Carleton University
Winter 2021
Department of English
DIGH 2002 / ENGL 2401 A: Digital Humanities: Theory and Method

Topic: "Digital Fakes and Fictions"

Prerequisites: second-year standing.

Tuesdays and Thursdays / 11:35 – 12:55
Format: Blended
Location: Online (Zoom and CULearn)

Instructor: Prof. Brian Greenspan
Office Hours: Tuesdays 14:00 – 16:00 via MS Teams
Phone: (613) 520-2600 ext. 2360

I.   Course description:

What does authenticity mean in the era of fake news, fake offers, fake users, and fake friends? The rise of digital simulations, deep fakes, and "alternative facts" have led many to conclude that reality is bent, if not irreparably broken. Media are evolving faster than ever before, outstripping our conventional means of evaluating and understanding them. Yet, literary studies and the digital humanities offer methods for assessing and critiquing reality's troubled relation with fiction.

This course will explore how the concepts of authenticity, fictionality, and fictional worlds are being altered by mediated, contested, virtual, and augmented realities. It will provide students with the opportunity to learn more about digital culture through theories and methods drawn from both literary criticism and the digital humanities. We will draw upon various perspectives within these fields to explore the ways that new digital platforms (such as Twitter, TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat, and Steam), processes (such as digital visualization and fabrication), and artifacts (including digital stories, videos, and games) are altering consensus reality. Along the way, we will analyze and evaluate popular stories about new media practices and the issues they raise, such as crowdsourcing, activism, doxing, online memes, fandoms, maker culture, artificial intelligence, and other forms of digital cultural production. Students will also have the opportunity to become familiar with a variety of user-friendly tools and techniques for bending reality through social media analysis, 3D modelling, video editing, and game design.

No prior programming or design experience is required, though students will need access to a computer to get the most out of our online workshops. Assignments may include critical assessments of texts and digital media artifacts, collaborative projects and presentations, and a capstone essay or project.

Prerequisites: second-year standing.

II.   **Preclusions:** None

III.   **Learning Outcomes: Students will gain literacy in new media by analyzing and authoring digital texts and artefacts in different media, using various tools and platforms. They will gain skill in researching online resources, and learn new approaches to humanities scholarship enabled by digital media. By working both individually and collaboratively on projects involving new media, students will develop technological and design skills, and learn to present their ideas persuasively through spoken, written, visual, and procedural rhetorics. Through ongoing discussion and debate, they will develop strategies for evaluating digital culture critically.**

IV. **Required Texts:** Readings will be available online, through our CULearn site, and at MacOdrum Library. **Only the latest versions of the syllabus and schedule posted on the course CULearn site are the official versions.** We will also explore various digital tools, platforms, and projects, along with some rudimentary programming (no prior experience required).

V. **Blended Instruction:**

This is a blended course, meaning some of our classes will take place synchronously online at our regularly scheduled class time, while others may include asynchronous online video seminars, modules, forum discussions, and other activities. Each class, whether synchronous or asynchronous, will have associated readings--usually articles and stories--that will form the basis of our discussion.

All online Forum Discussions will be linked to our **CULearn** course site. Our synchronous meetings will take place using the **Zoom** platform; an ID Code for each week's Zoom meeting will be posted in advance on **CULearn**. Those who install the Zoom app are encouraged to create a free Zoom account, **preferably using their *cmail.carleton.ca* email account**.

You will be invited, but not required, to enable your camera or microphone for our Zoom meetings, and will be expected to participate in our discussions verbally and/or through the Zoom chat window. You can join our Zoom meetings with the current link provided on CULearn either using the Zoom app, or through a standard web browser. You can also dial into any class meeting by phone, using the Zoom ID Codes that will be provided in advance on CULearn and one of [Zooms' toll-free numbers](#):

+1 647 374 4685 (Ontario)
+1 647 558 0588 (Ontario)

Local numbers for users located outside of Ontario can be found at: https://zoom.us/u/acKFv2t3c.

For instructions on installing or running Zoom, please visit Carleton Online: https://carleton.ca/online.

For more CULearn support, please visit CULearn Support: https://carleton.ca/culearnsupport/students.

VI. Evaluation

1) Flash analysis	500 words, **DUE** January 28	10%
2) Critical Game Design project	1000 words, **DUE** March 9	25%
3) Term Paper or Project	1500 words or equivalent; **DUE** April 6	40%
4) Collaboration	Zoom meetings and CULearn Forums, **DUE** regularly	25%

1) **Flash analysis** (500 words, **DUE** January 28)
For this project, you will be asked to write a brief analysis of a controversial issue related to digital texts and culture. We will discuss the assignment in detail in class.

2) **Critical Game Design project** (digital submission + 5-minute group presentation + 1-2 pages report, **DUE** March 9)
We will explore design strategies and expectations for this group assignment in class. Each group will be expected to present their game briefly for discussion in class on the due date.

3) **Term Essay or Project** (1500 words or equivalent, **DUE** April 6)
For this assignment, you can choose to submit a digital project, an essay, or a combination of both. Topics and guidelines for the term project will be assigned and discussed in class.

4) **Collaboration** (25%, **DUE** regularly)
You will have the opportunity to contribute in our synchronous Zoom meetings, as well as through our **CULearn Forum**. A portion of some classes will be set aside for asynchronous discussion on the Forum, which will

contribute to a substantial portion of your final grade. Regular attendance at seminars is expected, but that alone won't win you full marks for collaboration. Grading criteria will also include:

- the extent, relevance, and critical insightfulness of your contributions;
- your level of engagement and respectful dialogue with other members of the class;
- the regularity and consistency of your participation.

To ensure that you get the most out of the Forum, it's best to visit and engage with it on a regular basis, and to respond to what others are saying there. Your Participation grade will be determined in part by the regularity of your contributions, so don't wait until the end of term to participate.

Please remember that CULearn is a virtual extension of our classroom, and therefore is subject to the University's conduct regulations. At all times, you must respect your fellow classmates, and try to keep the discussion relevant to our course goals. When in doubt, follow The Golden Rule of Netiquette: *Don't post any comment you wouldn't read aloud in class or speak f2f.*

For more tips on Netiquette and on succeeding in **Online Interaction and Engagement**, visit: https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-resources.

All assignments will be graded on the basis of their critical insights and analysis; attention to textual detail; awareness of our lectures and discussions; clarity and persuasiveness; composition and presentation (verbal, visual, procedural, or otherwise); and relevance to our primary and secondary course materials.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Submitting Assignments

All assignments must be submitted through CULearn on or before the deadline. **Please don't e-mail assignments to me.** It is important that you submit each assignment through CULearn, as doing so provides proof that you have submitted it on time. Assignments not submitted through CULearn will not be considered for grading, and will score 0.

* N.B. To avoid potential sanction, please retain all rough work, including digital files. The instructor reserves the right to request all rough work, and to withhold the grade for any given assignment pending a supplemental oral examination by two professors.

Extensions, Late Assignments and Special Accommodations

- All assignments are expected to be submitted on time, unless you have: i) a medical note from a doctor explaining that you could not complete the assignment; ii) an explanatory note from the Paul Menton Centre (See Academic Accommodation, below); or iii) special permission for an extension from me.

- **You may submit written assignments up to 3 days late without penalty**; however, late or extended assignments will not receive extensive feedback.

- Assignments submitted more than 3 days late will be docked 5%/day, up to a maximum of 15%. Assignments handed in more than 6 days past the due date will not be accepted, and will score 0. In other words, plan ahead, develop a work schedule, and stick to it. Any request for an extension beyond 3 days must be submitted by email to the instructor at least one week before the due date.

Delays do sometimes occur as a result of computer errors. However, responsibility for your work rests ultimately with you. Be sure to back up your work and print out hard copies regularly as you write. That way, if your computer fails, you can always locate another one to finish your work.

Documentation

You are expected to document any and all primary and secondary sources referred to (directly or indirectly) in your assignments, including sources for websites, musical, visual and electronic information. **The MLA style of parenthetical references with a Works Cited page, as detailed in the MLA Handbook (8th ed.), is the only acceptable method of documentation** (see http://www.mla.org/style). For quick guidelines and examples, see https://www.uvic.ca/library/research/citation/documents/MLAStyle_QuickGuide_Update_Sept_2014.pdf.

It's your responsibility to educate yourself on how to avoid plagiarism through careful research habits and the proper documentation of sources. Any failure to document sources, whether deliberate or inadvertent, will carry heavy sanctions, and may result in a failing grade or expulsion (see Academic Integrity, below), so please double-check your Works Cited before submitting assignments. Make sure you know both the University's policies on plagiarism, and the MLA Handbook guidelines for referencing sources. If you're still are in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism or about the legitimacy of a citation or reference, please ask me or your T.A., or check with the Academic Writing Centre and Writing Tutorial Service (See Helpful Student Services, below).

To avoid potential sanction, please retain all rough work. The instructor reserves the right to request all rough work, and to withhold the grade for any given assignment pending a supplemental oral examination by two professors.

VII. PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Carleton University has a clear policy on academic integrity, including procedures to address academic misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, and other activities that violate academic integrity standards). Full information is in the Undergraduate Calendar under "Academic Regulations of the University" Section 10.1: https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academic-integrity-and-offenses-of-conduct/#academic-integrity-policy

It is particularly important in this class that students understand and meet academic integrity standards, and are sure they do not violate these standards through plagiarism. The following definition of plagiarism is taken from Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy, Part VI (this definition also appears in the Undergraduate Calendar):

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own." Plagiarism can include, but is not limited to:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft. It is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include failure of the assignment, failure of the entire course, or suspension from a program. For more information please go to: https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity.

Any secondary sources incorporated into your papers, including essays that I put on Reserve, must be cited appropriately. If you have any questions about when and how to cite sources, do not hesitate to ask either me or your T.A. If we suspect that an essay has been plagiarized either deliberately or inadvertently, we are required to submit the essay to the Dean, who will conduct a thorough investigation into the case and administer penalties. The penalties for

plagiarism are very severe, ranging from failure in the course to expulsion from the university. It's not worth the risk!

Carleton has other important policies regarding tests, examinations, and unauthorized resubmission of your work (that is, handing in the same paper in more than one class). Be sure you understand the standards so as to avoid any academic misconduct.

   N.B. To avoid potential sanction, please retain all rough work. The instructor reserves the right to request all rough work, and to withhold the grade for any given assignment pending a supplemental oral examination by two professors.

 For more helpful information visit the Academic Advising Centre: http://carleton.ca/academicadvising.

VIII. Request for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details click here.

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details click here.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520- 6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence
As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services

Accommodation for Student Activities
Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf

IX. Helpful Student Services

CU Online has lots of great advice for managing online courses: https://carleton.ca/online.

The **Centre for Student Academic Support** (http://carleton.ca/csas/) offers valuable support for writing and research, such as **Writing Services** (https://carleton.ca/csas/writing-services).

Carleton Health and Counselling Services (http://www.carleton.ca/health/) offers comprehensive health care, including counselling of personal problems and emotional distress. 2600 Carleton Technology & Training Centre.

For other services and support, visit http://www.carleton.ca/studentsupport.

X. Contacting Your Instructor

I'm available for telephone or online meetings during my virtual office hours on a first-come, first-serve basis to discuss issues directly related to the course. A link to my office hours will be posted on our CULearn course site.

E-mail is the most reliable means of contacting me. You can send me a message by e-mail from your Carleton account any time of day or night, and I will respond in good time (usually within 3 working days). For a timely response, be sure to use your Carleton e-mail account, and to include the course number ("DIGH2002") in the subject line of your message.

COURSE WEBSITE: http://culearn.carleton.ca/

The course website includes a glossary, supplemental readings, a tool for submitting your essays in digital form, a message board for scholarly discussions, and the definitive version of the course syllabus. Please remember that this space is a virtual extension of our classroom, and therefore subject to the University's conduct regulations. Respect your fellow classmates at all times.

To access the course site, you will first need a Student Computing Account (SCA). For account information, visit the Information Technology Services (ITS) website (http://carleton.ca/its). For answers to general questions about CULearn, write to edc@carleton.ca. For general computing questions, visit http://www2.carleton.ca/ccs/getting-help.

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