

# Multimodal Composition

Winter 2018

Monday, 6:00-8:05PM, PIGT 108

Office Hours: M-TH 4:00-5:30p, LSAX 240

## Catalog Description

A multimodal composition uses a combination of text, images, video, audio, graphics and interactivity in a format that allows each medium to contribute without redundancy. In this course you will explore multimodal compositions in a variety of formats, and learn to create both linear and non-linear story “packages.” The course is project-based, and each week you’ll work on one step in the development of a final project. You’ll also learn to analyze multimodal composition carefully and gain awareness of the expressive and informational strengths of each medium.

## Course Outcomes

This course has been designed to build upon your foundations in digital rhetoric and digital cultures. It will introduce you to concepts and practices of multimodal composition, especially in digital spaces, and give you an opportunity to produce effective “texts” for your portfolio and your future careers. When you are done you’ll be able to:

- **Research and plan multimodal compositions using Cornell notes, sticky note summaries, image sketches, storyboarding, and other organizational strategies**
- **Craft effective "narratives" using rhetorical strategies and appropriate mixes of media**
- **Produce photographs with an awareness of composition and design conventions**
- **Create a well-crafted 5-shot video sequence with live or added audio**
- **Demonstrate proficiency with user-centered design principles through both flow charts of user interaction and navigation *and* in the final product**
- **Demonstrate familiarity with site prototyping and social media planning**

Program level outcomes this course supports for Digital Technology and Cultures:

- **Become familiar with primary technological modes of production and practice using digital tools and languages**
- **Evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of research sources, digital tools, technologies, interfaces, and artifacts**

- **Analyze media, technology, and digital artifacts using interdisciplinary theories and methods**
- **Design multimodal projects that demonstrate an engagement with and advocacy for social justice issues and are informed by digital rhetoric and an understanding of audience.**

Program level outcomes this course supports for Organizational Leadership:

- **Demonstrate an understanding of major organizational and general management concepts and practices (such as change management, human resource management, organizational communication, and legal issues in organizations) and apply them in organizational settings**
- **Demonstrate exemplary written and oral communication, interpersonal, and presentation skills**

## **Recurring Activities & Assignments**

### **Readings**

This course depends on some familiarity with digital rhetoric. As such, you may need to go back to some of the readings from your Introduction to Digital Rhetoric course. You will also have readings to help you theorize multimodal composition and especially the relationship between modes. Along with each reading, you will complete a reading quiz.

### **Quizzes and Practice**

Expect to have weekly quizzes and/or practice assignments. These are low stakes and in total only account for 20% of the overall grade. These are tasks that are designed to keep you on track with the readings and prepare you for the Composition Tries. These will all be graded either complete, partially complete, or incomplete. The further benefit is that each of these will feed into the Tries, so if you spend time here you will have an easier time on the larger assignments.

### **Research Tries**

Since composition is a practice, you will be doing assignments that ask you to “try out” the various modes and strategies. These Tries account for 50% of your grade and are the chance to practice and create some resources you can use on your final project. You’ll notice that most of these assignments build directly on the work that you did in the Quizzes and Practice from the previous week. Additionally, these all include a reflection component that is crucial for supporting what’s called integrated learning. By reflecting on the practice, if you take it seriously, you will connect the practice to your body of preexisting knowledge—the stuff you already know and know how to do. This process of connecting new experiences with existing knowledge is how we learn and how we make learning personal and relevant. When I grade your assignments, my focus will be on how well you’re integrating the practice rather than your mastery of any particular mode. For the final project, however, you should be moving towards mastery!

### **Final Project**

For the final project, you will complete a larger multimodal composition project. This could take many forms, but you will want to think of a project that will be useful for your portfolio. There will be several steps to the project, and you will have a chance to present in class at the end of the quarter. This project accounts for 30% of your grade, so it is important to stay on track and get in touch with me if you find yourself getting behind. It should be an awesome opportunity to do a great project!

## Course Assessment (Grades!)

The assignment categories are weighted as follows:

Assignment Group	Percent
Quizzes & Practice	20%
Tries	10% x 5
Final Project	30%

Grade	Percentage	Range
A	94-100%	Superior
A-	90-93%	
B+	87-89%	
B	83-86%	Good
B-	80-82%	
C+	77-79%	
C	73-76%	Adequate
C-	70-72%	
D+	67-69%	
D	63-66%	Poor
D-	60-62%	
F	<59%	Failing

The final project is the single most valuable assignment, but keeping up with the weekly work makes up 70% of the overall class grade. The added bonus of working hard on the practice and tries is that they will prepare you to do well on the final project. In other words, I have designed and weighted the assignments to privilege engagement with the material and effort throughout the quarter rather than a Hail Mary on the final project.

The following expectations will help you be successful in this course. Please carefully review these expectations and follow them.

- Log into the course several times each week to check the course content, announcements, conversations, and discussions.

- Keep up with the weekly readings and assignments. Students who keep up with the weekly reading and assignments tend to do much better in an online course than those who do not.
- Please do not miss an assignment deadline. Refer to the course schedule/calendar to ensure that you submit assignments on time.
- Avoid missing assignments. Assignments are cumulative, and so you will find later assignments more difficult to complete if you missed any earlier on.

## Conversations

Although we will come together to lay out a set of “ground rules” for class, please see below for some guidelines of course interaction. Conversations will be an integral part of this course. Make sure you:

- Check your inbox at least twice per week (more often is better).
- Be patient. Don’t expect an immediate response when you send a message. Generally, two days is considered reasonable amount of time to receive a reply.
- Be courteous and considerate. Being honest and expressing yourself freely is very important but being considerate of others online is just as important as in the classroom.
- Make every effort to be clear. Online communication lacks the nonverbal cues that fill in much of the meaning in face-to-face communication.
- Do not use all caps. This makes the message very hard to read and is considered “shouting.” Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation (you may want to compose in a word processor, then cut and paste the message into the discussion or message).
- Break up large blocks of text into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.

## Interaction Guidelines

Many of the “rules of the road” that apply to conversations also apply to the use of interactive tools used in this course. Use the following conventions when interacting with the instructor and fellow students:

- While using synchronous tools, such as chat and conferences, be located in a quiet, private environment. This will help you stay clear of disturbances.
- If you want to send a personal message to the instructor or to another student, use conversations rather than the discussions (see Conversations).
- Be patient. Don’t expect an immediate response when you post to a discussion.
- Respect each other’s ideas, feelings and experience.
- Be courteous and considerate. It is important to be honest and to express yourself freely, but being considerate of others is just as important and expected online, as it is in the classroom.
- Explore disagreements and support assertions with data and evidence.
- Be sure to post discussions in the appropriate discussion topic.
- Do not use postings such as “I agree,” “I don’t know either,” “Who cares,” or “ditto.” They do not add to the discussion, take up space on the Discussions, and will not be counted for assignment credit.

- Avoid posting large blocks of text. If you must, break them into paragraphs and use a space between paragraphs.
- During a discussion assignment, deadlines for posting to and replying will be specified with each assignment. It is a good practice to always check the discussions tool multiple times during the week.

## Netiquette

“Netiquette” has evolved to aid us in infusing our electronic communications with some of these missing behavioral pieces. “Emoticons” and other tools have become popular and I encourage their use when it will add to the clarity of your communication.

Netiquette continues to evolve and I am sure that we will have constant additions to this growing language. The important thing to remember is that all of the “cute” symbols in the world cannot replace your careful choice of words and “tone” in your communication.

## Viruses and Redundancy

A virus can spell disaster. Your use of a reputable anti-virus program is a requirement for participation in this course. AVG is a great, free antivirus program. Malwarebytes is a great anti-malware program.

Also, make sure you are backing up your files on a flash drive, on Canvas, or some other alternative. “My hard drive crashed.” “My modem doesn’t work.” These are today’s equivalents of “My dog ate my homework.” And these events really do occur and they are really inconvenient when they do. However, these are not valid excuses for failing to get your work in on time.

## University Resources

[CANVAS HELP](#)

[LIBRARY AND LEARNING COMMONS](#)

[WRITING CENTER](#)

[LEARNING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS](#)

[ACADEMIC INTEGRITY TUTORIAL](#)

The following policies govern this course and comply with Seattle University policies.

## Support for Students With Disabilities

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an “invisible disability” such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support

services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff located in Loyola 100, (206) 296- 5740. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.

## [DISABILITY SERVICES](#)

# Academic Policies from the SU Registrar

Be sure that you understand the following university academic policies, posted on the Registrar's website:

- ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY
- ACADEMIC GRADING GRIEVANCE POLICY

<https://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/academics/performance/> (Links to an external site.)

## Incomplete Grades

If you are unable to complete course requirements because of extenuating circumstances, please notify the instructor on or before the date the assignment is due and provide relevant supporting documentation (e.g. doctor's note, note from counselor).

An agreement to receive an Incomplete (I) grade may be negotiated if your circumstances do not allow you to finish the course on time. The Incomplete Removal Policy of the university is available on the Office of the Registrar web site: <https://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/Policies.aspx> (Links to an external site.)

## Assignment Deadlines and Extensions

Assignment deadlines are visible on both the Course Syllabus and the Assignment List (as well as the individual Assignment pages themselves). You can always find links to those two pages in the left sidebar of the course.

Due to the nature of the work, and the online structure of the course materials, assignment deadlines will be automatically enforced. Generally, there will be no extensions to the assignment deadlines, primarily because falling behind on work in this course makes it exponentially more difficult to complete the course successfully.

If you have an obligation or responsibility that makes any deadline on the schedule an issue, please bring up this fact to your instructor as soon as possible. Your instructor will work with you to accommodate your other responsibilities, but any accommodation should be planned ahead of time in collaboration with your instructor.

If you are unable to complete course requirements because of extenuating circumstances, please notify the instructor on or before the date the assignment is due and provide relevant supporting documentation (e.g. doctor's note, note from counselor).

An agreement to receive an Incomplete (I) grade may be negotiated if your circumstances do not allow you to finish the course on time. The Incomplete Removal Policy of the

university is available on the Office of the Registrar web site: <https://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/Policies.aspx>

## **Student Responsibilities for Learning**

You are expected to budget 10 hours per week for this course. Most of the time, this will be adequate time to complete all of the requirements for each week. However, given the nature of the material in these courses, it is likely that some weeks will be more time-consuming than others due to complexity of concepts. Please communicate openly with your instructor about how the course is going and let your instructor know if you are regularly spending a lot more time to complete work. Additional tutoring or other assistance may be available depending on the nature of the issue. You are also encouraged to review the calendar at the beginning of the quarter to flag any weeks that seem to you to be especially full or challenging.