

# Language, Texts, and Technology

## DTC/ENG 375 Spring 2015: Syllabus

CUE 318, 1310–1400 MWF  
Dr. Mike Edwards  
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office hours MWF 0830–0930 341 Avery Hall and by appointment

### Required materials:

Baron, Dennis. *A Better Pencil: Readers, Writers, and the Digital Revolution*. London: Oxford University Press, 2009. Print or electronic book.

Gleick, James. *The Information: A History, A Theory, A Flood*. New York: Pantheon, 2011. Print or electronic book.

A Google Drive (formerly Google Docs) account (<https://drive.google.com/>).

### Description:

This course explores the interrelationships among technology, communication, and composing practices from a historical point of view, with a particular focus on various forms of literacies. Many of the issues of current concern to people who study and work with digital technologies and culture have deep historical roots, and writing and computation are both technologies that are themselves thousands of years old. We will use face-to-face and online discussions and collaborative work in multiple media to examine the connections between today's digital culture and its material history and practices.

### Outcomes:

Upon completing this course, you will

- understand the history of literacy and communicative technologies,
- understand how different technologies affect communication and culture, and
- be able to collaboratively bring together multiple media in demonstrating a critical approach to language, texts, and technologies.

### Attendance and lateness:

Your input is valuable, and we work collaboratively. It's important for you to be present and on time. I will make reasonable accommodation for planned absences if you arrange to submit your work ahead of time. The WSU Spring 2015 MWF schedule lists 43 sessions. I allow you three unplanned absences with no questions asked (but if work is due when you are absent, you must arrange to get it to me prior to your absence). **After three unplanned absences**, each additional absence costs you 25 points from your final grade (43 minus 3 is 40, so 1/40th of 1000 points). You will only receive credit for late work if you make arrangements with me prior to the due date. Tardiness is disruptive, so be on time: coming to class late three times equals one absence.

### Disability accommodation:

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and require accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations must be approved through the DRC (Washington Building, Room 217). Please visit or call 509 335 3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist.

## Academic integrity:

If you're in this class and being creative, there's no reason to not do the work. WSU expects all students to act in accordance with the WSU policies on Academic Honesty explained at <http://conduct.wsu.edu>. These policies address falsification, fabrication, multiple submissions, plagiarism, and other concerns. WSU offers additional resources about academic integrity at <http://www.wsulibs.wsu.edu/plagiarism/main.html>, and cheating is defined in the Standards for Student Conduct WAC 504-26-010 (3). If you violate any academic integrity policy, you will fail the course and I will report the violation to the Office of Student Standards and Accountability.

## Grading:

7 discussion board posts, lowest grade dropped (6 @ 30)	180
14 discussion board comments, lowest 2 grades dropped (12 @ 10)	120
7 collaborative GDrive syntheses, lowest grade dropped (6 @ 10)	60
midterm project plan	120
preparedness and participation (engagement, respectfulness, reading quizzes)	200
final collaborative project (including individual reflection and peer evaluation)	320

**1000 points total:** A=940–1000; A-=900–939; B+=870–899; B=840–869; B-=800–839; C+=770–799; C=740–769; C-=700–739; D+=670–699; D=600–669; F=599 and below.

## Safety:

Please familiarize yourself with information regarding campus emergencies/school closings by visiting the websites for University Emergency Management (<http://oem.wsu.edu/Emergencies>) and WSU Alert (<http://alert.wsu.edu>).

## Calendar:

Date	Preparation required	In-class activity or topic
1/12		problems envelope; assignments; morse code
1/14	4 #gamergate articles (~22 pages)	discussion boards; " <a href="#">Little Sh*ts</a> " response
1/16	<a href="#">Lethem</a> ; syllabus; <a href="#">Elouazizi "MOOCs"</a>	plagiarism policy; syllabus review; attendance
<b><i>Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday</i></b>		
1/21	❖ <a href="#">Barlow "Economy"</a> ; Lessig 1–12	watch " <a href="#">Copyright Criminals</a> "
1/23	Ball " <a href="#">Editorial Pedagogy</a> " I, II, III	multimodal and online editing
1/26	◇ InfoDev " <a href="#">Knowledge Map</a> " 1–30	goldfarming and microwork
1/28	Doctorow " <a href="#">Anda's Game</a> "	online economics and politics
1/30	Slee " <a href="#">Egypt's</a> ," " <a href="#">More Egypt</a> "	<a href="#">orientalism</a> , social media, and the Arab Spring

Date	Preparation required	In-class activity or topic
2/2	Joyce " <a href="#">Twelve Blue</a> "	<a href="#">hypertext</a> , games, interactivity; <a href="#">Zork</a> ; <a href="#">Twinery</a>
2/4	❖ Alexander " <a href="#">Joy of Text</a> "; Hudson " <a href="#">Twine</a> "	interactivity; <a href="#">Twinery</a>
2/6	O'Reilly and Battelle " <a href="#">Squared</a> "; Dash " <a href="#">Lost</a> "	historical evolution of the Web
2/9	◇ Baron ix–xviii, Gleick 3–12	background and historical overview
2/11	Baron 3–32 (1 "Writing," 2 "Tekno")	histories of literacy
2/13	Gleick 13–27 (1 "Drums")	pre-literate information theory
<b>Presidents Day Holiday</b>		
2/18	❖ Baron 33–48 (3 "Thoreau's")	histories of literacy
2/20	Gleick 78–105 (4 "Wheel-work")	mechanizing information; final project ideas
2/23	◇ Baron 49–70 (4 "Handwriting")	technological obsolescence and the idea of the new
2/25	Gleick 105–124 (4 "Wheel-work")	mechanizing information
2/27	finish composing midterm	<b>midterms due</b>
3/2	where have we been so far?	midterms returned in individual conferences
3/4	where have we been so far?	midterms returned in individual conferences
3/6	where have we been so far?	midterms returned in individual conferences
3/9	❖ Baron 71–90 (5 "Clay"); reflective post	(im)permanence; the resistance of old technologies
3/11	Gleick 125–143 (5 "Nervous")	early networks
3/13	◇ Baron 91–112 (6 "Wordstar")	computers, efficiency, and effort
<b>Spring Break</b>		
3/23	❖ recommend and review readings	planning meeting for final projects
3/25	Gleick 144–167 (5 "Nervous")	early networks

Date	Preparation required	In-class activity or topic
3/27	Baron 113–134 (7 “Trusting”)	autographic and allographic; forgeries and fakes
3/30	◇ Gleick 168–188 (6 “New Wires”)	information theory
4/1	Baron 135–156 (8 “Screen”)	the history of messaging; “old-school” tech
4/3	❖ Gleick 188–203 (6 “New Wires”)	information theory
4/6	Baron 157–182 (9 “Everyone’s”)	online identity, satire, reliability, and “truthiness”
4/8	◇ Gleick 204–232 (7 “Theory”)	<a href="#">Turing machines</a>
4/10	Baron 183–206 (10 “A Space”)	privacy and social media
4/13	Gleick 233–252 (8 “Turn”)	does meaning matter?
4/15	❖ Baron 207–226 (11 “Dark Side”)	harassment; <a href="#">“Collateral Murder”</a> ; <a href="#">Inspire</a>
4/17	Gleick 252–268 (8 “Turn”); <a href="#">Borges</a> , <a href="#">Quine</a>	organizing information; <a href="#">binary encoding</a> ; <a href="#">poem</a>
4/20	Baron 227–246 (12 “Pixels”)	professionalizing and the digital future
4/22	◇ Gleick 324–354 (14 “Randomness”)	writing returned; contemporary problems
4/24	believing and doubting; look back	individual conferences on projects; work on projects
4/27	believing and doubting; look back	individual conferences on projects; work on projects
4/29	Gleick 398–426 (15, 16 “News,” “Epilogue”)	individual conferences on projects; work on projects
5/1	reflective post	<b>team presentations of final projects</b>
TBA	exhibit projects at DTC public showcase	<b>final projects due</b>

❖ = discussion board post due

◇ = discussion board comments due; GDrive collaborative synthesis day