review
- **September 25: Academic Portfolio Due Date**

October

- October 2: Academic Portfolio Deadline (end of grace period, no work accepted after 11:55 PM)
- **October 2: Last day to drop classes**
- **October 16: Fall Break (no class meeting)**
- **October 19: Last day to resign without grade penalty**
- **October 23: Last day to apply for Fall graduation**
- October 23: Interrogate a Story Source Peer Review
- **October 26: Interrogate a Story Source Due Date**
- October 30: Remix Project Pitches in class

November

- November 2: Interrogate a Story Source deadline (end of grace period, no work accepted after 11:55 PM)
- November 18: Remix Project Peer Review
- **November 20: Last day to request rescheduling of final exams**
- **November 21 to 29: Thanksgiving Break**
- **November 30: Remix Project Submission Open (due date)**

December

- December 2 to 9: Remix Oral Presentations
- December 9: Remix Project deadline (end of grace period, no work accepted after 11:55 PM)
- December 10: SPOT evaluations due (by midnight)
- **December 8: Final Exams**
 - CRN #83206 (10:10 MWF course): Due by 9:45 AM on Wednesday, Dec 16.
 - CRN #88984 (11:15 MWF course): Due by 5:25 PM on Monday, Dec 14.
- **December 19: Final grades due**