



Department of English

164 West 17th Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43210-1370

Phone (614) 292-6065  
Fax (614) 292-7816

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Ed Adelson  
Associate Executive Dean  
College of Arts and Sciences  
109 Brown Hall  
Campus

Dear Dean Adelson:

Attached you will find the course proposal and a revised syllabus for English 269: Digital Media Composing. We appreciate the feedback we received from the department of Art Education on this new course and have taken their suggestions into careful consideration. Their concern was with the sample syllabus, which they felt was too comprehensive and rigorous for a 200-level course. The syllabus we originally submitted was meant to indicate a wide range of possibilities available for this course, so we understand their apprehensions. We have rewritten the course syllabus to be a more precise example of one specific section of this course that we might teach.

We also wish to note that our purpose in developing this course is not to teach software mastery or the production of art, as was suggested in the feedback from Art Education. Rather, our focus on composing in digital media is framed within the context of writing, rhetoric and English studies.

We are resubmitting the original course proposal with a revised syllabus that addresses concerns about the workload and requirements for a 200-level course. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Lloyd DeWitt', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Scott Lloyd DeWitt  
Associate Professor of English

Email: [dewitt.18@osu.edu](mailto:dewitt.18@osu.edu)  
Campus phone: 2-4640

## **New Course Proposal**

### **English 269: Digital Media Composing**

Columbus: Scott Lloyd DeWitt, Ben McCorkle, Jason Palmeri  
Mansfield: Susan Delagrange  
Marion: Marcia Dickson

#### **NEW COURSE PROPOSAL**

English 269 is a writing course that will introduce students to the ways in which textual production is being transformed by digital composing technologies. The course will teach students to analyze digital media texts that combine alphabetic writing, images, video, sound, animation, and interactivity. However, its primary instructional goal is to teach students to compose these texts using digital media technologies. Placing “new” and “old” media in dialogue, students will study the ways in which emergent digital media technologies both draw upon and transform established forms and practices of textual production. Through their production work, students will gain a deeper understanding of the complex rhetorical choices that digital media authors face in diverse contexts. By combining analysis and production, students will be able to participate critically in ongoing public conversations about digital textual practices while learning to situate digital technologies and texts in terms of their social, ethical, and material implications in the contemporary moment.

#### **COURSE RATIONALE**

The University and the Department of English have a strong commitment to the use of digital media in teaching and research and to the area of digital media studies. Scholars and students throughout the academy are increasingly reading and composing digital media texts as part of their work. Reflecting this trend, Ohio State recently opened the Digital Union, a digital media production space for faculty and students across the university. The Department of English has benefited greatly from the University’s BETHA and tuition-set-aside grant programs that have allowed us to create exciting technology projects. Furthermore, the Department dedicates significant resources to the Digital Media Project where graduate students and faculty can find instructional support and advanced technologies that will allow them to explore digital media in their work. Digital media have also had an influence on the department’s curriculum. Expanding beyond a sole focus on print texts, GEC courses like English 110 and 367 teach students to write analytically about visual texts, including websites and digital photos. English 569, Digital Media and English Studies, was added to the Department’s course offerings in 2000.

This course will serve our Department well in many ways. An introductory course in digital media composing will complement our already established commitment in this area and will parallel other 200- and 300-level writing courses we already offer (poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, business/professional writing). This course will also allow students to discover and initially explore a focused interest in digital media studies, an area of study that is becoming increasingly significant to them. Our current offering in digital media studies, English 569, is an

upper level seminar that allows faculty and students to examine the theory and praxis of English studies and the emergent technologies that are used to acquire and create knowledge in the discipline. Currently, primarily English majors enroll in this class. English 269 would not necessarily serve as an introduction to English 569. Instead, it is a writing course where the primary concentration is on creating digital texts. We expect to attract students from across the university with this course. Of course, like many of our 200-level classes, we hope that English 269 will attract new majors to the Department and will alert students early in the major to offerings of English 569. Also important to note is that English 569 has, from the start, been an exceptionally popular class, where waiting lists for the course are often as long as the enrollment limits; we expect this 200-level class to be equally popular among students across the curriculum. Once this course is approved, we will submit it to the GEC review committee, proposing that it meet 5.B.2 (Arts and Humanities, Analysis of Texts and Works of Art, Visual/Performing Arts). We will also submit it, along with English 569, to the College of Education for approval to fulfill the pre-ed requirement of “five hours in film/media studies.” Finally, a 200-level course in digital media studies would provide our graduate students an opportunity to teach in an area that is of great interest to them. (Graduate students who complete an English 903 with an English 569 professor have no opportunity to teach the subject matter at the 200 level.)

#### **COURSE OFFERINGS BULLETIN**

A writing course where students analyze and compose digital media texts while studying complex forms and practices of textual production.

#### **COURSE SYLLABI**

(See attached documents)

Instructor: Jason Palmeri  
Email: [palmeri.2@osu.edu](mailto:palmeri.2@osu.edu)  
AIM: [jasonpalmeri367](https://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/palmeri2)  
<http://people.cohums.ohio-state.edu/palmeri2>

## **English 269:**

### **Digital Media Composing**

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In our contemporary world, the nature of composing is changing rapidly. In addition to producing alphabetic texts (black letters on a white page), writers now increasingly use digital technologies to create multimodal texts that blend alphabetic words, images, and sounds. In this course, we will look at the formal properties and social implications of digital media texts, particularly digital audio essays and digital videos. In this course, you will learn to:

- understand and apply fundamental rhetorical principles for the creation of digital media texts
- analyze and manipulate digital composing technologies, such as Audacity and iMovie
- study the development of digital media texts, exploring how they draw on older forms of media (print books, film, photography, radio)
- consider the effects of digital media production on gender, class, race, ability, sexuality, nation and identity

To get a handle on these questions, we will read some foundational scholarship in digital media studies and we will analyze examples of digital media texts chosen by the class. We will also compose digital media texts that incorporate images, sounds, and words. We will also discuss the rhetorical and ethical choices involved in digital media production.

*No prior technology knowledge is expected for this course.* Through in class workshops and on-line tutorials, you will gain a basic familiarity with the digital composing tools we will be using. The purpose of this course is not to master specific software programs, but rather to consider how these digital technologies alter the experience of reading and writing.

## **Course Assignments**

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Note: More specific assignment prompts will be available on the course website.

### **Discussion Board:**

During this course, you will respond informally to discussion prompts about reading and digital media experiences. When noted on the syllabus, you will post a response before class begins. These responses can be brief and informal; however, they must address the prompt and demonstrate engagement with the material. Responses will be evaluated holistically at the end of class, but I will email you privately at least once during the quarter to give you feedback.

### **In-class composing:**

Throughout the quarter, you will complete in-class composing assignments as a way of learning and analyzing digital composing technologies. These informal assignments will ask you to manipulate existing texts/images/sound (provided by the instructor) in programs like Audacity and iMovie. These in-class experiences, in conjunction with class readings, will serve as the basis for class discussions, informal writing, and as brainstorming for your final digital media project.

### **Group Presentation:**

In groups of 3-4, you will sign up to give a presentation (approx 10 minutes) at some point during this quarter). In this presentation, you will show an example of digital media and then explain how it extends or complicates the readings we have done in the class.

### **Final Digital Media Project:**

Your final project will be a digital media text using audio, video, or a combination of both. project must have a clear rhetorical purpose in mind. We will negotiate the parameters of your project in individual conferences early in the quarter. There are four stages to your project:

Stage 1: Before you complete your final digital media project, you will complete a five- to six-page project proposal in which you discuss the purpose and audience for your project, the media you will use (and why you chose them), and the resources and skills you need to complete the project.

Stage 2: Your project will also include an informal story board (digital or paper) that sketches out the visual look of your project. Alternatively, you could write a tentative script that outlines the “sound” of your project.

Stage 3: Prior to completing your final project, you will be asked to share your work in progress with your peers. Your peers will provide you with constructive feedback and suggestion for making your project stronger.

Stage 4: You will write a reflective essay in which you outline the rhetorical, ethical, and technical choices that you made in your project and articulate what you learned from the process of producing it.

## **Grade Breakdown**

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Discussion board: 15%

In-class composing: 15%

Group presentation: 10%

Project Proposal and storyboard: 20%

Final project: 25%

Reflection: 15%

## **Classroom Policies**

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1. Attendance: Your successful completion of this course and development as a digital media composer is dependent on your active and continual attendance. Thus, each unexcused absence (after two) will result in the lowering of your final grade by one-third. Excused absences with documentation (i.e. illness, family tragedy, religious observance, or inter-collegiate athletics) will not affect your grade. Please note that four unexcused absences will automatically result in failure for the course.
2. Lateness: Two late arrivals (more than five minutes) will equal one unexcused absence.
3. Student Work: I expect that all assignments will be handed in on time (unless you have made prior arrangements with me). Any late assignments will be lowered by one letter grade each day it is late. To receive full credit on an assignment, you must turn in each assigned draft. If you fail to turn in an assigned first draft, your final grade will be lowered by one letter.
4. Cell phones must be turned off. The computers in the classroom are for academic use only. Checking email and instant messaging are NOT permitted.
5. Readings: All reading assignments are due on the day listed on the course schedule.

## **Accessibility / Accommodations**

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We all have varying abilities; we all carry various strengths and weaknesses. Some of these might even be “documented” with a place like the OSU Office for Disability Services (ODS). If so, please just let me know. With or without documentation, it is my intent to make our learning experience as accessible as possible. With documentation, I am especially interested in providing any student accommodations that have probably been best determined by the student and an ODS counselor in advance. Please let me know NOW what we can do to maximize your learning potential, participation, and general access in this course. The Office for Disability Services is located at 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue, phone 292-3307 (TDD 292-0901). See: <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu>

## **Academic Misconduct**

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It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism

and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct ([http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info\\_for\\_students/csc.asp](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp)).

## **Required Materials**

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1) A coursepack with *selections* from:

Bolter and Gruisin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*.

Crowley and Hawhee, *Ancient Rhetorics for Contemporary Students*.

Chion, "Projections of Sound on Image."

Ellis, "Broadcast TV as Sound and Image."

Heller and Vienne, *Citizen Designer: Perspectives on Design Responsibility*.

Selfe, "Lest We Think the Revolution is a Revolution: Images of Technology and the Nature of Change."

Sorapure, "Five Principles of New Media: Or, Playing Lev Manovich."

Williams, *The Non-Designers Design Book*

Wysocki, "With Eyes that Think and Compose and Think: On Visual Rhetoric" ; "Openings and Justifications"

Note: You will also be directed to digital media texts on the course web site.

2) A portable storage medium with large capacity (we will discuss options in class).

3) A set of headphones.

## **Daily Schedule**

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| D1 | <b>Introduction</b>   |
| D2 | <b>Rhetorical Theory: Classical Traditions</b><br>Read: Crowley and Hawhee<br>Due: Discussion board entry |
| D3 | <b>Rhetoric and/as Design</b><br>Read: Wysocki, "With Eyes"<br>Due: Discussion Board Entry                |

- D4     **Working with Audio**  
Due: In-class composing #1
  
- D5     **Defining Digital Media I**  
Read: Bolter & Gruisin  
Due: Discussion Board Entry
  
- D6     **Reading Digital Media Texts**  
Read: Digital media texts linked from website  
Due: Discussion Board Entry
  
- D7     **Rhetoric of Typography**  
Read: Williams
  
- D8     **Working with Images**  
Due: In-class composing #2
  
- D9     **Defining Digital Media II**  
Read: Wysocki, "Openings"; Sorapure  
Due: Discussion Board Entry
  
- D10    **Working with Video**  
Due: In-class composing #3
  
- D11    **Assembling Audio, Video, and Print**  
Due: In-class composing #4
  
- D12    **Defining / Developing Projects**  
Due: First Draft of Project Proposal
  
- D13    **Ethics of Digital Media**  
Read: Selfe; Heller & Vienne  
Due: Project Storyboard
  
- D14    **Workshop: Developing and Analyzing Digital Media**  
Due: Final Project Proposal
  
- D15    **Sound Theory: The Difference Audio Makes**  
Read: Chion, Ellis  
Due: Discussion Board Entry
  
- D16    **Workshop: Developing and Analyzing Digital Media**
  
- D17    **Workshop: Developing and Analyzing Digital Media**
  
- D18    **Peer Critique Workshop**



Due: First Draft of Digital Media Project

D19 **Workshop: Developing and Analyzing Digital Media**

D20 **Workshop: Developing and Analyzing Digital Media**

DF **Performance: Presenting and Analyzing Projects**  
Due: Final Draft of Digital Media Project and Reflection