

Carleton University
Fall 2020
Department of English and the College of the Humanities

ENGL 3401 A/ DIGH 3001 A

The Book in the Digital Age:

Prerequisites: third year standing or permission from the department

Synchronous meeting time: Thursday 2:35-5:25

Instructor: Prof. Micheline White

Email: Micheline.white@carleton.ca I do not reply to email after 4:30 PM or on the weekend.

Office: Paterson Hall 2A 45

Phone: 613 520-2600 ext. 1356

Office Hours on-line: TBA

I: Course Description: This course is a “blended course.”

Blended Courses

An online course where there is a mixture of synchronous meetings and asynchronous activities. This means students need to be prepared to meet some of the time online via web conferencing tools at scheduled days and times. The specific dates will be communicated by the instructor in the course outline. The asynchronous activities are intended to provide flexibility to students when the class is not meeting synchronously. Students are expected to remain up to date with the deadlines and due dates provided by the instructor. These courses require reliable high-speed Internet access and a computer (ideally with a webcam), and a headset with a microphone.

Blended course: some lectures will be live at stated times.

Description: This course will introduce you to key concepts pertaining to the study of books in the digital age. Over the course of the term, we will pursue two major threads—the book as an ever-changing material object; and reading a book as an ever-changing human activity. First, we will consider how the material features of “books” or “texts” have changed from scrolls, to manuscripts, to printed books, to e-Books and Apps. As we do this, we will examine the affordances and problems with producing digital versions of non-digital texts and of the possibilities inherent in the electronic book. Students will have an on-line session with the master printer of Carleton’s new “Book Arts Lab.” Second, we will consider how digital technologies enable or force us to read and interpret books in new ways. Here we will discuss “distant reading” and corpus linguistics; data visualization and literary texts (using Voyant); digital literacy; and on-line annotation tools (Hypothesis). In this portion of the course, you will experiment and play with (fun) digital tools.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- define and explain seven or eight key concepts pertaining to the book in the digital age
- describe the key changes brought about by the development of the book over time: from scrolls, to manuscript, to print, to digital texts.
- experiment with digital tools and resources and reflect on your experience of using them
- identify, summarize, and criticize the main thesis in a secondary source
- develop a research topic, undertake secondary research, produce an annotated bibliography, and produce a seven-page paper.
- provide productive feedback to your peers and engage in respectful academic discussion

II: Required Texts: All texts are available on-line or through the library. You can also use books from your own library – virtual or hardcopy.

III: Assessments based on learning outcomes: (still subject to revision depending on the size of the class)

1. Understanding and responding to secondary scholarship. Four summaries of 400 words.

4x5% = 20%

One of the learning outcomes for this course is that you will be able to “identify, summarize, and evaluate the main thesis from a secondary source.” Four times during the semester you will prepare a **short summary and analysis** of one piece of secondary criticism. On one occasion, you will present your summary to the group for 5 minutes during our synchronous meeting. You will post your summaries on a Q & A Discussion Forum where they will be graded.

2. Reflecting on your experimentation with digital tools/projects.

One of the learning outcomes for this course is that you will “experiment with digital tools and resources and reflect on your experience of using them.” You will provide two reflections based on a template provided by the instructor.

2 x 20% = 40%

3. Research and Writing:

One of the learning outcomes for this course is that you will “develop a research topic, undertake secondary research, produce an annotated bibliography, and produce one seven-page paper.”

The paper will be due on the last day of class.

1 x 35% = 30%

4. Quizzes

By the end of this course, you will be able to “define and explain seven or eight key concepts pertaining to the book in the digital age.” You will also be able to “describe the key changes brought about by the development of the book over time: from scrolls, to manuscript, to print, to digital texts.” In order to assess your progress, you will complete five time-sensitive quizzes that will be based on my pre-recorded lectures, secondary sources, the videos that I assign, and any other course material.

5 x 2% = 10%

IV. Students must fulfill *all* course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade.

