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ENGLISH 2269

Spring Semester 2013
TuTh 11:10–12:30 (#11640)
TuTh 12:45–2:05 (#11642)
343 Denney Hall ([map](#))



Digital Media Composing

Prof. H. Lewis Ulman
Director, Digital Media Studies

Department of English
353 Denney Hall
164 West 17th Avenue
Columbus, OH 43210

Office Hours: M & Th 3:00–4:30

ulman.1@osu.edu

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Course Description

English 269 introduces students to the theory and practice of composing digital media documents—documents that variously employ alphabetic writing, graphic elements, still images, animation, video, and sound, most often in combination. We will examine the formal properties and cultural contexts of numerous digital media genres.

Of course, we will practice digital media composing across the production cycle: design and pre-production planning, production, post-production editing, and distribution across various platforms and channels. Further, we will explore some of the key concepts that inform discussions of digital media—modes, codes, formats, media, genres, information ecologies. Finally, we will examine some of the legal and ethical issues surrounding the composition and use of digital media—e.g., fair use, copyright, licensing, permissions, accessibility, and so on.



Because you will need to work with some large files—especially when we work with video—you will also need to purchase or borrow a **portable external hard drive**. For our purposes a small (~250 GB) USB drive should suffice, but you might find it difficult to buy a new drive smaller than 500 GB.



Finally, you will need a small supply of **8–10 AA alkaline batteries**.

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Course Schedule

Preparation for class meetings will typically require reading and responding to essays and digital media documents; coordinating and collaborating with team members and "clients" (e.g., special collections curators); creating digital assets (e.g., images, sound and video files) on location. *Class activities* will include discussion of readings, revision of and review of media projects, student presentations, and hands-on workshops (e.g., learning to use media capture hardware and editing applications). [Click here to view a detailed list of due dates and reading assignments.](#)

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Assignments and Requirements

Below, I briefly describe the focus of each major assignment and provide links to more detailed instructions. Additional resources for each assignment will be posted in the "Contents" section of our class Carmen site.

Throughout the semester, student teams will have the opportunity to work with curators in one of The Ohio State University's 10 [Special Collections](#), building a portfolio of digital media documents that highlight unique objects in and/or aspects of the collections. At the curators' discretion, the digital documents will be used on the Libraries' Web pages, blogs, and display screens in Thompson Library. Individual assignments will consist of several parts, as described in the full descriptions of the Audio Essay, Audio Slideshow, Interactive Data Visualization, and Short-Form Documentary assignments. . . . [\[More Info\]](#)

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Grading Scale, Formula, and Rubrics

We will employ the "standard" OSU grading scale (see below), each assignment contributing a certain number of points to your total for the course as indicated in the table below. We will develop grading rubrics collaboratively in class.

Assignment	% of Final Grade	
1. Audio Essay	20 points	93 - 100 (A)
2. Audio Slideshow	20 points	90 - 92.9 (A-)
3. Interactive Data Visualization	20 points	87 - 89.9 (B+)
4. Short-Form Documentary	20 points	83 - 86.9 (B)
5. In-class "finger exercises"	20 points	80 - 82.9 (B-)
		77 - 79.9 (C+)
		73 - 76.9 (C)
		70 - 72.9 (C-)
		67 - 69.9 (D+)
		60 - 66.9 (D)
		Below 60 (E)

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Resources

Conferences. Please contact me if you have questions or problems that we do not address during our class meetings. You do not need an appointment to see me during my regularly scheduled office hours—just stop by room 353 Denney Hall. If I am not in, please wait five minutes and try again—I may be running an errand in the building. If my office hours are inconvenient for you, email me or see me after class to set up an appointment for another time—I am available for scheduled appointments Tuesday through Friday. Please don't wait until a problem becomes urgent before coming to see me; I can't always schedule an appointment immediately.

Online Communication. E-mail is perhaps the most convenient way to ask a short informational question about the course that you forget to ask in class, submit a draft for me to review and respond to, or notify me of an unavoidable absence and inquire about missed work. If you are faced with a real emergency, though, keep in mind that while e-mail is usually delivered in a matter of minutes, it can sometimes take hours. Moreover, while I check e-mail every day, I may not get your message for up to 24 hours. During regular business hours, you can leave messages for me with the English Department receptionist (292-6065).

Campus Computer Labs. The many [Student Computer Centers](#) across campus ensure that students have access to technologies for course work that requires current computer hardware and software and Internet access. Centers are equipped with Windows and/or Macintosh computers and a variety of peripheral equipment. Software includes word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheet, e-mail, web browsers, and more. [[Locations and Hours](#)]

The Writing Center. The [Writing Center](#) at OSU's Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing (CSTW) offers free help with writing at any stage of the writing process for any member of the university community. They also maintain a [resources page](#) with writing handouts and web links. For more on their policies and services, see their [policies page](#). *Note:* Please keep in mind that the Writing Center does not proofread students' work. They will discuss grammar issues with you and give you advice on how to proofread your own work, but they will not proof your drafts.

Research Assistance @ Thompson Library. Deb Kuzawa, University Libraries GAA, can provide assistance at any stage of the research process. She is available in Thompson Library, Room 460, from 11a-1p and 5p-7p Monday through Thursday. All sessions are drop-in and last for up to 20 minutes. Deb can be reached at kuzawa.1@osu.edu.

Carmen help desk. The Office of Technology Enhanced Learning and Research (TELRL) supports Carmen, OSU's course management system. If you have not used Carmen before, I suggest that you read [Getting Started with Carmen \(Student Guide\)](#). Links to further information can be found on the [Carmen help site](#).

Digital Media Project (DMP). The staff of the English Department's Digital Media Project (DMP), headquartered in 324 Denney Hall, can check out equipment such as digital audio recorders, digital still cameras, and digital video recorders. You can also do post-production editing on media workstations in the DMP lab (343 DE) during evening and weekend lab hours (specific hours will be posted outside 343 DE and on the DMP website; the lab should open starting in week 2 of Spring Semester). For more information, visit the [DMP Web site](#).

Important info about borrowing equipment from the DMP. The DMP has Flip video cameras, Zoom Q3HD video recorders, digital still cameras, tripods, and Edirol audio recorders for checkout. The following information may be important as you plan your projects and necessary reservations:

- All checkouts are for *24 hours*, with the exception that equipment picked up on Friday is due back to the DMP Monday morning.
- The DMP does not supply batteries, DVDs, video tapes, CDs, or other media. Students should procure recording media (if necessary) and extra batteries. For recorders with flash media (e.g., Flip cameras), students will need to download files to backup media before returning cameras to the DMP.
- All undergraduate reservations **must be made in person**.
- Habitually late returns will lead to revocation of checkout privileges.
- Students must make reservations and checkouts in their own names, not for friends or group members. **The equipment must be picked up and returned by the person who checked it out.**
- Only students in English classes may check out equipment.
- Equipment may ONLY be returned to the DMP, not the English department office or the lab assistants.

The Digital Union. The staff of OSU's Digital Union (DU), 370 Science and Engineering Library, can help with media production questions. You can also do post-production editing at media workstations in the DU, either on a drop-in basis or by reservation. For more information, visit the [DU Web site](#).

Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) Equipment Loan. The OCIO loans the following equipment for instructional

use at no cost (with a permission form signed by a faculty member) from their Service Desk in 025 Central Classrooms: digital audio recorders, digital video recorders, digital still cameras, microphones, and tripods. See their [Web site](#) and [Online Checkout site](#).

Accessibility/Disability. Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. Ohio State's [Office for Disability Services](#) (150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; 614-292-3307; TDD 292-0901) coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. However, any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should feel free to contact me privately to discuss his or her specific needs.

Counseling and Consultation Services. Your time at Ohio State promises to be exciting and filled with many new experiences, but it can also be overwhelming. Counseling and Consultation Services provides a wide range of resources for undergraduate students. For more information call 292-5766 or go to www.ccs.ohio-state.edu.

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Course Procedures and Policies (The Fine Print)

"Save your files *early* and *often*. **Back up** your files *early*, *often*, *here*, and *there*."

The following list of procedures will help you plan, conduct, and complete your work in this course. Please read the policies carefully and ask me any questions you may have about them. Keep in mind that these policies constitute a "contract" that we all must respect if our work together is to go smoothly.

Late Work. In fairness to all members of the class, I cannot accept any late work unless you have made arrangements for an extension before the due date (genuine emergencies excepted, but I reserve the right to decide what constitutes an emergency). Please do not assume that I will automatically agree to extensions.

Attendance/Absences. We will devote much of our class time to discussion of assignments and in-class "studio" work, so your attendance at every class meeting is essential to your success in the course. You are responsible for any work due, assigned, or done in any class you miss for any reason, and you must assume that your grade may suffer if you miss *any* class meetings.

More than three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade, regardless of your grades on individual assignments.

Flu! In keeping with OSU's current advice regarding flu, I ask that you not attend class if you have an Influenza-like illness. You should not return to class until your fever is gone ($<100^{\circ}\text{F}$ or 37.8°C) for at least 24 hours. For more information about self-treatment and medical treatment for the flu, see the Wexner Medical Center's [flu information page](#). Note that you can excuse yourself from classes with an [Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class](#) form in lieu of a doctor's visit verification form. In short, coming down with the flu constitutes an excused absence :-) — take care of yourself, and I will do whatever I can to help you catch up!

Class Cancellation Policy. In the unlikely event of class cancellation due to emergency, I will contact you via your OSU e-mail account and request that the English Department place a note on the classroom door. In addition, I will contact you as soon as possible following the cancellation to let you know what will be expected of you for our next class meeting. *Please make sure to check your OSU e-mail account daily, and do not allow it to exceed its maximum storage space (which will prevent it from receiving further e-mail).*

Plagiarism. 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 must report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee. For additional information, see Faculty Rule 3335-5-487 and the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Plagiarism entails representing another's works or ideas as one's own. It includes unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. I realize that using sources correctly and effectively requires training and practice, particularly in new electronic media, and we will discuss these issues in class. You also might find it useful to review OSU's "[Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity](#)." If you have questions about how to use sources, please see me before submitting your work. In accordance with university rules, I will report all cases of suspected plagiarism to the [Committee on Academic Misconduct](#).

Netiquette. Online social forums (e-mail, Web-based discussions, chat rooms, wikis) are extremely diverse, ranging from very informal to quite formal. Behavioral norms vary accordingly. Please keep in mind that behavioral norms appropriate for a face to face classroom also apply in any online forum associated with this course. In general, you should treat classmates in such forums as you would expect to be treated in class. On the one hand, please respect everyone's academic freedom to express ideas related to our course without fear of intimidation. On the other hand, please understand that academic inquiry entails subjecting ideas, including our own, to reasoned criticism from others. And please don't lose sight of the fact that behavior online is subject to University policies such as the [Code of Student Conduct](#). Regarding your written work online, you might find it helpful to review "[Virtual Legality](#)," by former Associate Legal Counsel Steve McDonald, which discusses how to steer clear of copyright infringement, libel, obscenity, invasion of privacy, and computer fraud (whew!).

Copyright, intellectual property, and fair use. Working in digital media poses all sorts of new questions regarding copyright and intellectual property, and we will discuss these issues as we go. While it is important to respect others' intellectual property, it is equally important to assert the right to fair use granted you by copyright law. If you have any questions about copyright, intellectual property issues, or fair use, please don't hesitate to ask. To find out more about this topic, visit the Office of the Chief Information Officer's [Copyright Resources](#) page.

Cybersecurity. In order to protect your privacy, I ask that you follow a few simple procedures when communicating with me online. First, please do not send me e-mail or attachments, or submit contributions to Carmen, that contain any of the following information, even inadvertently: your social security number, driver's license number or state identification card number, or any financial account number or credit or debit card number with security codes or passwords (I know you are unlikely to do so, but the reminder is worthwhile). Second, while it is fine to use e-mail to ask routine questions about the course, please submit any drafts and assignments via Carmen's dropbox or BuckeyeBox (BuckeyeBox is not yet approved for instructional use). That practice will help keep your work — and my evaluations of your work — private. I will convey grades to you electronically through Carmen and/or OSU e-mail.

Format and backup copies of assignments. Because of the special nature of the work in this course, we will discuss the format of your work as we go along. My only general instruction is that you always keep *at least two* electronic copies, on different disks or drives, of any work you submit. *Save your work early and often. Back up your work early and often, here and there* (i.e., have at least two copies stored in two different places). In particular, make sure to keep a backup of any work that you do in our classroom. I recommend saving versions of your projects under different names at several points in your work so that you can always "retreat" to an earlier version.

Convention. Misspellings, typos, and grammatical blunders can, at worst, change the sense of your argument; at best, they distract even an attentive reader. Problems of this sort will affect your grade. If you would like special assistance with grammar or spelling, please see me—I will be happy to help. Proofreading is your responsibility, and you must allow time to do it carefully. For a quick online reference, see Jack Lynch's "[Guide to Grammar and Style](#)." For further help with writing, you may wish to visit Ohio State's [Writing Center](#).

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