

## **Lightning Talk Script**

Hello, my name is Lee Hibbard. This semester I've been teaching English 419, Multimedia Writing. The course is designed to focus on writing in a variety of genres and contexts for different platforms and mediums, and it's one of those courses an instructor jumps at the chance to teach. Since multimedia writing has such a wide definition, the possibilities for a course theme are quite literally endless. As I sat down to plan out a semester of writing in different genres, contexts, and media, I turned to what I felt was the perfect integration of these concepts: archiving and curation.

Archiving and curatorial practices take place in multiple modes and contexts, particularly in the 21st Century. The human urge to preserve and share our lives is amplified in the era of social media, and this was my primary reason for this course design. Students have more archival and curatorial tools available to them than any other generation in history, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and are frequently warned of the dangers of using those tools carelessly. In a time of rapid information sharing and easily rewritten history, I thus saw a need for a course that focused on the analysis and understanding of how we as citizens can rhetorically share and preserve information.

The course sequence operated on a personal to global scale of rhetorical archival concepts, with students beginning by examining their own archival and curatorial habits. Each student wrote an analysis of one or more of their current social media accounts and then assessed what they do (or don't) need to change to make that account acceptable for a young working professional. Students in this class have analyzed everything from their Instagram accounts to their personal Youtube channels, talked about their branding and influence, and considered the different audiences their digital presence could have.

After taking a look at their personal archival practices, students expanded their scope to select and examine an existing archive of their choice. They conducted two major assignments based on this unit, the first being a rhetorical analysis of that archive's context, purpose, and contents. The second was a remediation exercise distilling that information into a brief paragraph, which was then posted on a class wiki page, giving students the opportunity to learn rudimentary html and css in a communal digital space.

The final project took this expansion even further and had students working in small groups to propose and design a new archive of their choice. They proposed the concept in a designed white paper and are now in the process of remediating that paper into three major components: an exhibit guidebook that

details the goals, audience, and scope of the archive, a sampling of the archive's contents, and a poster presenting the major goals and uses of the archive.

Students are currently proposing archives on a variety of subjects, including apple products, political tweets, and pokemon cards.

In the information age, the way we move and function in the digital spaces available to us can shape our futures in drastic and previously unforeseen ways, and what we preserve and how we preserve it will affect the stories we can share. If these students can take rhetorical ownership of their own narratives, and better understand the stories and experiences of others, they'll be that much more prepared for whatever their futures hold.

Thank you!