

A dark blue background with a glowing, abstract digital network of nodes and lines. A stylized human head profile is visible on the left, filled with various icons representing technology, communication, and social media. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Digital Rhetorics

ENG 351 | Spring 2022
Day/Time

Illinois State University

Professor Information

Professor: Dr. Erika M. Sparby

Email:

Zoom Room:

Zoom Hours:

Required Texts

All texts are available for free on ReggieNet. Films are on Kanopy and Netflix. You may decide to purchase Wachter-Boettcher's *Technically Wrong* and Duckett's *HTML + CSS* since you will read them in their entirety.

Course Description and Objectives

This advanced course studies theories of digital rhetorics and asks you to read and think critically about a range of relevant issues, from the practical (information architecture, design, content strategy, usability, and so on) to the ethical (privacy/obscurity, online aggression, identity and power, access and accessibility, and so on). You will analyze and compose in a variety of digital genres, and you will also question and enact design justice while considering how these same genres can be used for various forms of advocacy, activism, and other forms of social justice. Class time will be divided between discussion and activities. Students with little experience with particular digital technologies will still have a successful semester as long as they are willing to learn. Google is invaluable, and other resources and workshop time will be provided.

The objectives for this course are to

- Interrogate relationships between technology, identity, culture, and power and how individuals and communities enact (and are perceived in relation to) digital rhetorical skills and practices
- Develop your understanding of digital rhetorics and corresponding principles, practices, and research, and use this knowledge to produce rhetorically effective texts
- Learn digital production and circulation skills in a range of social media
- Gain familiarity and experience with a range of tools for the production of digital materials

Brief Assignment Descriptions

The assignments in this course are designed to meet the course objectives outlined above. Below are brief descriptions of the assignments; full prompts are available on Reggienet.

Coded Bio

To show off your new HTML + CSS skills, code a brief bio of yourself as a student and human. This may become your coded portfolio homepage later.

Attendance/Participation

You are expected to arrive to class on time and be prepared. Complete all readings beforehand and be prepared to discuss them in class. Engage in all discussions and activities.

Tech Time (Undergraduate Only)

Once during the semester, undergraduate students will present on a technology that is not in widespread use by others in the class. Explain how the technology works while also applying theories and concepts discussed in the class.

Class Facilitation (Graduate Only)

Once during the semester, graduate students will facilitate a 30-minute discussion. They can take many forms, such as a lecture with discussion, small group work, mini-workshop, or any other relevant plan.

Coded Portfolio

This portfolio will be a culmination of your work. It will include several artifacts:

- A homepage
- Your interface analysis and redesign
- Two additional pages of your choosing
- Reflections on rhetorical skills/theories

Interface Analysis & Redesign

Analyze and redesign a digital interface. Consider the identity shortcomings your analysis revealed, as well as the values you think the interface should embody, then produce a redesign that is more inclusive of a variety of identities.

Grade Distribution Undergraduate

<i>Component</i>	<i>Points</i>
Attendance/Participation	20
Tech Time	10
Coded Bio	10
Interface Analysis and Redesign	20
Coded Portfolio	40

Grade Distribution Graduate

<i>Component</i>	<i>Points</i>
Participation	20
Class Facilitation	10
Coded Bio	10
Interface Analysis and Redesign	20
Coded Portfolio	40

Grading Note

All assignments and projects must be completed to pass the course.

Grades are earned, not given. I do not respond to requests for higher grades.

Grading Scale

A	100-90
B	89-90
C	79-70
D	69-60
F	59 or below

Course Policies

The policies in this syllabus are considered contractual at Illinois State University. If you remain in the class after day one, you have agreed to all that is required. I reserve the right to change the day-by-day schedule (with advanced notice), but not the requirements outlined above in the course description and below in the policies.

Attendance

You are expected to attend class regularly, arriving on time and prepared to participate. But we're also still in a pandemic. **If you feel unwell or have another excusable reason to miss class, contact me and let me know so we can arrange how you will make up the course work for the days you are absent.** Do not come to class if you are sick or suspect you have been exposed to COVID-19.

Homework Submission

- Submit all homework by the date and time listed in the prompt.
- I accept late work for two days after the due date, but you will lose points from the final grade if I have not granted an extension.
- Except in extreme circumstances, presentations cannot be rescheduled.
- Technological mishaps are not accepted as excuses for late work.

Professionalism and Content Warnings

You are expected to produce professional, high-quality documents that are appropriate for specific writing situations. During class discussions, peer feedback, and in your writing, you are expected to treat others with respect. This pertains to all class members, the professor, and the audiences you write for and people you write about. I do not tolerate intolerant discourses. If a student engages in disrespectful or hateful speech, we will discuss conduct; if it happens a second time, the offender will be removed from the course altogether.

All ISU students are responsible for upholding the [Code of Student Conduct](#). Submitting an item of academic work that has previously been submitted without fair citation of the original work or authorization by the faculty member supervising the work is prohibited. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the course. In certain circumstances, I may be required to refer violations to the [Student Conduct and Community Responsibilities](#), a unit of the Dean of Students Office.

Some of the content and discussions in this course may trigger traumas and strong emotions. I will give content warnings, but be aware of your own capabilities and limitations. If you think a topic may be triggering, please prepare to mute the discussion for a bit if needed. If you decide to miss class, your absence may be excused but you will be responsible for making up any missed work.

Accessibility

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact SASS (Student Access and Accommodation Services).

Location: 350 Fell Hall

Phone: (309) 438-5853

TTY: (309) 438-8620

Website: <http://studentaccess.illinoisstate.edu/>

Email: ableisu@ilstu.edu

Mandatory Face Coverings

To protect the health and safety of all students, faculty, and staff, wearing face coverings while indoors is **mandatory** at Illinois State University. This classroom is no exception. To attend class, you must be properly wearing a suitable face covering that completely covers your mouth and nose. "Suitable" refers to an approved disposable or cloth covering that restricts the flow of respiratory air and water droplets. Sheer, lace, netting, or other thin fabrics are not suitable.

I will try to keep some disposable masks on hand, but you are responsible for remembering your own face covering. If you attempt to attend class but are turned away for not having a face covering, this will count as an unexcused absence and will negatively affect your grade.

Campus Safety and Security

ISU is committed to maintaining a safe environment for the University community. Please take a few moments to ensure you are signed up for [ISU Emergency Alerts](#). Also, note the information posted in each classroom about emergency shelters and evacuation assembly areas (indicated in classrooms). Additional safety information is available on the Campus Safety and Security website.

Student Well-Being

Resources are available to ensure that you keep yourself healthy if you need help.

Covid Testing and **vaccines** are free to all students.

Mental Health: Student Counseling Services are free and completely confidential.

Video and Audio Recording

Notice of Recording a Class Session by the Instructor (Zoom)

The University wants to make students aware that a course may be recorded by the faculty member for later use. Please understand that each faculty member makes an individual decision on whether recording and/or sharing their class materials is warranted. Any recordings that a faculty member makes available are for use by students enrolled in the class and are for the purpose of individual or group study only. The recordings may not be reproduced, shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to publicly accessible web environments.

Regarding students making their own recordings (Zoom and F2F)

Students may not use audio or video devices to record classroom lectures or discussions. Students with disabilities who need to record classroom lectures or discussions must contact the Student Access and Accommodation Services. Students who violate this policy may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under the University's Code of Student Conduct. Students who wish to use audio or video devices to record classroom lectures or discussions must obtain written permission from the instructor. Such recordings are to be used solely for the purposes of individual or group study with other students enrolled in the class. They may not be reproduced, shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to publicly accessible web environments. Students with disabilities who need to record classroom lectures or discussions must contact the Student Access and Accommodation Services. Students who violate this policy may be subject to both legal sanctions for violations of copyright law and disciplinary action under the University's Code of Student Conduct.