E 314J ● Literature and Digital Media

Instructor: LeMieux, Steven
Unique #: 35155
Office: FAC 16
Office Hours: Tuesday 2:00-3, Wednesday 1:00-2:00, Thursday 2:00-3:00

Flags: Writing
Computer Instruction: Yes
Semester: Spring 2014
Web Site: http://litdigmed.pbworks.com/

Prerequisites: English 603A, Rhetoric and Writing 306, 306Q, or Tutorial Course 603A

Description: This course will act as the first point of contact between many students and electronic literature. For all the time that we spend on digital media we generally have had little to no experience with literature that has been "born digital." More than ever before, we are doing our reading on digital devices, but in this course we will be drawing a distinction between reading a text on an e-reader like the Kindle or iPad or reading texts online and reading and experiencing this fully digital electronic literature. These latter texts have been built within the full affordances of the digital; they incorporate hyperlinks and branching paths, sound, images, video, connectivity, and varying degrees of interactivity. As such, at first blush they're almost incomprehensible. In the past I've found that students simply don't have any idea *how* to read them. In this course we'll begin the slow process of learning to read, again.

Rather than feeding into the broad ghettoization of digital work (where digital texts are maligned as mere games or "experiences"), we'll work to unpack digital texts as electronic literature. We'll begin with several texts that push the boundaries of print, texts that edge up against the possibilities of the digital. With these bridging pieces we'll build a vocabulary for discussing digital texts while still dealing with something marginally familiar. Once we have begun to build a stable foundation for reading these strange texts we'll take our first tentative steps toward reading electronic literature. The bulk of the class will be spent working through these novel, electronic texts. Finally, we'll explore and discuss how video games might be taken up as pieces of electronic literature.

Course Goals:
In this course you should begin to learn to read differently than you have been previously. You should learn to consciously read texts closely and critically, making concrete choices in how you read. You'll learn to read texts within various contexts and alongside critical, scholarly texts as well as cultural, historical artifacts and events. You should learn to look at texts, exemplified in this class by electronic literature, as always offering (and sometimes demanding) novel ways of reading.

Writing Flag Statement:
This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Texts:
You will need to purchase copies of the following.

Labyrinths by Jorge Luis Borges
House of Leaves by Mark Z. Danielewski
Electronic Literature by Katherine Hayles
Thirty Flights of Loving by Blendo Game

The following are either accessible online or will be provided by the instructor

afternoon, a story by Michael Joyce
The New Media Reader edited by Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Nick Monfort (selections)
Electronic Literature Collection Volumes One and Two http://collection.eliterature.org/

Requirements & Grading:
Weekly Reading Responses	25%
Paper 1, Choosing to Read	25%
Paper 2, Learning to Read	25%
Paper 3, Playing to Read	25%

Your overall grade for the course will be assessed using the following plus/minus scale:

93 and above: A		62-67: D
90-91: A-	78-79: C+	60-61: D-
	72-77: C	
88-89: B+	70-71: C-	59 and below: F
82-87: B		
80-81: B-	68-69: D+	

Policies:

Attendance:
You are expected to attend class, to arrive on time, to have completed assigned reading and writing assignments, and to participate during in-class reading, writing, revising, and discussion sessions. **Should you miss the equivalent of five class meetings, excused or not, you will fail the course.** If you find that an unavoidable problem prevents you from attending class, you should contact me as soon as possible, preferably ahead of time, to let me know. Note that, besides religious holy days (see below), the university specifies very few other excused absences. Tardiness counts as half an absence. On any day you arrive after I have finished calling roll, you will be considered tardy. If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you are absent—not tardy. You are responsible for making sure I mark you on the roll when you are late. Leaving early also counts as half an absence.

Documented Disability Statement: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone), or visit http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd.

Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Academic Integrity: Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. For additional information on Academic Integrity, see http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint.php.

Religious Holy Days: By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Email: Email is an official means of communication at UT-Austin, and your instructor will use this medium to communicate class information. You are therefore required to obtain a UT email account and to check it daily. All students may claim an email address at no cost by going to http://www.utexas.edu/computer/email/.

Schedule:

Week	Day	Date	Assignment/Event
1	T	1/14	**CLASSES BEGIN** Introduction and Syllabus
	Th	1/16	Course Texts and Electronic Literature Collections
2	T	1/21	Hayles, Electronic Literature Chapter 1 Lanham, The Electronic Word: Literary Study and the Digital Revolution
	Th	1/23	Borges, Tlon, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius and The Garden of Forking Paths
3	T	1/28	Borges, Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote
	Th	1/30	**TWELFTH CLASS DAY** Introduction to House of Leaves—This is Not for You
4	T	2/4	Danielewski House of Leaves
	Th	2/6	Danielewski House of Leaves + Hayles Chapter 5
5	T	2/11	Danielewski House of Leaves
	Th	2/13	Danielewski House of Leaves + NMR
6	T	2/18	Danielewski House of Leaves
	Th	2/20	Danielewski House of Leaves Annotation (in class writing)
7	T	2/25	Zork
	Th	2/27	Paper 1, Choosing to Read, Peer Review
8	M	3/3	Paper 1, Choosing to Read, Due by 11:59
	T	3/4	Hayles, Electronic Literature Chapter 2 Joyce, afternoon, a story (in class)
		3/6	Joyce, afternoon, a story (in class)
9	T	3/11	**SPRING BREAK**
	Th	3/13	**SPRING BREAK**
10	T	3/18	Hayles, Electronic Literature Chapter 3 Jackson, my body -- a WunderKammer ELCv1
	Th	3/20	Coover, The End of Books In class E-lit Explorations
11	T	3/25	Strickland, Slippingglimpse and V: Vniverse ELCv2
	Th	3/27	Six Selections by the Oulipo Monfort, ppg256 ELCv2
12	T	4/1	Marino, A Show of Hands ELCv2
	Th	4/3	Paper 2, Learning to Read, Peer Review
13	M	4/7	Paper 2, Learning to Read, Due by 11:59PM
	T	4/8	Licklider, Man-Computer Symbiosis QWOP/GIRP (in class)
	Th	4/10	Thirty Flights of Loving (in class)
14	T	4/15	Turkle, Video Games and Computer Holding Power Thirty Flights of Loving (in class)
	Th	4/17	Bad Machine ELCv1
15	T	4/22	Aarseth, Nonlinearity and Literary Theory
	Th	4/24	Spaceteam
16	T	4/29	Evaluations, final discussion
	Th	5/1	Paper 3, Playing to Read, Peer Review **LAST CLASS DAY**
Finals	Th	5/8	Paper 3, Playing to Read, Due by 11:59 PM