

Digital Identities

DICE 4010

Winter 2017

Dates: Tuesdays 6-8:05

Room: Pigott 308

Instructor: Wanda Gregory, PhD

Email: gregoryw@seattleu.edu

Office Hours: by appointment and Tuesday 5-6

Course Description:

We often ask ourselves questions about who we are in our daily lives. While we can look into mirrors and see our physical self whenever we want, how are we conveying ourselves in the online world? Who are we online? Today we have not just our physical selves to consider, but our digital identity. How are we perceived online and how do we curate ourselves both in the physical and digital realms? At the same time, how do we perceive others we might only know in the digital space?

In this course, we will analyze our digitally mediated identities. We will appraise and reflect upon not only the digital identities of others, but also the cultural implications of our own digitally constructed identities. We will also be exploring issues of privacy and surveillance as it relates to our digital selves. How can we protect our identities in worlds filled with fake news, cat fishing and hackers?

Aims of the Course:

Analyze a range of digital spaces, technologies and platforms that we use to create digital identities and communities.

Examine how digitally constructed identities/communities reinforce and/or disrupt cultural ideologies related to gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and/or social-economic class.

Conduct an ethnographic research study illustrating and analyzing social media practices among a digital subculture.

Reflect on how our own digital identities are constructed and how one's digital identity reflects/disrupts specific ideologies.

Grading

The course requirements will be weighted as follows in the overall course grade:

50 pts. Homework Assignments

5 pts. Discussion Questions

15 pts. Social Media Analysis

30 pts. Ethnography Project and Presentation

Assignments

Homework Assignments

There will be homework assignments throughout the quarter. These assignments will help you scaffold the kind of information and research you will need to compile for your project and to gain a better understanding of your real and digital selves.

Discussion Boards

Each week will be a discussion question for you to explore. These should be 150+ words and will be due by midnight Saturday of each week. I would like you to then comment on two of your peer's postings by midnight on Sunday. We will discuss these in class during the next in class meeting.

Social Media Analysis:

For this assignment, you will choose a public personality who uses social media frequently. This can be a businessperson, media personality, writer or any public person who uses multiple social media outlets. You will analyze their digital identity and write a 4-5 page paper along with the presentation of an ignite talk on your personality.

Ethnographic Project

For this project, you will write and present mini-ethnography on a digital sub-culture or group of your choice. You will be required to write a short 300-500-word statement about your proposed research project for the quarter. You might want to begin thinking now about what gaming cultures, either in an interactive virtual world/game or within a gaming community in Seattle, you may wish to research.

Your final paper (8-10 pages) will be based on your individual ethnographic research that you will be conducting throughout the quarter. Your primary data for your final paper will be derived from your project field notes.

You can choose the sub-culture in consultation with your instructor. As part of this assignment you will conduct fieldwork on a sub-culture and keep a journal which will be submitted on a weekly basis for comments.. You can present your work either as a paper or in the multi-media format of your choice. During Week Five we will do a mini checkpoint with a final presentation during Week Ten.

Policies, Guidelines, and Helpful Information

Paper Formatting and Length: All typed papers and assignments should be double-spaced, using 12- or 11-point font and one-inch margins. Any paper assignment you turn in should be stapled together with your name visible. You do not need a title page. Your papers—and any other assignment you turn in that cite an article or book—should use your choice of a proper citation style. Any style guide (e.g., APA, Chicago, MLA, etc.) is ok as long as you are consistent in your citation use. Papers not following these guidelines may be marked down.

Course Readings:

Readings will be available via canvas or provided in class.

Course Schedule

Please note that the following is a 'working schedule.' Class materials are subject to change based on the interests, understanding, and general pace of the class. It is your responsibility to keep on top of any schedule changes, whether you are in class or not. Changes and announcements will be made in class and through email and Slack, so please stay up to date.

[Jan 3th]: [Week 1: Introduction Digital Identity](#)

[Jan 10th]: *(online)* [Week 2: Defining Social Media](#)

[Jan 17th]: [Week 3: Selfie Culture, Celebrities and Branding](#)

[Jan 24th]: *(online)* [Week 4: Avatars, Games and Virtual Worlds](#)

[Jan 31st]: [Week 5: Avatars, Games and Virtual Worlds part 2](#)

[Feb 7th]: *(online)* [Week 6: Dataveillance and Biometrics](#)

[Feb 14th]: [Week 7: Privacy](#)

[Feb 21st]: *(online)* [Week 8: Hacker Culture](#)

[Feb 28th]: [Week 9: Mortality in the Digital Space](#)

[Mar 7]:[Week 10: Ethnographic Case Study Presentations](#)