

Preliminary Web Course Description

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: ENGL4320	Course Title: Special Studies in English	Date of Offering: Winter 2018
--------------------------	---	---

Course Instructor: S. Brown	Course Format: Seminar
-----------------------------	------------------------

Brief Course Synopsis:

Writing in the Digital Age

This double-weighted, project-based seminar course will provide students with the opportunity to investigate writing in the digital age from a several of complementary perspectives. It will focus both on the nature of writing, especially literature, has in an increasingly digital world, and engage participants actively with the challenges and opportunities involved in writing for digital media.

We will engage with a number of types of e-literature ranging from hypertext fiction through interactive poetry to video games, considering the ways in which they engage with the affordances of digital writing. Participants will explore some of the scholarly debates surrounding digital textuality, and will also engage in hands-on exploration of a number of digital tools and environments designed to facilitate research and writing in new ways.

The course will cover:

- E-literature
- Interactive digital narrative, including video games
- Non-linear long-form arguments, including hypertext
- Citation management tools
- Semantic text encoding
- Exploration of several digital writing platforms
- The rhetoric of interface

The course may incorporate, based on student interest, other forms of digital engagement with text such as analysis and visualization tools. Class participation will involve engagement with blogging, Twitter, and other social media platforms.

Students will define a research project based on their particular interests related either to a particular example of writing in digital form or to a theoretical aspect of writing in a digital environment. They will develop their project over the course of the semester, presenting on related material and work in progress. Projects will be workshopped by the class as a whole. The project will result in a digital artefact comparable to a major research paper in substance and in the extent of its research and citation, that uses a non-mainstream digital writing platform and includes theorized reflection upon its use. Projects may incorporate digital methods in a range of

ways, including presenting final results in the form of a conventional word-processed document, but more adventurous approaches are encouraged. Collaborative work on projects is encouraged but not required.

No experience with web technologies is required. Students are expected to enter the course open to new technologies and with a willingness to experiment and take risks in the form as well as the content of their work.

Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

- 15% Short presentation and position paper on an example of digital writing (750-1250 words, incorporating at least one primary, one secondary, and one theoretical source)
- 20% Demonstration and written review of a digital writing tool or platform (1000-1500 words) framing your evaluation with at least 2 secondary sources.
- 15% Participation: contributions to class (b)log and in-class engagement
- 10% Project Proposal: Annotated bibliography, 250-word summary of the literature on your topic, 500-word project pitch, and a 250-word summary of digital strategy
- 15% Project artefact draft one, feedback on a peer's draft, and workshop presentation
- 25% Final project artefact and (3500-5000 words)

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

Students will require a relatively recent computer (not just a tablet, although computers can be borrowed from the Library or used in THINC Lab in the Library) and regular access to the Internet.

Required Texts:

Adam Hammond, *Literature in the Digital Age: An Introduction* (Cambridge)

Gorman, Samantha and Danny Cannizzaro. *Pry*. <http://prynovella.com/>

Other texts TBD

Many of the readings are available online, through the Library, or through Courselink, as specified in the schedule. Students are responsible for bringing a copy of the readings for the week, and ideally also previous readings, to class either on a screen or on paper, and of having engaged with them in such a way that they can refer to them in detail, ask and answer questions, and offer comments about them.

Readings are noted in the schedule. Keep referring to the schedule. Some readings will be added as we go in respond to emergent questions or in relation to particular projects or presentations.

Depending on the nature of the student's project, there could be software costs, but there are plenty of open-source tools that can be used.

Other information that you wish share about the course (optional):

This course emphasizes a blend of critical and practical activity. This is quite different from most English courses. Your intellectual engagement is expected to include trying out new methods and

tools for scholarship, in addition to reading, writing, and presenting. Emergent tools are often buggy and poorly documented, so you need to accept a measure of frustration as a distinct likelihood in this course. The course may also have a greater emphasis on work in progress and collaboration than you are used to: you will be asked to present on work that is not yet in final form, and you will be given the option to collaborate on your major project with one or more classmates. You will not be required to collaborate unless you so choose.

A laptop computer with wireless capability that you can bring to class is highly desirable for this course: see me if this is not possible for you. Regular and preferably high-speed access to the internet is necessary to complete the readings and assignments.

List the distribution requirements that this course fulfills: Students can satisfy the Canadian requirement by focusing their project appropriately. Consultation with and approval of both the instructor and an academic advisor are required.