HDCC 208B: Seminar in Digital Cultures and Creativity:
Digital Storytelling: Persuasive Authoring and Digital Spaces
Fall 2012

Instructors:

Jennifer Guiliano	Porter Olsen	Jim Smith	Amanda Visconti
guiliano@umd.edu	polsen@umd.edu	jimsmith@umd.edu	visconti@umd.edu
(301) 405-9528			
@jenguiliano	@pwolsen	@jgsmith	@Literature_Geek

*Please email Jen Guiliano (*guiliano@umd.edu*) with any general course questions, including all questions about grading.*

Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 1-2 pm or by appointment
Office Location:
Maryland Institute for Technology In the Humanities, Hornbake Library 0301
Directions: Enter Non-Print Media (basement level) and hang left past the DVDs.

Class Times: Thursday 2-4:30 pm
Class Location:
Maryland Institute for Technology In the Humanities, Hornbake Library 0301
Course Website: http://mith.umd.edu/digitalstorytelling

Course Description: Every day, we are bombarded by stories: in books, on the news, in music, on websites, in stores, while visiting museums, etc. So pervasive are stories that we often become desensitized to them. Yet, stories are carefully constructed to communicate messages that rely on particular goals and are expressed in specific forms. "Digital Storytelling" explores narratives as they are designed, produced, and consumed in digital forms. What are the elements of a story? How do digital spaces function similarly/differently from non-digital spaces when looking at narrative? How does the platform a story is produced on or in open and close the way you understand it? What are the tools you can use to write and visualize narrative in digital form? And finally, what does it mean to "tell stories" when digital forms and technologies are constantly changing? Students will have the opportunity to explore digital technologies, create and produce narratives, and analyze stories in digital forms. Games, digital exhibits/digital history, websites, and digital mapping will all be explored and will serve as the primary areas of inquiry for this project-driven course.

Learning Outcomes:
- Students will receive focused exposure to the special topic of persuasive authorship within the broad purview of digital cultures and creativity.
- They will explore the topic of digital storytelling both critically and theoretically through readings, critical thought, and practical, hands-on development of digital tools and technologies.
- Students will be able to discuss major issues and debates in the area of the digital storytelling, and be conversant with important concepts and terms.
- Students will synthesize insights from one another as well as the instructor and their readings in order to produce a final project that displays real depth of creativity and insight in the area of digital storytelling and persuasive authorship.

- Students will conclude the seminar with a focused base of knowledge that they can use as a foundation for a program capstone project, as well as working relationships with instructional faculty and other students with kindred interests.

Goals: Students will

- Demonstrate understanding of methods, skills, tools and systems used in the interdisciplinary construction of "stories" and "narratives."
- Demonstrate the ability to choose and use appropriate technologies to communicate about topics and questions and to formulate a final project leveraging their understandings of digital stories and narratives.
- Demonstrate critical analysis of arguments and evaluation of an argument's major assertions, its background assumptions, the evidence used to support its assertions, and its explanatory utility
- Communicate effectively, through written and oral communication and through other forms as appropriate.
- Demonstrate understanding of the interconnections of knowledge production within and across disciplines and digital forms.
- Delineate and describe the importance of studying and/or researching narrative construction and deployment in digital forms.

Expectations and Attendance: HDCC208B is a small seminar class that relies on engaged student participation. This is not a lecture course; it is a class where the instructors will rotate throughout the semester and where you, as a student, will be expected to be actively engaged in class discussions and assignments. We will meet only once a week. As a result, your presence is instrumental to the success of the course for all students. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. If you are aware that you will be absent, it is your responsibility to notify the instructors and to work with your classmates to make sure that you are aware of any assignments made during the class. Instructors will be available during office hours to discuss any missed assignments; however, we will not recap class discussion for you. Students are expected to be familiar with the University policy on attendance: one absence is allowed for a medically-necessitated reason per course per semester provided the student supplies a written note attesting to the date of the illness, that the information is true and correct, and that they understand that providing false information to the instructors is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Students with repeated absences or with a major prolonged absence due to illness or other major emergencies will need to provide the instructors with written documentation from a licensed non-familial health care provider. Repeated tardiness or leaving early will constitute an absence. Students will be provided with at least one short break during the class to stretch their legs and use the restroom.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to be familiar with the university code of academic integrity as outlined by the University of Maryland in its *Code of Academic Integrity*. It is important to understand that any instances of plagiarism, cheating, or other violations of the code can result in the failure of the course and possible expulsion from the university. Cheating includes: reusing portions of coursework for credit, allowing others to prepare work, and utilizing external aids including commercial term paper and internet companies. If you have a question regarding any of the above or the code in general, consult immediately with one of the instructors.

Plagiarism and Citations:The definition of plagiarism is broader than commonly assumed. Plagiarism includes: direct quotation, paraphrasing, summarization, and fabrication of materials. All quotations taken from other authors, including paraphrasing and all sources from the Internet (including Wikipedia, blogs, and forums) and other digital media, must be indicated by quotation marks and properly referenced. When writing a blog or blog comment, cite at least the author's name and enough information for a reader

to find the work on their own (e.g. a hyperlink if available); for short papers and the final project, please use MLA style when citing your sources (Purdue Online Writing Lab MLA Formatting and Style Guide). Some of the works we'll be reading may not be covered by the MLA style guide (e.g. digital games); if this is the case, please give at least the work's title, author/developer studio, date of publication, and the web address for the work (if any). If you are ever uncertain about your need to cite something or how to do so, please contact the instructors *before* turning in your work.

Grading Policy: As this class includes a team of instructors, grading will be handled as follows: each instructor will grade blogs, in-class assignments, or any homework assignments given the week they serve as instructor. The primary instructor is noted beneath each week in the schedule. Rubrics, where used, will be provided.

Blog Posts (10): 35% (70 points)
Quizzes and In-Class Assignments: 10% (20 points)

All semester-long assignments (the initial proposal, final project draft, and final project) will be graded by Jennifer Guiliano and one other instructor based on the type of final project you have chosen to complete. The scores from both instructors will be earned as follows: Instructor 1 grade + Instructor 2 grade divided by 2. Students will also receive written feedback on semester-long assignments.

Initial Proposal: 10% (20 points)
Final Project Draft: 5% (10 points)
Final Project: 35% (70 points)

Additionally, students will earn a class participation grade from all four instructors as follows: Instructor 1 grade + Instructor 2 grade + Instructor 3 grade + Instructor 4 grade divided by 4.

Class Participation: 5% (10 points)

Expectations for participation include having read all of the day's pertinent required readings prior to their assigned due date, active and thoughtful engagement during discussion, and quality engagement with instructors and other students in class and on the course website. Attendance alone does not guarantee an A in class participation.

Late Assignments: All assignments are due by the time and date noted on the syllabus. Late assignments will be docked one full letter grade per 24 hours up to three days late (A to D). Assignments will not be accepted more than 72 hours late unless there is a legitimate excuse as noted under the absence policy. If you know you will be late in turning an assignment in or absent on the day the assignment will take place, you are expected to turn that assignment in *prior* to your absence to receive full credit. Lack of access to or technical difficulties with computers are unacceptable excuses for late or missed assignments.

Final Project: Students will complete a final project (in lieu of a midterm and final exam) that will require them to select one of the following digital forms and construct a persuasive narrative. In this course, we will cover a variety of types of persuasive narrative: personal, political, literary, archival, historical, etc. For your final project, you will be asked to create a narrative in one of the following forms:

- HTML e-literature (you may create a different form of e-lit, e.g. Flash-based, with the instructors' approval)
- a Game
- an Omeka repository
- a short machinima film using Second Life

- a tour of a natural space using a variety of digital tools (Google Earth, web pages, YouTube, Second Life, etc.)

Your final project will be evaluated based on four criteria: understanding and use of narrative elements, appropriateness of platform for your narration, use of the technology, and quality of the overall project. You are welcome to partner with a classmate for the project; however, should you partner, it is expected that you have a clearly delineated set of responsibilities so that each student can be judged individually. You will receive detailed information on each type of project and the expectations associated by the third week of class.

Computing Policy:
This course relies heavily on the use of computing technologies. We ask students to bring an iPad or laptop to class each day as we will use the course blog and other digital destinations throughout the class. If you do not have access to an iPad or laptop, please let the instructors know immediately and MITH will provide access to an iPad or laptop during class hours. Students are encouraged, if they do not have access to a computer of their own, to familiarize themselves with the various campus labs.

Grade Protest Policy:
To ask the instructors to consider a grade change, the procedure is as follows: Within one week of the hand-back date the student must provide in writing to Jennifer Guiliano a detailed description of the complaint including *why* the grade is considered insufficient. The student will then schedule a specific individual meeting with the instructors to discuss the grade. Grades will not be discussed prior to or following any class, nor will they be discussed during office hours without prior notice to the instructors. If there is a question about improving one's grade or the grading metrics used, then the student is encouraged to make an appointment during office hours.

Blogging Policy:

The instructors understand people have different levels of comfort with writing publicly; therefore, you are allowed to use a pseudonym on our course blog, as long as you email the instructors what this name is before the deadline of the first assignment for which you use the pseudonym so that we can grade your work.

Special Needs:
If you have a registered disability and wish to discuss accommodations, please email the instructors by the end of the second week of class. Disabilities can be registered through Disability Support Services (4-7682 or 5-7683 TTY/TDD).

Religious Observance:
It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor by email of any religious observances that will conflict with your attendance, assignment deadlines, or final exam. The student should provide emailed notification to the professor by the end of the second week of the term; the notification must identify the religious holiday(s) and the date(s). If this notification is not given to the instructor by this date, all missed assignments, quizzes, and exams are subject to grade penalties.

Campus Closings:
Information regarding official University closings is available at http://www.umd.edu/emergencypreparedness/weather_emer or via 301-405-7669. If a campus closing or emergency occurs, the instructor will contact you via your university email address to tell you how to proceed. Always assume that deadlines have not been cancelled unless the weather emergency is so catastrophic that both the University and local businesses are closed.

Syllabus Subject to Change:
This syllabus is subject to change; any changes will be sent out to your university email address, announced in class, and posted to our course website (http://mith.umd.edu/digitalstorytelling).

Schedule

Week 1: August 30, 2012- Introduction

Instructor: All
In-Class Assignment: Constructing your Avatar

Week 2: September 6, 2012- Constructing a Basic Narrative

Instructor: Jim Smith
Instructional Prompt: Stories surround us. They form the basis for everything we do, from getting to school to getting through a job interview or landing that big contract. By the end of the week, you will have a basic understanding of how stories work as negotiation between the storyteller and the audience.

Readings:
- Music and Passion by Benjamin Zander
- The Politics of Fiction by Elif Shafak
- 4 a.m. by Rives
- "Writing, Briefly" by Paul Graham
- "Show and Tell" and "Characterization and Exposition" from *Self-Editing for Fiction Writers* by Browne and King.

In-class Assignment: Observe or participate in a small live action role play action scene. Discuss how you would describe what you saw in the context of the story being told.

Blog Assignment: Construct a 250-500 word narrative of an action.

For Next Week: Install the free TextWrangler app from the Apple App Store to your iPad or Mac laptop, and bring this machine to class next week; we'll be using this to write HTML for a webpage.

Week 3: September 13, 2012- Exploding Narratives

Instructor: Amanda Visconti
Instructional Prompt: How do digital spaces support non-traditional narrative formats?
Readings:
1. *These Waves of Girls* by Caitlin Fisher (spend at least 8 minutes exploring)
2. **One** of the following:
   a. *The 21 Steps* (read all)
   b. *The Urban 30* (read three different characters' posts that appear next to each other datewise)
   c. *Haircut* (all)
3. Any **one** work selected from Electronic Literature Collection Volume One or Electronic Literature Collection Volume 2 (**you'll need to report on this in class,** so pay attention to how it makes use of digital features like linking and multimedia)
4. Deena Larsen's Fun da Mentals site
Optional Reading:
1. Matt Kirschenbaum's "Why Should Humanities Students Learn to Code?"

In-class Assignment: Report on e-lit reading; HTML lab

Homework Assignment:
1. Finish HTML lab if unfinished
2. Rewrite last week's narrative as simple e-lit using HTML:
    a. Full credit if you post your narrative to the blog and describe the features you would include in your digital version of the narrative
    b. **Extra credit** if (in addition to the explanatory blog post) you make your narrative into a simple piece of HTML e-lit, upload it to the web, and share the link on your blog

Week 4: September 20, 2012- Narratives of American Expansion in Multiple Form

Instructor: Jim Smith
Instructional Prompt: How do the affordances of a game interface affect the narrative we experience when playing a game?

Readings:
- Galloway, Alexander. "Gamic Action, Four Movements." *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture*. Electronic Mediations 18. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2006.
- Bartle, Richard. "Hearts, Clubs, Diamonds, Spades: Players Who Suit MUDs." *Journal of MUD Research* v1.1 1996.
- Dixon, Dan. "Player Types and Gamification." CHI 2011.
- We are the stories we tell ourselves, by Shekhar Kapur

In-class Assignment: Break into groups and design a computer game that has components addressing each of the four "movements" described by Galloway and the four player types described by Bartle..

Blog Assignment: Play a game of your choice, text or graphical, single player or multiplayer, and write a 250-500 word narrative from your character's perspective.

Week 5: September 27, 2012- Playing Narrative within Games

Instructor: Jennifer Guiliano
Instructional Prompt: How do digital spaces function similarly/differently from non-digital spaces when looking at narrative? This lesson will explore the history of the Oregon Trail in three different forms: from a memoir, from tribal history, as a scholarly article, as a website, and as a game. What information is best communicated in which form and what arguments can be made within particular forms?

Readings:

Frances Parkman, *The Oregon Trail, Sketches of Prairie and Rocky-Mountain Life,* Knickerbocker's Magazine, 1847-1849. Please read "Jumping Off": http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/oregon/otrail04.html and "The War Parties": http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/oregon/otrail10.html

Playing History: Oregon Trail: Virtual Apple 2: http://www.virtualapple.org/oregontraildisk.html. Please play the Virtual Apple 2 version of Oregon Trail. You are expected to play through the entirety of the game at least once or until your character perishes. Please do not intentionally kill your characters as it will affect your ability to complete the blog assignment. You are free to select whichever character you choose.

Blog Assignment: Forming teams of 4, you will be assigned one of the following forms of historical narration to write an overview of. Your overview should outline names, dates, places, events, and other pertinent information gleaned from your reading.

> Team 1 and 3: Parkman and Oregon Trail: Virtual Apple 2
> Team 2 and 4: Webber and Oregon Trail: Virtual Apple 2

In-Class Assignment: We will start class by comparing and contrasting the information learned from the narrative and discussing the pros and cons and the particular form.

Week 6: October 4, 2012- Narratives of the Past and Digital Media

Instructor: Jennifer Guiliano
Instructional Prompt: The most prolific way we encounter persuasive authoring each day is through the media: be it the television, print, web, or audio. Using September 11th and its media coverage as a starting point, we will explore how the narrative of a single day of events have been shaped by various forms of digital media.

Readings:
Peter Liebhold. Collecting September 11: Remembrance and Reflection.
http://americanhistory.si.edu/september11/2011/collecting.asp

Roy Rosenzweig, "Scarcity or Abundance: Preserving the Past in the Digital Era" *American Historical Review*. http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/108.3/rosenzweig.html

Steve Brier and Joshua Brown, "The September 11 Digital Archive" *Radical History Review* Issue 111 (Fall 2011).

Shannon Perich, September 11: A story told in Pixels.
http://blog.americanhistory.si.edu/osaycanyousee/2011/08/september-11-a-story-told-in-pixels.html

September 11th Digital Archive. http://911digitalarchive.org/index.php

Smithsonian Institution September 11th Digital Collection.
http://americanhistory.si.edu/september11/collection/

Blog Assignment: Explore Tuesday September 11th (http://archive.org/details/911/day/20010911) and Monday September 17th (http://archive.org/details/911/day/20010917) at the Understanding 9/11 (http://archive.org/details/911) archive site. Select the same time and the same station on those two days and compare and contrast the narrative elements of the t.v. coverage paying attention not just to the content of the narrative but the visual elements as well. How has the narrative and its elements changed over time? You should repeat this exercise for two different stations (one should be non-US).

Week 7: October 11, 2012- Narratives of Media, Present and Future

Instructor: Amanda Visconti and Jennifer Guiliano
Instructional Prompt: Learn how to build a basic personal archive via Omeka.net, consider the "history of the now" and issues of preservation through an exercise imagining what modern digital objects you'd save for the future.

Readings:
[Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web](#) by Dan Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig–just the following sections (each has multiple pages–be sure to read all the pages for each chapter listed here):
- Introduction,
- Exploring the History Web,
- Getting Started,
- Collecting History Online, and
- Owning the Past? chapters

In Class Assignment: Bring to class five digital or physical objects related to important moments in your life (e.g. photos, a song from your first dance, small items tied to memories, newspaper clippings…). Make sure these are things you are comfortable sharing with the class. These items can be non-personal things (e.g. a game disk) that attach to strong personal memories.

Post-class Assignment (due by 8:00am EST on 10/16/2012):
1. Finish adding content to your personal Omeka.net site begun in class; you should have uploaded at least five items and given each a title, a description, and text in at least one other field.
2. Write a blog post listing at least five items of media (books, magazines, websites, art, music…) in a "media time capsule" you'd create to share with the future to help people understand what life is like in 2012 (pick any future date more than ten years away for your projected audience). What mechanisms would a person in the future need to be able to access these media? What would each choice say about how you live, what your culture values, and what your relationship with media is? And let's say you're feeling mischievous–imagine what contents you'd put in a time capsule to give people a "wrong" or alternate impression about life today (using contents that are actually from 2012). What's wrong about this second media capsule? **Your blog post should [follow the general directions for writing a blog post](#) as well as:**
   - list at least five items of media (books, magazines, websites, art, music…) in a "media time capsule" you'd create to share with the future (pick any future date more than ten years away)
   - Discuss what mechanisms a person in the future would need to be able to access these media
   - Discuss what each choice says about how you live, what your culture values, and what your relationship with media is

Week 8: October 18, 2012- Seeing Digital Narratives

Instructor: Amanda Visconti

Instructional Prompt: What are the tools besides HTML you can use to write and visualize narrative in digital form? We'll explore distant reading, text visualizations, and remix culture.

Readings:
- Eric Faden's "[A Fair(y) Use Tale](#)"
- Cory Doctorow on ["Why Do You Give Away Your Books?"](#)
- Cory Doctorow's [webpage](#) listing ways readers have remixed his novel *Little Brother*
- "[Orson Whales](#)"
- "[Prometheus Smurf](#)"
- "[Don Draper Says What](#)"

Assignment:

- Create a distant reading visualization, then publish the image to the course blog alongside a written or video post analyzing the visualization; your post should also imagine in detail the features of a new distant reading tool you wish existed (how would it work? what would it tell you? could it be built now?)
- Extra credit if your post includes remixing of public domain media such as music, images, video, etc. (must be properly cited--author, title, and public domain/Creative Commons license type)

October 21: Initial Proposal Due and Make Office Hours Appointment to Discuss Your Proposal
You must make a 15-minute appointment during the week of October 21st to speak with one of the instructors about your proposed project.

Week 9: October 25, 2012- Analyzing Narrative

Instructor: Jim Smith
Instructional Prompt: The kinds of stories that come out of a game can tell us a lot about how the game is designed. Conversely, the rules that we choose to live by can determine the possible stories that we can expect to experience.

Readings:
- The Moral Mind by Jonathan Haidt

In-class Assignment: What do the stories we wrote in week 5 tell us about the games we played?

Blog Assignment: Examine a game that you enjoy playing in light of the five aspects of morality. What does the game encourage or discourage? Based on this examination, how do you believe you would enjoy playing the games that your classmates played?

Week 10: November 1, 2012-Natural Worlds/Digital Worlds: Virtuality and Ecocriticism

Instructor: Porter Olsen
Instructional Prompt: Over 100 years ago, naturalist John Muir created one of the first "virtualizations" of what is now Yosemite National Park. He did so not with the latest 3D modeling hardware, but with words. In this lesson we will explore the etymology of the word "virtual" and consider how it was used before it was adopted by computer science in the 1960s. Along the way we'll read the works of Muir and other nature writers with an eye to identifying the strategies they used to create "virtual" spaces through language. We will then extend what we learn about representing the natural world into the digital sphere through Google Earth and Second Life.

Readings:

Muir, John: "Yosemite Glaciers"
Oxford English Dictionary: Virtual
Intro to Ecocriticsm (ELMS)

In-class Assignment: Explore Google Earth and Second Life

Blog Assignment: Explore a "natural" space in either Second Life or via Google Earth (or the same space in both). Channeling your inner Muir, write a travel log of your explorations on the class blog (include screen shots). Address the effect these digital spaces have on you as compared to natural spaces and textual virtualizations.

Week 11: November 8, 2012-Cyberpunk and the Digital Frontier

Instructor: Porter Olsen
Instructor Prompt: As a counterpoint to thinking about natural spaces, this lesson explores virtual spaces and urban spaces. We will read William Gibson's "Burning Chrome," the short story that introduced the world to the concept of cyberspace. In reading "Burning Chrome" we will pay particular attention to the types of landscapes the various characters inhabit and how those landscapes shift back and forth across the digital frontier, a frontier that we continue to navigate today.
Readings:
> Gibson, William: "Burning Chrome" (ELMS)
> Intro to Cyberpunk (ELMS)
> Haraway, Donna and James Kohl: "A Cyborg Manifesto" (Comic)

In-class Assignment: Come prepared to discuss the readings. Keep the following questions in mind:
● Why does Gibson structure the his narrative the way he does? That is, what connections can we draw between the way he tells his story and the world he describes?
● If the spaces we inhabit (at least in part) define our identity, what spaces do each of the characters inhabit and how do those spaces both define and limit them?
● In what ways is Gibson's cyberpunk world like the world we inhabit? In what ways different?
● What are the digital frontiers in "Burning Chrome"?
● What, according to Haraway, is a cyborg?
● What is the relationship between the cyborg and the feminine?
● Who is a cyborg in this story? (think beyond the obvious)?
● Do you/we live at a similar digital frontier?

Blog Assignment: Create your own cyberpunk character. Details should include the space/geography that best defines him or her; His or her relationship to the matrix; goals and aspirations; relationship to the law (remember the *punk* part); etc.

Week 12: November 15, 2012-Machinima and "Found Technologies"

Instructor: Porter Olsen
Instructor Prompt: Machinima (a neologism from machine + cinema) emerged in the mid 1990s as gamers began to use *DOOM* and *Quake* to create short films of their gaming exploits (called "speed runs"). Henry Lowood, who we will read for this class, uses the term "found technology" to describe the innovative way in which gamers repurposed 3D shooters and turned them into mini film studios. Subsequently, a number of platforms have emerged for creating machinima, Second Life being primary among them. In this class we will discuss the particular form of creativity observable in such "found technologies" and use Second Life as a platform for making our own machinima.

Readings:
> Lowood, Henry: "Found Technology: Players as Innovators in the Making of Machinima" (ELMS)

Watch:
> Selected machinima (selections will be emailed to the class)

In-class Assignment: In small groups, use what you have learned to create a work of socially conscious machinima.

Blog Assignment: Continue working on your machinima and post it to the class blog.

Week 13: November 29, 2012: Proposal Draft

Your proposal draft is due *either* by email (to guiliano@umd.edu) or by paper copy to Jen's MITH desk **by 4:00pm EST on November 29th**. No class will be held today.

Week 14: December 6, 2012- In Class Workshop on Final Project

Attendance is required.

Final Exam = Final Project Due: December 14, 2012 by NOON EST

How to Write a Blog Post

Blog posts are meant to be well-written, both thoughtful and thought-provoking; the best ones will also stimulate discussion on the course site and in the classroom. Feel free to end your post with questions you haven't answered yet or would like to hear your classmates answer; also consider embedding relevant pictures and other media in your posts. Recording a video or audio blog to Youtube and then embedding it into a blog post on our course site is also allowed. The grading rubric for blogging (below) takes effort into account. **Although there's not a hard and fast rule as to blog length, most blogs should be at least 300 words and/or 2-3 paragraphs long, and you want most of your post to be content--don't waste time on empty statements and repetition.**

The best blog posts will both demonstrate you've done the reading and show you have understood and analyzed it. Blogs should never be a summary of what you've read or heard; if you're writing in response to a reading or lecture, your blogs should consist of a) analysis and reaction and criticism of that content, or b) how the readings apply to our larger questions of defining literature and digital literature and considering what happens to literature as it changes from one medium to another. Images and videos are awesome, but they should be classroom-appropriate.

How to Post a Blog to Our Course Site (not to your own blog!)

When registering for WordPress, you may have also created a personal blog site; please make certain you are posting any work for this course to the course site and not your personal blog site (e.g. amanda.wordpress.com). You can always check this by looking at our class blog and seeing if your post appears there.

To post to the course site, do the following: On the WordPress administration page (the "dashboard"), you'll need to navigate to our blog by clicking in the left menu on "dashboard", "my blogs", and then on the middle of the page on "Digital Storytelling". This will put you inside our course blog, and when you publish a new post from there (posts > add new > write your stuff and click "publish") it should appear on the course's front page.

Blog Grading Rubric:

Blogs will be graded on the following scale:

Rating	Characteristics
7	**Exceptional.** The blog entry is focused and coherently integrates examples from the course readings with explanations or analysis. The entry demonstrates awareness of its own limitations or implications, and it considers multiple perspectives when appropriate. The entry reflects in-depth engagement with the topic. The blog meets the requirements of the assignment (i.e.

	answers the question in the blog prompt, includes any other features the instructor asked for), stands on its own as a coherent piece of writing making a solid argument, and goes beyond answering the blog prompt in the quality of its style, claims, and support.
5-6	**Both Meets and Exceeds Assignment Requirements.** The blog entry is reasonably focused, and explanations or analysis are mostly based on direct examples from course readings (e.g. quotations or paraphrased but cited arguments) or other evidence. Fewer connections are made between ideas, and though new insights are offered, they are not fully developed. The entry reflects moderate engagement with the topic. The blog meets the requirements of the assignment (i.e. answers the question in the blog prompt, includes any other features the instructor asked for) and also stands on its own as a coherent piece of writing making a solid argument.
3-4	**Meets Assignment Requirements.** The blog entry does not do anything more than directly answer the blog prompt; it may be mostly description or summary, without consideration of alternative perspectives, or with few connections made between ideas. The entry reflects only a brief amount of time thinking about the topic. The blog meets the requirements of the assignment (i.e. answers the question in the blog prompt, includes any other features the instructor asked for) but does not stand on its own as a coherent piece of writing making a solid argument (e.g. feels like an answer jotted down on a test, not a piece of writing one might find on a decent journalism site). A "2″ does not address specific arguments or quotations from course readings.
2	**Limited.** The blog entry is unfocused, parrots the work of others without making significant additions, or simply rehashes previous comments, and displays no evidence of student engagement with the topic.
0	**No Credit.** The blog entry is missing or consists of a few disconnected sentences.