

FSP 121.05 The Digital Domain

Fall, 2013 Professor Janet Mazur

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Office Hours: Wednesday from 1 to 3 p.m. Otherwise by appointment

Course Description

Is there any aspect of our lives that the Internet and/or digital technology has NOT altered? From how we connect through social networking to how we listen to music, study, date, vote, acquire the news and shop, our online and digital interactions are profoundly shaping our daily existence. In this course, we examine the possibilities and the problems that technology poses. We will also study those who do not have access to the technology that has become ubiquitous in our lives. We will fulfill the college's Community Engaged Learning requirement through a project that we create in collaboration with the Bonner Center.

Required Text:

Turkel, Sherry. *Alone Together; why we expect more from technology and less from each other*. New York: Basic Books, 2010.

We will also read excerpts from other contemporary books as well as periodicals such as *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, and others. You will access all of these documents electronically on SOCS, unless indicated otherwise. We will also consult The OWL at Purdue as well as other books and tools that deal with the technical aspects of writing academic papers.

How will our class be conducted?

You will take part in lively classroom discussions as well as virtual chats and discussion board postings. You will submit your papers electronically (unless indicated otherwise), voice your opinions often and get to know your classmates well since you will frequently be working in small groups. You'll learn about process-oriented writing from peer tutors and submit regular entries to an online blog. You'll hear from guest speakers and reflect on timely documentaries. You will collectively create a real-world project that will benefit the greater community.

General Course Requirements

You will be expected to complete all reading assignments; participate actively, intelligently and consistently in our class discussions; respect others and respond to their ideas both sensitively and constructively; and always arrive in class promptly. Likewise, you will be expected to be attentive and participate fully in the peer review workshops, which will take place during class and consist of reading the work of your classmates and offering them feedback in a structured setting. You and your small group members will offer a presentation to the class, which will include the use of Power Point or a similar tool. You will complete two formal papers,

submit one blog entry per week as well as respond to occasional discussion board postings

Grading

Your final grade will be based upon the following:

- Two Papers – Each 6 to 8-page paper will be worth 15 percent of your grade for a total of **30 percent**.
- Blog Entries – Successful completion of all 15 assigned entries counts for **15 percent** of your final grade. Blog entries will be submitted in a designated area of SOCS and must be completed by 5 p.m. the day before our class meets.
- Two mini papers, one a brief "Net Fast," reaction, the other a response to a documentary and the third, a "starter," in which you and a classmate kick off the session with a fresh news item - 5 percent for each assignment for a total of **15 percent**.
- In-class presentation – You will be paired with one or more classmates for a substantial 20-minute presentation near the semester's end. **15 percent**
- Class Participation, including how well-prepared you are on a daily basis, your involvement in discussions, as well as homework and unannounced quizzes – **5 percent**.
- Final Exam – An essay style exam integrating key concepts we cover during the semester – **20 percent**.

Paper Particulars

You will complete at least one of the two formal papers in a step-by-step fashion, beginning with a rough draft which will then be reviewed in class with a small group of classmates. You will then turn in a revised version to me via SOCs. Your grade for both papers will be based upon the criteria specified in a paper-specific rubric, which will be distributed to you beforehand.

No trees will perish on our account!

All final papers will be submitted electronically, unless otherwise noted.

See the daily schedule for the exact due dates, which include separate dates for completion of the rough draft and final version of your papers.

With each paper, you will be given a prompt detailing exactly what is expected. This will include due dates as well as explicit information on the paper's objective and how to best achieve it. *Warning: I do not accept late papers!*

Texting is Taboo or In-Class Etiquette

Kindly turn off all cell phones (and I will do the same)

Likewise, remove your iPod or other headphones.

Your full attention is expected.

This is a seminar, meaning that it is a “conversation,” in which we talk as well as listen. Likewise, you will be expected to treat your classmates with respect, especially when you find that their opinions differ from yours.

For you to absorb all this class has to offer, you must be present. If illness or emergency prevents you from attending, you **MUST** e-mail your professor within 24 hours. Two consecutive absences will require a medical excuse.

Absences will be excused only for those reasons recognized as legitimate by the college and outlined here: TCNJ’s attendance policy *is available on the web:*

<http://www.tcnj.edu/~recreg/policies/attendance.html>

Course Goals

The goals of The Digital Domain are:

- To think critically about the effects of the digital technology, focusing on the question of how it is enhancing the human condition versus how it is detracting or creating gaps between individuals, cultures or nations.
- To foster your intellectual curiosity as well as to encourage a culture of intellectual engagement outside our classroom
- To take greater responsibility for your own learning
- To complete a project for a local elementary school, which fulfills the college’s community service requirement (details TBA)
- To conduct college-level research and become a more thoughtful, engaged and ethical researcher.
- To write college-level papers and essays and to be a more a reflective and self-aware writer, willing and able to edit, proofread and revise your own work
- To understand that the concept that a well-rounded education extends beyond your immediate professional or academic field.

Turning in Assignments

This course will make extensive use of SOCS, a courseware system developed at TCNJ. Please check the Welcome area frequently for updates and timely messages. Your papers will be submitted via the SOCS dropbox, and you will receive feedback from me here as well. You must have your TCNJ e-mail account log in and password to use SOCS. You will also need your TCNJ Unix login (same as your e-mail account) to use any computer in the library. Please tend to this during the first week. Call the help desk (x2660) for assistance.

Accommodations

Any student requiring accommodations will benefit from contacting the Office of Differing Abilities. You can read TCNJ’s statement regarding accommodations at

<http://www.tcnj.edu/~eeisfo/ada/htm>. If you need special assistance, I will make every effort to accommodate your needs and to create an environment in which your special abilities will be respected.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is the appropriation of the ideas of texts of others. It is intellectual theft and will be treated as a serious infraction of the college's Academic Integrity Policy. One of the goals of this class, however, will be to teach you how to avoid plagiarism and collusion, another form of academic dishonesty, especially in the collaborative environment that we seek to create. If you plagiarize, I will seek the most strenuous penalties available to me. Not only is plagiarism an intellectual crime, it is a personal insult to me and to all of your peers.

Questions?

Feel free to e-mail me with any and all concerns. If there is something you do not understand, you need to let me know as soon as possible. I promise to return your e-mail as promptly as I can.