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ENG 658: Computers & Composition
Dr. Alexandra J. Cavallaro || Spring 2020 || Location: wherever you are!
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Zoom Office Hours: Wednesday, 6:00-7:00pm, or by appointment

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Welcome to ENGLISH 658!

Course Description:
The ability to read critically and write strategically in a variety of media is a crucial component of literacy in the 21ˢᵗ century. In this class, we will examine and explore the ways computer technologies can be integrated into scholarship, the workplace, and the writing classroom, as well as how they alter the understanding, acquisition, and teaching of literacy. Toward that end, we will focus on the "why" and "how" of computers (with some attention to the "why not" and "how not" as well). No previous technological experience is necessary, although a willingness to experiment with new modes of composition is required.

Required Texts and Supplies:
- Access to Blackboard for class readings

Course Assignments:
- Blackboard Activities: 25 points each (total number to be determined--expect at least 20)
- Exploration of New Composing Technology: 300 points each (total of 2)
- Final Project: 500 points

Explorations of New Composing Technology:
1.   For this assignment, I want you to select a new-to-you or relatively-new-to-you digital technology in which to engage critically. This assignment is designed to get you thinking about the affordances of the technologies and to broaden your practical experiences with those technologies. You should allow at least 2-3 hours for immersing yourself in each experience. You have a number of options: maybe you've never used Twitter before, or maybe you want to learn to use video or audio editing tools. Perhaps you want to learn some simple coding or experiment with blogging or website software. Regardless, your technology should be digital.

2.   Following this exploration, you will submit two things: a brief written report (approximately 3 pages in length) in which you reflect on your experience and propose how you might incorporate the affordances of the medium/technology in a writing course (high school or college level) or in a scholarly project. Along with this written report, you will also submit a "product" that comes from your experimentation—this might be a short video or podcast you created, a link to a Twitter account, a blog, a website, etc. This "product" can be experimental and need not be polished, but it should, in some way, critically respond to and/or apply concepts

and ideas from one of the class readings (think of it as a digital response paper). When I grade this assignment, I will be looking for: a description of your experience, a thoughtful and critical reflection on the affordances of the technology and the ways it might be incorporated in writing classes and/or scholarly endeavors, and a product that uses the technology to critically explore the implications or applications of a concept or two from one of the readings. I will provide summary feedback on this work.

Final Project:

For your final "paper" you will pursue a research question related to your scholarly interests. Ideally, this will be an extension of something you've written on before: perhaps a seminar paper in another class, perhaps something you've done some reading on already and has piqued your interests, or perhaps this is your future or current thesis project. The kick: you must produce a "soundly engineered" (a la Shipka) piece of multimodal scholarship that

makes use of the affordances of digital media. We know from our readings that multimodal does not necessarily mean digital, but I want you to stretch your skill set and think about producing scholarship for some of the many digital platforms that have recently developed.

This final project has two parts:
1. A digital piece of scholarship, 11-12-page research paper.
2. A. rationale (3-4 pages) where you reflect on your choices.

The project allows you to put our course principles into practice, while the rationale asks you to account for your choices and discuss what concepts from class informed your work. Some of the questions you might consider include: What is the relationship between form and content in your work? How do multimodal elements and digital platforms help you to reimagine your scholarship? We will build this project over the course of the quarter and will build additional grading criteria together.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100%	A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%
B+	87-89%	B	83-86%	C-	70-72%
C+	77-79%	C	73-76%	D-	60-62%
D+	67-69%	D	63-66%	F	Less than 60%

Course Policies:
Learning Environment: This course will operate under a spirit of nondiscrimination and equality. My goal is to create a safe and welcoming environment where everyone feels comfortable expressing their opinions, while also respecting other class members. I want you to argue with, disagree with, and challenge each other, but I want it done with respect for both the writers whose work we read and your classmates. All participants in the course will abide by CSUSB policies and guidelines, including those governing discrimination, harassment, and academic honesty. Language or actions that are deemed discriminatory or harassing will not be

tolerated. Repeated offenses will be dealt with as per school policies. In addition, should you ever feel that another student has made you uncomfortable in any way, please see me as soon as possible. I take harassment and discrimination very seriously. Following these guidelines will result in a better learning experience and environment for everyone.

Gender Identity:

This course affirms people of all gender expressions and identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than is what on the class roster, please let me know. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records, and so I may call you by your preferred name and pronouns.

Your Well-Being:

I expect you to be participating fully and turning in all of your assignments on time. These acts maximize the learning that occurs in our class: You're giving yourself all possible opportunities to think and practice, you're enriching your peers' experiences, and you're keeping me on a schedule where I can provide you with productive feedback at an optimal time. Like any professor, I hope that my class can be a priority in your life. However, I know that life doesn't always cooperate to let you focus on your chosen priorities exactly when you need or want to.

Late Papers: If you need more time to complete an assignment let me know.

If you're having issues that are making you fall behind, I want you to email me or come talk to me. At minimum, we need to make sure that we both understand the status of your grade and that we have a plan to get you back on track before your grade is no longer salvageable. Good communication with me is the key to your success in this class, and I am willing to do everything in my power to help you. And if you're worried about how you're going to get back on track, or if you're concerned that something like a mental illness or learning disability is getting in the way of your ability to succeed in your classes, I definitely want you to reach out to someone—it doesn't have to be me, but someone. Professors, advisers, counselors, the deans of students, and others on campus can point you in the direction of excellent resources and provide you with support and guidance. Please don't talk yourself out of reaching out when needed. You deserve support for any issue that threatens to interfere with your ability to complete your education.

Office Hours:

My office hours are available by appointment or every Wednesday from 4:00-5:30pm. During my office hours please feel free to stop by through the Zoom chat room to ask questions, discuss paper ideas or drafts, share concerns, or just have a chat and a snack. I recommend making an appointment for a Zoom meeting to discuss any concerns you have about assignments. This will also allow me to have a good conversation with you about your work and give you feedback.

Participation:

Participation is essential for your success in this course. I will ask you to engage with your classmates for workshops and peer review of your work on Blackboard. Using Zoom for lectures, we will engage in an open and ongoing process of inquiry and collaborate over the course of the term. While I expect you to have completed the assigned reading and prepared notes,

questions, observations, and objections, I do not expect you to completely understand each reading. We will work to come to terms with the readings as a community.

Revisions:
I want to stress the importance of revision and writing as a process, you may revise your explorations for a higher grade. The due dates and requirements for these revisions will be listed on the course schedule. You may meet with me throughout the term during office hours to discuss your revisions (I do not recommend leaving the revisions to the last minute).

 Disability Accommodations - ADA: If you are in need of accommodations for a disability in order to participate in this class, contact Services to Students with Disabilities at (909) 537-5238.

Plagiarism and Cheating
Students are expected to be familiar with the University's Policy on cheating and plagiarism. Please review this at http://bulletin.csusb.edu/academic-regulations. Instances of cheating, plagiarism, and academic dishonesty will not be accepted, and will have consequences for your course grade and possibly your status at the university.

Course Schedule:
Refer to Blackboard for your reading and assignment schedule.