Contact Information

Instructor: Betsy Brey
Email: ebrey@uwaterloo.ca
Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 11am-12pm via Microsoft Teams. Appointments for other times and dates available.

Contact details: The best way to get ahold of me outside of office hours is via email. I will reply to emails and messages on Teams within 24 hours. To get in touch during office hours, log in to the ENGL108D Team in Microsoft Teams and send me a chat message; we can discuss via video or chat depending on your preference. Please note that I do not use the Instant Messaging/Chat service on Learn.

Course Description

This course examines how digital communication technologies construct and constrain the formation of online identities and social spaces. More specifically, we will explore the technical, cultural, and social forces that make digital lives both familiar and unfamiliar, traditional and subversive. In addition to studying the who, what, where, when, why, and how of "digital lives," this course is focused on helping you develop your skills as an academic reader and writer in the discipline of English.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

As an ENGL 108D student, you will:

1. Understand and explain the connections between theoretical, critical and popular discourses concerning the who, what, where, when, why, and how of digital lives.
2. Engage critically with your own digital life.
3. Analyze cultural, material, and immaterial practices, objects, and artifacts of digital lives.
4. Adapt and explore different conventions of genre, audience, cultural assumptions, and rhetorical context in digital media.
5. Effectively and helpfully collaborate with other students through group work and fair project delegation, both in smaller and larger groups.
6. Create projects in several formats, including a formal essay, weekly informal writing, and a creative/non-traditional multimedia project, demonstrating an informed understanding of core concepts and theories learned.
Required Materials

*The book is required, and we will be working with it every week. You may purchase a physical copy or e-book version. Additional assigned readings are available online for free; see the LEARN schedule for links.*

Assessment and Assignments
These descriptions are intended to help you see an overview of the assignment. They do not contain all the requirements of the assignment. Complete assignment sheets and marking rubrics are available on Learn.

**Creative Project (20%)**: For this project, you will work in a small group or on your own. Using one of three supplied format options, you and/or your group will create plan, write, and create a digital story. This may be accomplished in a few possible ways, which will be discussed in class: Option A, netprov; Option B, threaded storytelling project; Option C, Twine game. In addition to submitting your story, each student individually must also submit a personal reflection—a 4-5 page explanation of the project describing your storytelling goals, the ways your story worked with or against the affordances of your digital format, how your group worked together, and what your own contributions to the project were. At the start of the project, everyone must submit a Creative Project Pitch Survey via the Survey function on Learn, which includes an informal description of the story you want to tell and a workflow organization and delegation section. If you have another idea for a storytelling project beyond the suggestions, feel free to discuss it with me during office hours. Reflections are due posted to the Dropbox in Word or PDF format by each student individually. Only one student per group needs to upload the files, images, links, screenshots, etc., for the story itself.

**Discussion Board Posts (20%)**: Each week, you are responsible for completing one of the two prompts on the Learn discussion board for that week. You have two options: choose one of the prompts and respond to it in 300-400 words OR choose one of your classmate’s responses to either prompt and respond to that with 300-400 words. The discussion boards are intended to be informal and reflective, encouraging you to connect different theories, concepts, and ideas from class each week. Your lowest two marks will be dropped.

**End of Term Essay (20%)**: By the end of class, you will have access to a comprehensive set of notes from presentations over the term, in addition to your Discussion Board posts. For the end of term essay, there will be four prompts to choose from; you will choose two of these prompts and write a 2-3 page essay using the book and the notes you took and collected over the course of the term. No outside research is required or allowed. Prompts will be posted to the Response Essay section on Learn during the last week of class.

**Group Presentation (20%)**: In a small group, you will be responsible for reading, taking notes, and presenting the materials from your assigned reading. You and your group will sign up for a topic/date and work together to create a presentation reviewing the core concepts from the reading. Your presentation is intended to be a supplement, not a replacement, for reading the chapter. Consider your role as making a study guide for your classmates. You will create a PowerPoint or Google slides presentation and share your guide with the class by recording your presentation with Bongo Video.
Assignments. This is not a public speaking assignment, so you will not be marked on the quality of your speaking. Your group will also upload the notes from the chapter to the video presentation for the class to access. After you upload your video, you must then complete the Group Summary Response Quiz on Learn, located under the “Group Summary Report” tab on the content bar to the left. You will not receive any points for the assignment until you complete this final portion. Presentations and notes will be available for use in the Response Essay at the end of the term. You will sign up for a presentation date early in the term. There are no make-up groups available for this assignment. Plan accordingly; if you are unresponsive to your group, the project will go on without you. Any sudden changes must be worked out with your group.

Participation (20%): You’ll earn participation points in a few ways, including but not limited to:

- Workshops
- Video Prompt Responses
- Viewing Lecture Videos
- Peer Review
- Chapter Quizzes

Weekly Participation cannot be made up at a later date; be sure to track your progress using the Checklists.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Assessment Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Boards</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>End of Term Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Evaluation and Mark Distribution

90-100%: assignments earning 90-100% are truly outstanding and spectacular work that goes well above and beyond the expectations of an assignment at the 100 course-level. This work demonstrates mastery of the subject matter at the undergraduate level. Full Credit earns a 100%.

80-89%: assignments earning 80-89% show excellent, exceptional work. The work is communicated in a polished and effective manner with a great deal of attention to detail.

70-79%: assignments earning 70-79% demonstrate a solid understanding of the material. The work is communicated in an effective, appropriate manner and attention to detail is apparent, expressing an understanding of the material beyond the minimum level of comprehension. Partial Credit earns a 70%.

60-69%: assignments earning 60-69% meet the expectations of an assignment but does not surpass expectations. The work shows comprehension and effort but only meets the minimum requirements of a task. These are the average marks for coursework.

50-59%: assignments earning 50-59% do not meet the expectations of the assignment, either due to misunderstanding, not following directions, or by not attending to the required tasks of the assignment.
1-49%: assignments earning 1-49% are failing marks. Academic assignments of any kind earn failing marks usually for two reasons. And your professors can always tell the difference between the two. One kind of assignment may fail because—even though the writer clearly worked conscientiously and made a genuine attempt—a student does not understand the material. It indicates that the student should meet with the professor or a TA or attend peer tutoring in order to understand the course material and the skills required at a university. A different situation is when the assignment was written by a student capable of much better work who has not taken the assignment seriously enough or given it the time it required. Assignments in this category were perhaps written at the last minute, did not go through a thoughtful revision process, and may not have been based on sufficient preparation, reading, or research. Students receiving failing grades in for this reason should interpret them as wake-up calls: careless work will not earn credit in university courses.

0%: the assignment has not been received by the professor; No Credit earns a 0%.

Note: Grades in the 60-70% range are average and meet the terms of the assignment. Marks in 70-80% are good and worth being proud of; a 75% means I think you have a great understanding of the material and have made good decisions about how to present your knowledge. Marks in the 80-100% range are difficult to obtain and show work above the expectations of a 100-level course. If you earn a 95%, it means it’s one of the best pieces of work I’ve have ever seen for this kind of class. Doing the minimum does not earn 90s.

Using Learn
This is an online course. All course materials will be completed via the University of Waterloo’s Learn platform.

- **Announcements**: I will use the Announcements widget on the Course Home page during the term to communicate new or changing information regarding due dates, instructor absence, etc., as needed. You are expected to read the announcements on a regular basis. To ensure you are viewing the complete list of announcements, you may need to click “Show All Announcements.”
- **Content**: Course content is accessible from the main page by selecting Content on the Course Home navigation bar. Each week will have its own module on the left-hand side of the screen. Modules will include all details and links required to complete the week’s assignments.
- **Checklist**: I create weekly checklists of what is due and what you should be doing. If you feel lost or you’re worried you’ve missed something, this is the place to go and look!
- **Discussions**: Some participation and all of the Discussion Board assignments will be completed via their respective discussion boards. Discussions can be accessed from the Course Home page by clicking Connect and then Discussions on the course navigation bar.
- **Dropbox**: Certain assignments will require you submit your work via Dropbox, which can be accessed from the Course Home page by clicking Submit and then Dropbox on the course navigation bar. **All submitted materials must be uploaded as a PDF or Microsoft Word file type**: I cannot open Pages.
• **Grades:** You can check your marks at any time by selecting Grades from the main navigation bar. I will do my best to mark small assignments within a week and large assignments within two weeks. If that changes, I will update my process via the Announcement widget.

• **Quizzes:** As part of the Group Presentation assignment, groups will be writing quiz questions to assist in content comprehension. Each week that there is a Presentation, there will also be a quiz to complete. You can locate available quizzes by selecting “Submit” and clicking “Quiz.”

• **Video Assignments:** This is a Bongo application in Learn. We’ll be using it for Group Presentations and some participation work. Under “Submit,” select “Video Assignments” and you will be taken to the landing page with your assignments. Some participation assignments will require you to use the Video Assignment feature. The first time you use it, log in with your Waterloo email and password; this service is part of the university’s official web platforms.

**Coronavirus Information**

The University Coronavirus resource page provides updated information on COVID-19 and guidance for accommodations due to COVID-19 (https://uwaterloo.ca/coronavirus/academic-information). Email me if you have questions or concerns. Stay healthy and stay safe.

**Academic Integrity**

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

• As a student, you are expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for your actions. If you are unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or if you need help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about rules for group work/collaboration, you should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

• When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, you should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm

• If you believe that a decision affecting some aspect of your university life has been unfair or unreasonable, you may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm

• You may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 -Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 – Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm

• More information: Academic Integrity Office (UW): http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/
Accessibility and Accommodations
AccessAbility Services (https://uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for those of us with disabilities, without compromising the academic integrity of curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to do your best in class, please register at the beginning of each academic term. In cases where you are experiencing problems either in or outside of class that are affecting your attendance and/or work performance, please keep me informed. On a case-by-case basis, alternative arrangements may be made. In addition, please let me know what I can do that will make the course more accessible to you. The course is intended to be challenging, but the structure of the course itself should not be a barrier to your learning.

Late Work, Extensions, and Due Dates
Materials are marked with a due date. Submit the file to the correct location as indicated by the assignment before 11:59PM on its due date to be eligible for full credit. I do not accept assignments via email; if you email me an assignment, I will just ask you to upload it to Learn and the time the assignment is submitted to Learn is the time it is submitted. Stuff gets very lost in my inbox.

Late assignments are subject to a late penalty. For percentile assignments, 5% of your earned mark will be subtracted per day late. Work submitted nine days or more late will automatically receive 50%. Very late work may be marked without feedback.

All that said, I strongly believe that you know your schedule and your abilities better than anyone. I am more than willing to extend due dates if and only if you request an extension at least 2 days before the due date. Extensions will not be granted for assignments due on the same day as the request. I have this policy in place to help you organize your schedule and manage your time, not to reward procrastination.

Mental Health Support
We all need a support system.

On Campus
- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 xt 32655
- MATES: one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek form Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7
- Good2Talk: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-433 ext. 6880
- Here 24/7: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
• **OK2BME**: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning folks in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS [website](#), and you can download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)](#) and the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information.

**Territorial Acknowledgement**

The settler city of Waterloo is founded on stolen land. We are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River. But acknowledgement isn't enough. We must actively work against the erasure of Indigenous people’s lives and rights.

**A (Hopefully Unnecessary) Reminder about Respect and Safety**

I would like to draw attention to the title of the course—digital lives. We are looking at our own digital lives, but others’ lives as well. All content we discuss was produced by another human being, and we will speak respectfully about and towards the subjects of and posters of digital media content. You can speak about media that is created to be satirical, truthful, humorous, offensive, honest, or abusive without being derisive towards those who posted the material or those featured in the material. This can be difficult at times. But remember, this is University level coursework. Be professional.

This is not to say we cannot or will not discuss topics, or that everyone must agree. But we will only engage in respectful conversations in online and in-class discussions and assignments. Please help to make this classroom a safe space for everyone. Sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, religious prejudices, etc. will not be tolerated. The material we cover in class may engage in these behaviors and discourses, but members of this class will not.

**Course Schedule**

IMPORTANT: ALL TIMES EASTERN. Please see the University Policies section for details.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities and Readings</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1: January 11–15</td>
<td>• Syllabus Video&lt;br&gt;• Video lecture&lt;br&gt;• Reading: Dorey, “Proof My Life is an Anime’—Yes, I’m the Toast Person”</td>
<td>• Introduce Yourself Video Assignment&lt;br&gt;• Discussion Board&lt;br&gt;• Syllabus Quiz&lt;br&gt;• Introduction Survey</td>
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<td>• Reading: Lindgren, chapter 1 “Digital Society”&lt;br&gt;• Reading: Morrison, “Facebook and Coaxed Affordances” (LEARN)</td>
<td>• Chapter Quiz&lt;br&gt;• Discussion Board&lt;br&gt;• Grade Your Prof’s Presentation Exercise</td>
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| Week 3: January 25–29 | • Reading: Lindgren, chapter 2 “Social Media”  
• Group Presentation  
• Reading: Literat and van den Berg, “Buy memes low, sell memes high” (LEARN) | • Chapter Quiz  
• Discussion Board  
• Memeconomy Exercise |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 4: February 1—5 | • Reading: Lindgren, chapter 3 “Cyber Debates”  
• Group Presentation  
• Reading: Jurgenson, “The IRL Fetish”  
• Reading: Turkle, “Stop Googling, Let’s Talk” | • Chapter Quiz  
• Discussion Board  
• Debate Exercise |
| Week 5: February 8–12 | • Reading: Lindgren, chapter 4 “Interaction and Community”  
• Group Presentation  
• Reading: Feher, “Digital identity and the online self” (LEARN) | • Chapter Quiz  
• Discussion Board  
• “Writing Ourselves into Being” Exercise |
| February 15–19 | Reading Week | |
| Week 6: February 22–26 | • Reading: Lindgren, chapter 5 “Communities and Networks”  
• Group Presentation  
• Reading: Turk, “Fan Work” | • Chapter Quiz  
• Discussion Board  
• Fans and Fandoms Exercise |
| Week 7: March 1—5 | • Reading: Lindgren, chapter 6 “Digital Visuality and Visibility”  
• Group Presentation  
• Reading: Herrman, “How Tik Tok is Rewriting the World” | • Chapter Quiz  
• Discussion Board  
• Selfie City Exercise |
| Week 8: March 8-12 | • Reading: Lindgren, chapter 7 “Feeling Digital”  
• Group Presentation  
• Readings: Spumante: “The Subtle Art of Trolling” and Rugnetta/PBS Idea Channel “When is a Troll No Longer a Troll?” | • Chapter Quiz  
• Discussion Board  
• The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly Exercise |
| Week 9: March 17-19* Shortened Week | • Reading: Lindgren, chapter 8 “Digital Citizenship”  
• Reading: “Buchholz, DeHart, and Moorman Digital Citizenship During a Global Pandemic” (LEARN)  
• Group Presentation | • Chapter Quiz  
• Discussion Board |
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<th>Week 11: March 29–April 1* Shortened Week</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Reading: Lindgren, chapter 9 “Digital Power and Exploitation”</td>
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<td>• Reading: Lindgren, chapter 10 “Digital Activism”</td>
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<td>• Reading: Belkhir and Elmeligi, “Assessing ICT Global Emissions Footprint: Trends to 2040 &amp; Recommendations” (LEARN)</td>
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<td>• Group Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Video lecture</td>
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<td>• Reading: Gray-Hawkins, “Collective Movements, Digital Activism, and Protest Events”</td>
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<td>• Group Presentation</td>
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<td>• Chapter Quiz</td>
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<th>Week 12: April 12—14* Shortened Week</th>
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<td>• Review and Wrapping Up</td>
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<th>April 17-26 Finals</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Response Essay</td>
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<td>• Course Evaluations (Evaluate Platform Link)</td>
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