

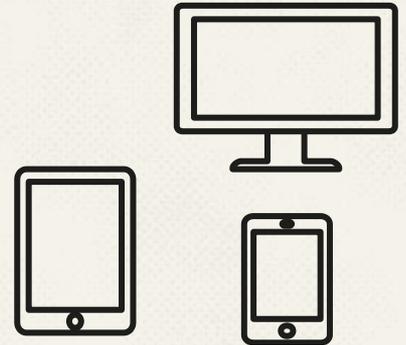
# **Technological Temporality: Strategies for Adaptable Digital Course Design in Higher Education**



Lee W. Hibbard, PhD || Georgia Tech

# Digital Course Design

- Course Design in an explicitly Digital Context
  - Online learning
  - Hybrid learning
  - Distance learning
- Relevant to instructors and institutions across multiple higher education programs



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## What makes it *Adaptable* Digital Course Design?

- Adapting to shifting cultural and educational needs across multiple axes
- Aiding students and instructors across multiple aspects of their lives
- Shaping the course to the students, the situation, the cultural landscape, and the subject matter

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# Examining The Evolution of a College Course

- Autoethnographic retrospective
- Course development from design to implementation
- Demonstrate benefits and impacts of adapting course content
- Provides a blueprint for adapting pedagogical practice
  - Using new instructional technologies
  - Enacting equitable pedagogical practice

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# English 419: Multimedia Writing

## From the Purdue Course Catalog:

*“Multimedia writing for networked contexts. Emphasizes principles, and practices of multimedia design, implementation, and publishing. Typical genres include Web sites, interactive media, digital video, visual presentations, visual argument, and user documentation.”*

- **Housed in the Professional Writing Program**
- **Students are mostly Juniors and Seniors**
- **Variety of backgrounds including Professional Writing, Purdue Polytechnic Institute, and the Sciences**
- **One option for required courses in multiple undergraduate degrees**

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# Teaching Multimedia Writing at Purdue

- Opportunity for course design experience
- Encouraged to draw upon research interests and areas of expertise
- Colleagues teach sections that have approaches including data science, board game design, and web remediation
- Instructors have background teaching in introductory composition and professional and technical writing

# **MULTIMEDIA WRITING: VERSION I**

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*Spring 2019, Fall 2019*

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# Multimedia Writing: Take 1

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- Drawing from my research into digital archiving and curation
- Project-based structure
- Workshop format
- Variety of readings about multimedia, archiving, curation, and digital rhetorics
- Group project

# Course Structure



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# Assignments and Structure

- Unit 1: Personal Archival Practice
- Unit 2: Rhetoric and Design of Existing Archives
- Unit 3: Creating and Designing Archives
- Readings and discussion

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# Unit I: Personal Social Media Curation

- Examination of personal social media habits and presence
- Critical assessment of professional and personal ethos in public and private digital spaces
- Social media discussions
- Personal archive and history activities
- Readings on content moderation (Sarah T. Roberts), curation (Jenny L. Davis)
- In-class presentations

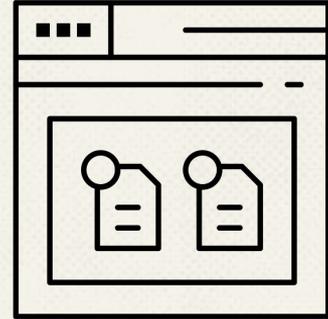
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## Unit II: Existing Archive and Archive Wiki

- Visit to Purdue Archives and Special Collections
- Students select archive, conduct rhetorical analysis
  - Goals, context, contents of archive
- Write-up of analysis
- Entry in a class curated wiki
  - Remediate and condense information + rudimentary html and css practice on wikidot sites
- Example archives analyzed by students:
  - Newberry Library, Alberta Wildlife Association (AWA), Internet Archive

# Unit III: Archive Design Project

- Students work in optional small groups
- Propose and design a new archive
- Assignment structure:
  - Researched White Paper
  - Exhibit Guidebook
  - Sample contents
  - Poster presentation
- Subject examples:
  - Political tweets, Pokemon cards, curated Spotify playlist, denim



# Course Reflection

- Positive student response: appreciation for being able to choose their own topics
- Some pushback against archive theme
- Adjustments between Spring and Fall iterations included:
  - Different readings
  - Flexibility on group work and deadlines
  - More workshop time in-class

# **MULTIMEDIA WRITING: VERSION II**

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*Fall 2020*

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# Going Remote: Teaching During COVID-19

- Given option to teach a remote hybrid/hyflex course
- Multimedia Writing is well suited for online and remote learning
- Had to adapt the course to two new circumstances:
  - Fully remote during COVID
  - New course management system (CMS)

D2L | Brightspace

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# Making Multimedia Writing Remote

- Attempts to rework initial iteration of Multimedia Writing unsuccessful
- Too many in-person or site-specific ideas
- Technical and complex assignments
- Would require significant lecture and discussion in a new format
- Prohibitive for students and instructors

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# Evaluating Multimedia Writing Version 1

## Things That Work

- Student autonomy and choice
- Drawing from current events
- Personal multimedia experiences
- Project structure

## Things to Adjust

- Archives emphasis
- Workshop time
- Group work
- Presentation requirements
- Readings

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# Going Remote: Lessons from Online Teaching

- Successful online experiences with Business Writing and Introductory Composition
- Asynchronous spaces and discussions: discussion boards, Slack, Discord
- Transparency and communication
- Flexible deadlines and assignments

# Class Structure

- Similar assignment structure
  - 3 major projects and 1 final project
- Create more flexibility for students dealing with stressful situations in first COVID semester
- Account for student workloads beyond my course

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## Flexible Structure: Using A Choose Your Own Adventure Pedagogy

- Structure influenced by the flexibility of a Choose Your Own Adventure Game
- Give students more options and flexibility in their assignments
- Provide examples to guide decisions and choices
- ‘What can my students get out of this course? How can they make the most of it?’

# A Virtual Class Structure

- Fully remote
- Use of Discord for group discussion and community building
- Zoom for one-on-one conferencing
- Student hours twice a week
  - Office hours and class meeting combo
- Active participation in Discord servers
- Simple workflow and structure



# Course Structure



**Same structure, different assignments**

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# Assignments

- 3 major projects
  - Crafting Multimedia Narratives
  - Analyzing Multimedia Artifacts
  - Designing Multimedia Creations
- 5 reading journals
- Revised final portfolio

# Course Aftermath and Takeaways

- Student responses very positive
- Students asked lots of clarifying questions throughout the semester
- Course evolved to be more general approach to multimedia
- Focus on encouraging student creativity and autonomy

“Makes students feel welcomed to talk about their various passions and interests, and then **connects those interests to the larger scope of the class**. The open nature of the assignments allows for great **flexibility** within the various assignments, and lets students **flex their muscles** in a more ambiguous playing field, much like they will have to when they enter the job field in the future.”

## Student feedback samples

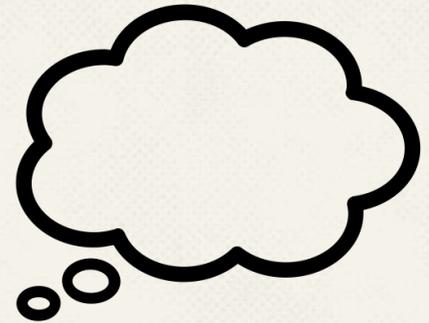
“Mr. Hibbard has been exceptionally **kind and understanding** and flexible with deadlines. He is one of the few instructors that **makes it clear that our health (mental, physical, emotional, etc.) and well-being are important** and may warrant accommodations from time to time, due to both the pandemic and just everyday life happenings. It's incredibly comforting to know that he will be **considerate** of whatever it is we bring to him.”

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# The Future

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- How the course can evolve from here
- Online vs. in-person differences
- What I would do differently in the future
- Takeaways for other multimedia writing instructors



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# Adaptable Pedagogy: Takeaways

- Positive student response
- High quality work
- Flexibility of projects and deadlines
- Variety of tech (new and old)
- Making certain engagement paths optional
- Transparency and communication
- Adapting to cultural climate

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## Adaptable Course Design: Some Conclusions

- Benefits student learning
- Equitable and just pedagogical strategies in higher ed
- Helping students, helping instructors, preventing stagnancy
- Drawing from new concepts as well as old
- Allowing a course to evolve at a pace tailored to the class, students, and instructor

**THANKS!**

*Any questions?*

You can contact me at:



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This presentation and other materials available on my website

<http://leehibbard.com>

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## CREDITS AND IMAGE SOURCES

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Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

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