

ENG 6801, Sec. 1 (19918)- Texts and Technology in History (3 credits)
Spring 2020 Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Sonia Stephens

Office hours: Tu 2:30-4:00, W 1:15-2:45,
or by appt.

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Class meeting date/time: Tuesdays 6:00-8:50 pm in TCH 151

Course Description & Objectives:

This course explores the history of relations between texts and technology. We will examine how various technologies have influenced the nature of texts they produce. Our objectives are to:

- Discuss how texts and technologies have changed over four major epochs—the ages of oral speech, literate culture, the “late age of print,” and electronic media—and how they have affected the way we think.
- Study the history of the practice of breaking information down, naming it, and reorganizing it.
- Mix historical discussions about texts and technology in history with practical considerations on the future of texts (using e-media technologies).
- Examine the relationship between texts and technology in Western culture.
- Examine the history and role of science, technical inventions, and print as they intersect with written forms of communication and production.
- Examine the impact of networked digital technologies on culture and the social, rhetorical, and theoretical issues that new media present producers and consumers of texts.

Required Texts: (These are the editions I will be using, but you can use any edition of these texts)

- Elizabeth Eisenstein (1983) *The printing revolution in early modern Europe*, 1st Edition.
- Daniel Headrick (2002) *When information came of age: Technologies of knowledge in the age of reason and revolution, 1700-1850*.
- Thomas Kuhn (2012) *The structure of scientific revolutions*, 4th Edition.
- Walter Ong (2002) *Orality and literacy: The technologizing of the word*.

Other short readings will be shared via our Webcourses site. These will include selections from:

- Matthew Gold & Laura Klein, Eds. (2019) *Debates in the digital humanities 2019*. (access via <https://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/>)
- Elizabeth Losh & Jacqueline Wernamont, Eds. (2018) *Bodies of information: Intersectional feminism and digital humanities*. (access via <https://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/>)
- Jentery Sayers, Ed. (2017) *Making things and drawing boundaries: Experiments in the digital humanities*. (access via <https://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/>)
- [various presenters] “SustainableUX: Design vs. climate change.” (<https://sustainableux.com/>)
- Noah Wardrip-Fruin & Nick Monfort, Eds. (2003) *The new media reader*. (We’ll be reading several of the freely-available pieces gathered in this collection.)

Recommended Text:

- If you have not read Jay David Bolter (2001) *Writing space: Computers, hypertext, and the remediation of print*, 2nd Edition, in ENG 6800, it may be helpful to do so.

General Policies: Your participation in class discussions is required and is expected at every class meeting. This is a discussion-based, student-centered class; it only works if you take responsibility for your learning by showing up prepared and engaged. Full preparation includes reading assigned material and writing or thinking about it, as well as bringing course materials to class with you.

Attendance is crucial because of the vital role discussion plays in this course, and unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade. As a matter of courtesy, please arrive on time prepared to stay for the entire class. Be advised that we will cover materials in class that are not included on the syllabus; you are responsible for all material covered during your absence.

The following types of absences are excused; notify me about these ahead of time:

- Religious holiday (please notify me during the first week of class)
- Authorized UCF or academic events (e.g., presenting work at an academic conference)
- Legal obligations (e.g., jury duty)

If you have a family or other personal emergency, notify me as soon as possible. Notifying me of a situation or problem after the fact prevents me from making alternative arrangements. If you are a deployed active duty military student and will need an accommodation for this, contact me as soon as possible to discuss your circumstances.

I expect professionalism in all discussions. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or other derogatory remarks will not be tolerated. My top priority is to provide a safe environment for learning. You must have a KnightsMail account and check it regularly. I will use Webcourses messaging to contact the class on occasion, and I recommend you set it to forward e-mail to your KnightsMail account automatically.

Digital devices are fine, as long as they are being used for legitimate class purposes. Cell phones, etc., should be muted before class begins. If needed for a critical situation, inform me before class. Do not record class activities without prior written permission from me.

All assignments are due by the announced date and time except in the event of a medical or personal emergency, or the exceptions noted above. For non-excused late work, 10% (one letter grade) will be deducted for each 24-hour period late until a grade of F is reached.

Financial Aid Activity: In order to document that you began this course, please complete the introductory discussion post on our Webcourses site by *5:00 pm on Friday of Week 1*. Failure to do so will delay your financial aid.

Academic Honesty: All work must be original by you. Undocumented use of another's words, ideas, images, or other media is plagiarism, as is allowing someone else to write or edit your work for you. If you are caught plagiarizing, depending on the severity, you will fail the assignment. You also risk automatically failing the course, disciplinary referral to the appropriate dean, and possible expulsion from UCF. See the UCF Rules of Conduct (osc.sdes.ucf.edu/process/roc) for further information. Papers written for this course may be submitted to Turnitin.com at my discretion.

Course Accessibility Statement: UCF is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate format upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. None will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request them. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Accessibility Services, Ferrell Commons 7F Room 187, phone (407) 823-2371, sas@ucf.edu.

Copyright: The materials used for this course may contain copyright-protected materials. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only.

Mandatory reporting and UCF Cares: As a professor, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility. If you share information with me about sexual misconduct or crimes that may have occurred on campus,

I am required to contact the appropriate UCF student support agency. If you prefer to remain anonymous and are seeking resources or support for yourself, a friend, or a classmate, you can also visit UCFCares.com for free services and information about a variety of student concerns. You can reach a UCF Cares staff member at ucfcare@ucf.edu or call (407) 823-5607 between 8am and 5pm. If you are in immediate distress, UCF offers counselors 24/7 at (407) 823-2811 (then press #5).

Campus Safety: Emergencies are rare, but if one arises during class everyone will need to work together. In case of emergency, call 911. Every UCF classroom has an emergency procedures guide posted on the wall near the door (online at emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html). Familiarize yourself with the exits from the building. To stay informed about emergency situations, sign up for UCF text alerts at my.ucf.edu (“Student Self Service” > “Personal Information” > “UCF Alert”). If you have a special need related to emergency situations, please email me or talk to me during office hours. Consider viewing this UCF video about active shooter situations: goo.gl/ygJkky (shortened link).

University Writing Center: The UWC is available for all students to assist with writing. See <http://uwc.ucf.edu/> for details.

Note: Changes to the syllabus or course schedule will be made at my discretion, announced in class, and posted on Webcourses.

Grading

Grading: Your grade will be determined by the following:

- *Class participation (10%):* You will be graded on in-class engagement, peer feedback, and one meeting with me (outside class time) to discuss the proposed topic for your final paper. Participation means being in class and actively learning, i.e., engaging with reading materials, the teacher, and one’s peers. This includes raising questions, sharing insights, and actively and respectfully interacting with others.
- *Discussion posts (10%):* Most weeks, you will write an online discussion post (250-300 words) responding to the course reading before class begins. The purpose of the posts is to respond critically and synthetically to the course readings and connect them to your research interests and what you are learning in your other courses.
- *Collaborative Intro to T&T syllabus + individual reflection (15%):* As part of the T&T core course technology sequence, we will be working with GitHub (an online repository) to practice collaborative authoring and version control. You will complete several practice activities on this platform, contribute to developing a syllabus, and write a 400-500 word individual reflection about your experience.
- *Presentation & handout (15%):* Most weeks, one or two people will give a 15 minute oral presentation, accompanied by a handout (1 page, double-sided, printed or electronic), about a supplementary reading (possibilities listed on Webcourses). The handout or electronic text should be designed as a reference tool to assist your classmates in developing ideas and locating sources for projects as well as studying for comprehensive exams. The purpose is not to simply to give a book report, but also to aid yourself and others in navigating a continued exploration of the field of T&T. Begin with a short summary of the text’s focus and situate the book and author in a scholarly conversation. Then the presentation and accompanying text should explain key concepts/methods/applications from the book, relate the book to others that we’ve read, and explore how the book’s ideas might be useful to T&T scholarship (including your own).
- *Paper proposal & annotated bibliography (20%):* You will write a 750-850 word proposal for your final paper, accompanied with a 7-10 text annotated bibliography of your proposed sources for the

paper. Before you turn in the proposal, I would like to meet with everyone one-on one in person or via Skype outside of class to discuss your topic ideas.

- *Final paper (30%)*: In this final assignment, you will individually write a scholarly paper that synthesizes ideas from course readings and beyond, and makes an argument related to the history of T&T. In general, this will center on some aspect of the intertwined relationships between communication technologies, the texts they produce, and larger societal concerns or movements. Your paper should be 12-15 double-spaced pages (including references) and include an abstract (100-150 words).

Grade Scale (%): 94-100 = A 93-90 = A- 89-87 = B+ 86-83 = B 82-80 = B- 79-77 = C+ 76-73 = C 72-70 = C- 69-67 = D+ 66-63 = D 62-60 = D- >60 = F

No Incompletes or extra credit will be given in this course.

Written Grading Standards:

- An A text is exceptional. It presents sophisticated and significant critique and is guided by a meaningful argument. It contains the required elements of the assignment, is written in an engaging style, is arranged in a logical manner, is memorable, and is visually appealing. It is free of mechanical errors.
- A B text is strong. It contains all required elements of the assignment. It is generally above average in terms of the criteria mentioned above, but falls short of excellence in one or more category. It has only minor mechanical errors.
- A C text is competent. It contains all required elements of the assignment. It is generally average in terms of the major criteria listed above. It has a few mechanical errors.
- Low C or D work is weak. It does not include the required elements of the assignment and it falls below average in terms of one or more of the major criteria.
- F work fails in terms of one or more of these criteria.

Schedule (reading subject to change)

Week 1 Jan 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course introduction • Webcourses: Introductory discussion post by Friday, 5 pm (financial aid activity) • Drop/swap deadline 1/9; Add deadline 1/10
Week 2 Jan 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving from orality to literacy • Read: Ong Chapters 1-3 (~70 pp)
Week 3 Jan 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving from literacy to print • Read: Ong Chapters 4-7 (~100 pp) • Other: Holiday Mon 1/20
Week 4 Jan 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print technologies and society • Read: Eisenstein Chapters 1-4 (~105 pp)
Week 5 Feb 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print technologies and scholarship • Read: Eisenstein Chapters 7-8 (~90 pp)
Week 6 Feb 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific practice as a technology • Read: Kuhn Chapters 1-7 (~75 pp) • Collaborative syllabus & individual reflection due
Week 7 Feb 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific revolution & technological shift • Read: Kuhn Chapters 8-13 (~100 pp)
Week 8 Feb 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technologies of classification • Read: Headrick Chapters 1-3 (~90 pp)

Week 9 March 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technologies of representation I • Read: Headrick Chapters 4-5 (~90 pp)
Week 10 March 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Break (no class)
Week 11 March 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technologies of representation II • Read: Bodenhamer “Narrating space and place”; Harris “Deep geography–deep mapping”; Hayman et al. “A deep chart” (~55 pp) • Proposal & annotated bibliography due • Other: Withdrawal deadline 3/20
Week 12 March 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technologies of communication • Read: Headrick Chapters 6-7 (~40 pp) + From <i>The New Media Reader</i>: Ch. 36 (Stallman); Ch. 40 (Winner); Ch. 54 (Berners-Lee et al.) (~25 pp)
Week 13 March 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthropocene technologies • Read: From <i>Debates in the Digital Humanities 2019</i>: Ch. 37 (Nowviskie); Ch. 44 (Parikka) + TBD
Week 14 Apr 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology and the human subject • Read: From <i>The New Media Reader</i>: Ch. 38 (Laurel); From <i>Making Things & Drawing Boundaries</i>: Ch. 31 (Ruecker & Roberts-Smith); From <i>Bodies of Information</i>: Ch. 3 (Risam)
Week 15 Apr 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of objects • Read: From <i>Making Things & Drawing Boundaries</i>: Ch. 6 (Sneha); Ch. 24 (Garfinkel); Ch. 27 (Rogers)
Week 16 Apr 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam week: Class meets 7:00-9:50 pm • Final papers due