



EAST TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY

ENGL 611.01W | WRITING WITH DIGITAL MEDIA

Course Syllabus: Spring 2026 | Online

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Jason A. Walker Office Location: Talbot Hall #229

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 2:00 – 3:30pm Office Phone: (903)886-5260

University Email Address: Jason.Walker@ETAMU.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: 24 hours (weekdays), weekend emails answered Monday

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

ENGL 333 is a practicum on composing original essays with digital media, including video, sound, and images. This course is designed for advanced students and those new to writing with digital tools. Introduces students to a range of tools, concepts, and models for composing with digital media, as well as ethical considerations associated with the creation and sharing of multimodal texts, including the role to be played by the Digital Humanities. Objectives include understanding the fundamentals of digital storytelling. Students will demonstrate that understanding by assembling and sharing their own original examples of digital storytelling in video, sound, images, or other modalities. Course may be repeated for credit as topics change..

Required Texts (student purchase)

Ball, Cheryl E., Jennifer Sheppard, and Kristin L. Arola. *Writer/Designer: A Guide to Making Multimodal Projects*. 3rd edition. Bedford/St. Martin's.

Rodrique, Tanya K., and Kyle D. Stedman. *Soundwriting: A Guide to Making Audio Projects*. University Press of Colorado.

Faris, Michael J., Courtney S. Danforth, and Kyle D. Stedman, editors. *Amplifying Soundwriting Pedagogies: Integrating Sound into Rhetoric and Writing*. WAC Clearinghouse.

Manovich, Lev. *The Language of New Media*. MIT Press. Additional course readings available via D2L course shell.

Additional Required Materials

- A valid, working Leomail address that you check everyday
- At least two storage methods: cloud, flash drive, folders, etc.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Compose rhetorically effective multimodal texts using sound, image, video, and interface design.
- Apply theories of multimodality and new media to the analysis of digital texts.
- Integrate sound as a primary rhetorical mode rather than as a supplement to alphabetic text.
- Demonstrate ethical and transparent use of AI-assisted composing tools.
- Engage critically with Digital Humanities scholarship and practices.
- Reflect thoughtfully on their composing processes and rhetorical decisions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

General Overview of Required Work

ENGL 611 is a graduate-level practicum that balances theoretical inquiry with sustained multimodal composing. In this course, you will engage deeply with scholarly readings in multimodal rhetoric, sound studies, new media theory, and digital humanities while applying these frameworks to original works of digital composition. The course emphasizes learning across modes, including written text, visual, sonic, and interactive rhetoric. You will make deliberate rhetorical, ethical, and accessibility-focused choices as writers and designers.

Required work includes regular reading and participation in weekly discussion boards, where you analyze course texts, examine digital examples, and engage in scholarly dialogue with peers. You will complete a series of focused multimodal micro-projects that isolate and develop specific skills in visual design, soundwriting, and interface or user experience. These shorter assignments build toward more complex composing tasks and encourage experimentation with tools, genres, and audiences.

In addition to these applied exercises, you will produce a sustained critical media analysis essay that situates a digital or multimodal text within relevant theoretical conversations from the course. The semester culminates in a substantial original multimodal digital storytelling project that demonstrates rhetorical coherence, ethical design, and theoretical grounding across one or more media. Finally, you will complete a reflective essay that synthesizes your learning, evaluates your composing processes, and articulates how your understanding of writing, rhetoric, and digital media has evolved over the course of the term.

Course Engagement Expectations

This course is organized around critical engagement with course materials and sustained multimodal composition in an online environment. Because ENGL 611 is delivered asynchronously, discussion takes place primarily through discussion boards rather than live, in-person conversation. While this format has limitations, it reflects the realities of contemporary digital communication and provides an important space for practicing rhetorical awareness, clarity, and audience-centered writing. Because the course centers on digital rhetoric and multimodal communication, discussion itself should be treated as a rhetorical act, with contributions demonstrating intentionality, intellectual engagement, and relevance to course concepts.

Successful participation in this online graduate course requires personal responsibility, consistent commitment, and proactive time management. In addition to substantive discussion posts, you are expected to engage fully with all composing and analytical work in the course, including multimodal micro-projects, a critical media analysis essay, and a final digital storytelling project. These assignments are cumulative and interconnected, require ongoing preparation and revision, and form the core of the course's learning objectives.

Major Assignments and Grading

Midterm and Final Grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90 – 100%
 B = 80 – 89%
 C = 70 – 79%
 D = 60 – 69%
 F = <60%

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| • Discussion Board Posts | 15% |
| • AI and Digital Authorship Position Statement | 10% |
| • Multimodal Micro-Projects (image, sound, interface) | 15% |
| • Critical Media Analysis Essay (10-12 pages) | 20% |
| • Final Multimodal Digital Storytelling Project | 25% |
| • Final Reflective Essay | 15% |

Late Submission and Missing Assignments

Successful and satisfactory completion of this course requires the timely submission of all assignments. Deadlines are established to support the pacing of readings, multimodal composing, peer response, and instructor feedback that are central to the course's structure and learning objectives. Because assignments are often cumulative and inform subsequent work, submitting work on time is essential.

Late work is generally not accepted. Exceptions may be considered only in cases of documented extreme circumstances and, whenever possible, with advance notice. Extreme circumstances are limited to serious and unavoidable situations and do not include work schedules, competing

Assignment submission dates and course calendar subject to

deadlines in other courses, connectivity issues, or poor time management. In an asynchronous course, participation-based work such as discussion posts, peer review, workshops, and collaborative activities depends on timely engagement and cannot be made up once the relevant instructional window has closed.

You are responsible for planning accordingly and communicating proactively about any issues that may affect your ability to meet course requirements. Failure to submit work on time or to participate fully in required course activities may significantly impact your performance in the course.

Statement on Grading and Assessment

Evaluation in ENGL 611 involves informed professional judgment appropriate to a graduate course in multimodal composition and digital rhetoric. Digital and creative projects are assessed not only on technical execution, but on rhetorical effectiveness, conceptual coherence, intellectual and creative risk, and aesthetic control, including the degree to which design choices are purposeful and responsive to audience, medium, and context. Because aesthetic judgment is integral to evaluating multimodal work, assessment cannot be reduced entirely to mechanical or standardized criteria.

At the same time, grading is guided by clearly defined expectations, including completion of required components, alignment with rhetorical goals and genre conventions, ethical and transparent use of sources and digital tools, accessibility considerations, and timely submission of work. Strong performance reflects a balance between creative risk-taking and accountability consistent with graduate-level standards. When the instructor determines that substantial improvement could be made through revision, he may, at his discretion, selectively invite revised submissions for the possibility of an improved grade.

ACCESS, NAVIGATION, AND RESOURCES

This course is designed to support a range of learning approaches while maintaining consistent academic expectations for all students. Reasonable accommodation will be provided in accordance with university policy for students who have documented needs through the appropriate campus office.

Students who are registered with Disability Services and who require accommodation should contact me directly as early as possible in the semester to discuss the implementation of accommodations approved through Disability Services. Accommodation is intended to ensure accessibility in the course rather than alter the academic standards, learning outcomes, or essential requirements of the course.

Students without documented accommodations who are experiencing academic, personal, or emotional challenges are encouraged to make use of available university resources, including the Counseling Center and academic support services. Disabilities and learning challenges may be visible or invisible, and the university provides formal processes to ensure that students receive appropriate support.

All students are expected to meet the stated course requirements. Questions about access or support, or issues which may hinder progress should be addressed as early as possible to allow for appropriate planning within the framework of institutional guidelines.

Students With Disabilities – ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm. 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

Learning Management System (LMS)

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements:

- [LMS Requirements](#)
- [LMS Browser Support](#)
- [Zoom Video Conferencing Tool](#)

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903-468-6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace (D2L), please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: [Brightspace Support](#).

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. You should have at least two storage methods such as a flash drive, cloud storage, folder, etc. to back up all your class materials. You should also have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems such as the local library, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment

services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding the Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Communication

Communication is a key part of success in this course. I am available via email (Jason.Walker@ETAMU.edu) from 9am-5pm weekdays to discuss assignments and other course-related concerns. I also have walk-in office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-3:30 pm in Talbot Hall Room 229, or by appointment (email me to set up a time). Please note that I may not respond to emails after hours, but I will respond within 24 hours on weekdays. Emails received over the weekend will be answered on Monday.

Building Community

Even in an asynchronous online environment, building informal connections with classmates can be especially valuable. You are encouraged to exchange contact information with one or two peers to support one another in navigating readings, assignments, digital tools, and course expectations. These connections can provide spaces for clarification, idea-sharing, and encouragement while helping to create a more collaborative and mutually beneficial digital learning community that extends beyond the discussion board.

Attendance

“Attendance” in ENGL 611 is demonstrated through regular, timely engagement with course materials, discussion boards, peer review activities, and assigned work rather than physical attendance in a classroom. Successful completion of the course depends on consistent participation each week, including meeting deadlines and contributing meaningfully to course discussions and collaborative activities.

The course may include occasional synchronous meetings via Zoom for workshops, project support, or community building. When synchronous sessions are scheduled, advance notice will be provided, and expectations for participation will be clearly communicated. If you anticipate difficulty attending a scheduled Zoom session, you should communicate proactively so that alternative arrangements, when appropriate, can be discussed.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress or weather, may make it necessary for me to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced immediately.

Grievances

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head or Assistant Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form

(available in the main office, Talbot Hall 141). Before an appointment is scheduled, the student must provide clearly documented and explained issues as to why the meeting is being requested. The student must also state when they discussed the issue in person or via phone (not email) with the instructor already. Where applicable, students should also consult [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05](#) (“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”).

Respect & Student Conduct

This course brings together individuals with diverse backgrounds and perspectives, and meaningful intellectual work may involve disagreement, discomfort, and challenge. These moments can be productive when approached with respect and intellectual generosity. Because the course takes place primarily online, professionalism applies to all forms of digital communication, including discussion boards, peer feedback, email, and collaborative platforms, and requires clear, respectful language and attention to tone and boundaries. During any synchronous Zoom meetings, students are expected to participate in a manner consistent with a professional academic setting. All students are expected to follow university standards of conduct and contribute to a respectful, inclusive learning environment conducive to meaningful engagement. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Inclusion Policy & Nondiscrimination Notice

Your value as a member of this course and university community at large is vital to me, regardless of social identity factors. While at times, the topic of class discussions, readings, and other activities may take you out of your comfort zone or even go against your individual perception of the world, you are expected to keep an open mind and evaluate claims based on facts and knowledge, rather than preconceived notions alone. For questions, concerns, and problems related to discrimination based on race, ethnicity, class, nationality, gender identity, sexuality, religion, veteran status, or other social or personal identity factors, please come talk to me.

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Collection of Data for Measuring Institutional Effectiveness

To measure the level of compliance with the university’s Institutional Effectiveness guidelines, throughout the semester, I will collect some of the ungraded texts you produce. The texts will be part of a portfolio created on your behalf and will be measured to ensure that our program “promotes practices that result in higher student academic achievement; an enhanced student experience; aligned and transparent decisions; and readily available information for improvement, accountability, and accreditation.” This is solely an assessment of program effectiveness and in no way affects students’ course grades or GPA.

Writing Center

The Writing Center offers writers free, one-on-one assistance. We currently offer 45min, face-to-face or online sessions that writers can book from our website: www.etamu.edu/writing-center.

Assignment submission dates and course calendar subject to

We welcome all writers, majors, and disciplines—undergraduate and graduate students alike (faculty and staff too!). Research shows that all workers benefit from sharing their work with a focused reader. The Writing Center staff is trained to support writers in any stage of the writing process (from the blank page to polishing sentences), and we work with writers to verbalize writing goals and to stay on track with larger writing projects. We work with any form of writing (academic and nonacademic). The writers with whom we work usually bring projects like important emails, weekly writing assignments, midterm and final essays, and theses and dissertations. Contact us with any questions here: writingcenter@etamu.edu.

Library

The Velma Waters Library supports the research, learning and teaching interests of students, faculty and staff. Connect with a librarian, explore our research and course guides, and attend workshops.

- Chat with a Librarian! Get immediate assistance with our chat service on the main Library page: <https://www.etamu.edu/library/>
- Email ask@etamu.libanswers.com. We will respond to your email within 24 hours, often much sooner.
- Text your question to 903.225.2862.
- Call the Waters Library at 903.886.5718 or contact the librarian for your college/department to discuss your research needs.
- Meet With Us! Don't stay up all night searching Google. Schedule a one-on-one consultation held in-person or via Zoom with the librarian for your college/academic department.
- Visit Us! We'd love to meet you in-person!
 - Waters Library Research Office: Second Floor, Room 213
 - Waters Library University Archives: 4th Floor, Room 406A
 - East Texas A&M at Mesquite Metroplex Center: Second Floor, Study Room

Academic Integrity & Honesty

Here is the official word on plagiarism and academic integrity from ETAMU:

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#) [Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

Basically, plagiarism is any attempt to pass off someone else's words or ideas as your own, but also not giving credit where credit is due. As your instructor, I want to know YOUR thoughts, YOUR ideas, and what YOU have to say—and it doesn't have to be perfect the first time. If you are struggling with an assignment, please come talk to me, and I will help you in any way that I can. Plagiarism is not worth the risk.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

In this course, the use of AI tools is expected as part of learning to write with digital media; however, such use must be ethical, responsible, and aligned with course guidelines. All AI-assisted work must be fully and transparently documented, and failure to disclose AI use constitutes a violation of course and program policies regarding academic integrity. Below is the official policy statement regarding the use of AI in writing program courses at ETAMU:

The East Texas A&M University (ETAMU) Writing Program acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), and Artificial General Intelligence (AGI). The ETAMU Writing Program is guided by national, flagship organizations representing the discipline of English and the field of Writing Studies, including the Modern Language Association (MLA), National Council on the Teaching of English (NTCE), and the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) regarding the theorization and teaching of critical AI literacy. ETAMU Writing Program values a spectrum of beliefs about AI, GenAI, and AGI, ranging from ethical integration to absolute refusal. ETAMU Writing Program believes in and practices critical AI literacy alongside ethical, responsible integration of AI, GenAI, and AGI in our writing instruction, appropriately. We teach students to document their AI use in their writing and other curriculum deliverables while highlighting educational concerns about using these technologies. ETAMU Writing Program instructors share their position on and preferences for AI, GenAI, and AGI integration with students, and students follow the instructor's guidelines and the requirements of the course. Undocumented uses of AI, GenAI, and AGI can constitute an instance of academic dishonesty, including cases related to issues like plagiarism and misrepresentation in student deliverables.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

COURSE OUTLINE/CALENDAR

Below is a sketch of the semester. Be sure to consult D2L for the most up-to-date schedule and deadlines. I will send a weekly announcement each Sunday covering the week ahead.

WEEK	TOPICS & READINGS	ASSIGNMENT DUE
1 1/12 – 1/18	Topic: Introduction to Multimodal Writing Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Writer/Designer</i>, Introduction • Ch. 1 Selfe, “Toward New Media Texts.” 	Discussion board: Defining multimodal writing 1/18 – 11:59pm
2 1/19 – 1/25	Topic: Ethics, AI, and Digital Authorship Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McKee & Porter, <i>Ethics of Digital Writing Research</i>, Ch. 1 • Bender et al., “Stochastic Parrots.” 	Ethical AI & Digital Authorship Statement 1/25 – 11:59pm
3 1/26 – 2/1	Topic: Accessibility and Design Justice Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Writer/Designer</i>, Ch. 7 • Noble, <i>Algorithms of Oppression</i>, Ch. 1 	Discussion board: Accessibility analysis reflection 2/1 – 11:59pm
4 2/2 – 2/8	Topic: Rhetoric of Design Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Writer/Designer</i>, Ch. 2 • Ball, “Assessing Multimodal Compositions.” 	Visual rhetoric micro-project 2/8 – 11:59pm
5 2/9 – 2/15	Topic: Visual Rhetoric Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manovich, <i>Language of New Media</i>, Ch. 1 • Barthes, “Rhetoric of the Image.” 	Discussion board: Visual rhetoric and meaning-making 2/15 – 11:59pm
6 2/16 – 2/22	Topic: Interface & UX Readings: Manovich, Ch. 5	UX micro-project 2/22 – 11:59pm
7 2/23 – 3/1	Topic: Sound as Rhetoric	Discussion board: Sound as rhetorical action 3/1 – 11:59pm

Assignment submission dates and course calendar subject to

	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Soundwriting</i>, Ch. 1 • Selfe, “Movement of Air.” 	
8 3/2 – 3/8	Topic: Audio Storytelling & Sound Pedagogies Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Soundwriting</i>, Chs. 3–4 • Stedman, “Sonic Rhetoric.” • <i>Amplifying Soundwriting Pedagogies</i>, Intro & Ch. 2 	Audio micro-project 3/8 – 11:59pm
9 3/9 – 3/15	SPRING BREAK Listen to <i>S-Town</i> on YouTube. We will discuss this after the break.	
10 3/16 – 3/22	Topic: New Media Theory Readings: Manovich, Ch. 3 Bolter & Grusin, “Remediation.”	Critical response essay 3/22 – 11:59pm
11 3/23 – 3/29	Topic: Digital Humanities Readings: Manovich, Ch. 4 Risam, “Decolonizing DH.”	Discussion board: Digital humanities, power, and knowledge-making 3/29 – 11:59pm
12 3/30 – 4/5	Topic: Circulation & Public Audiences Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eyman, <i>Digital Rhetoric</i>, Ch. 6 • Ridolfo & DeVoss, “Composing for Recomposition.” 	Final project proposal 4/5 – 11:59pm
13 4/6 – 4/12	Topic: Digital Storytelling Models Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Miller & Shepherd, “Blogging as Social Action.” 	
14 4/13 – 4/19	Topic: Peer Review Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball, “Multimodal Assessment.” • Shipka, <i>Toward a Composition Made Whole</i>, Ch. 5 	Final project peer review 4/19 – 11:59pm

15 4/20 – 4/26	Work Week	Final multimodal project due 4/26 – 11:59pm
16 4/27 – 5/3	Topic: Reflection Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yancey, “Reflection in the Writing Classroom.”	Final reflective essay 5/3 – 11:59pm