

ENGL 435: Global Digital Cultures (Final Version)

Fall 2016

TR 9:30-10:50 Main 224

Dr. Kimberly Hall

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Office: Main 227 Hours: M-W 1:00-3:00

Appointments can be booked through Starfish

Media theorist Marshall McLuhan wrote, “We become what we behold. We shape our tools and then our tools shape us.” So what does it mean when our primary tool is digital technology? And what do we behold of the world through this tool? How does this tool shape our view of the world and our relationship to it? Are these tool shaped or used differently in different parts of the world, and why is this important?

These are some of the larger questions we’ll be pursuing in this course. We’ll do that by exploring important digital media cultures of non-Western countries and reading them comparatively with our own. You’ll learn to use formal media analysis to describe what you see and explain why it is important. And why it is different. We’ll use these points of difference not to Other the non-Western world, but to think critically about the effects of collapsing important differences between cultures as a result of the “global citizenship” and “hybridity” promised by networked sociality. Readings and screenings will explore texts from the Middle East and North Africa, The Russian Federation, Japan, Korea, China and selected countries in the Global South.

Course Outcomes

- Engage with a diverse range of non-Western media texts and cultures.
- Learn to analyze digital media texts with attention to formal, material, and cultural contexts of production and circulation.
- Express a critical argument about the relationship between digital media and global citizenship in the form of a final multimodal project.

Expectations and Encouragements

- **Participation:** This course is designed to foreground your perspectives, ideas, and questions. I want to hear what you have to say in every class meeting. Some of the texts we will be reading will be challenging, either because of the language or the content. I encourage you to bring those challenges to class in the form of questions or comments. I also encourage you to come and see me if you need strategies for participation.
- **Conduct:** It is my expectation that we will treat one another with respect and dignity at all times. This includes the creation of a learning space free from distraction and disruption, therefore you are asked to refrain from the use of cell phones, laptops, and tablets unless otherwise specified.
- **Attendance:** You are expected to come to every class session prepared. This includes completing all readings, all homework assignments, and being prepared to discuss

questions and issues that arose for you. Per college policy, three unexcused absences will result in an administrative withdrawal from the course.

- **Class Work and Homework:** All work is due on the date indicated on the syllabus. However, each student is also allowed one “grace card” which allows her or him to take a two-day extension on any paper deadline—except the final—with no questions asked and no effect on the grade. If you choose to use your grace card, please email me on the due date to let me know.
- **Academic Integrity:** All students are expected to know and abide by the Honor Code, which can be found here:
http://www.wofford.edu/uploadedfiles/studentlife/honor%20code_rightsresp.pdf
- **Student Accommodations:** Please refer to the college guidelines below, and let me know how I can assist you:
<http://www.wofford.edu/uploadedfiles/studentlife/healthservices/disability%20services%20service%20guide%20fall%202008%20revision.pdf>

Texts

Peters, Benjamin, Ed. *Digital Keywords: A Vocabulary of Information Society and Culture*.

* Readings marked with an asterisk indicate readings that will be made available through Moodle.

Grading

Your assignment in this course will be determined through a joint discussion. Below are three categories I will be requiring, along with their value. You will decide as a class how you want to allot the rest of the points, and the types of assignments by which your progress in this course will be assessed.

- Participation: 15%
- Region overview (blog post and in-class presentation): 10%
- Annotated bibliography and project outline: 5%
- Final multimodal research project: 30%
- Weekly Reflections: 15%
- Music Video Analysis: 10%
- Photo Essay: 15%

Schedule

Date	Discussion	Reading	Assignments
Keywords			
Tuesday 9/06	Introductions/ Digital		

Thursday 9/08	Digital	DK: Streeter, "Internet" *McPherson, "Digital"	Sign up for region overview
Tuesday 9/13	Global	DK: Avanca, "Community," Peters, "Digital"	Watch <i>Life in a Day</i>
Thursday 9/15	Global	*Vaidhyanathan, "The Googlization of the World"	Download and explore Google Earth
Tuesday 9/20	Culture	DK: Striphias, "Culture"	Explore SelfieCity
Thursday 9/22	Culture	*Poster, "Global Media and Culture"	Explore Minneapolis and St. Paul are East African Cities
		Middle East and North Africa	
Tuesday 9/27	The Arab Spring	*Howard and Hussain, "Digital Media and the Arab Spring"	Explore #ArabSpring on Twitter
Thursday 9/29	The Arab Spring	*Hempel, "Social Media Made the Arab Spring..."	Explore "An Interactive Timeline of Middle East Protests"
Tuesday 10/04	Iraq	*Howard and Hussain, "Al Jazeera, Social Media, and Digital Journalism" *Dreier, "Al-Jazeera Enables Citizen Journalism"	Explore Al Jazeera's Sharek portal
Thursday 10/06	Lebanon	*"Mapping Digital Media: Lebanon"	Explore Serge Najjar's (serjios) Instagram Links and 2 mins. of video for VE due in class Post introductions to VE Facebook page by Sunday
Tuesday 10/11	Lebanon	Preparing for the Virtual Exchange	Explore Al-Monitor Lebanon Final video due for editing
Thursday 10/13	Virtual Exchange: Meet in Library	Meet in the library	
Tuesday 10/18	Israel	*Zevelov, "Internet Comments in Israel" DK: Forsyth, "Forum"	Explore Ynetnews
Thursday 10/20	Iran	*Eloranta, et. Al., "Facebook Iran"	Photo Essay Due Explore Iranian' Blogs
		Asia	
Tuesday 10/25	China	*Yang, "Online Activism in an Age of Contention" *Ai Wei Wei's Blog (Selections)	Watch Google vs. Baidu commercial

Thursday 10/27	China	*Han, “Literature and the Era of Microblogs”	Photo Essay Responses/Reflections Due
Tuesday 11/01	Japan	DK: Bhaduri, “Gaming” *Nintendo History	Play Pokémon Go
Thursday 11/03	Japan	*Galbraith, “Falling in Love with Japanese Characters;” “The Crying Game”	Explore <i>Kanon</i> Gameplay Video on YouTube
Tuesday 11/08	North Korea	*Boynton, “North Korea’s Digital Underground”	Explore Daily NK
Thursday 11/10	South Korea	*Kim, “Korean Media in a Digital Cosmopolitan World”	Music Video Analysis Due Explore Kakao Blog and Girls Generation Videos
		Russia	
Tuesday 11/15	The Soviet Union	*Peters, “A Global History of Cybernetics”	Watch “Cybernetics” by Paul Pangaro
Thursday 11/17	The Russia Federation	*Soldatov & Borogan, <i>The Red Web</i> , Chs. 6 & 7	Explore @roscosmosofficial on Instagram
		Africa	
Tuesday 11/22	Kenya	*Blaze, “Hip-hop in Kenya” *Storm, #NuNairobi...More than Just a Hashtag” *Explore Kabangu: Nairobi Watchmen	Abstract and Annotated Bibliography Due
Thursday 11/24	Thanksgiving Holiday—No Class		Sign up for presentation time on Moodle
Tuesday 11/29	Nigeria	*Onishi, “Nigeria’s Booming Film Industry”	Watch Afolabi, <i>Finding Nollywood</i>
Thursday 12/01	Diaspora and Hybridity	*Appiah, “The Case for Contamination”	
		Course Wrap-Up	
Tuesday 12/06	Research Presentations		
Thursday 12/08	Research Presentations		
Wednesday 12/14	Final Project Due by 5 pm		

