

# ***Intro to New Media Studies***

**LITT 2136-001**

**Spring 2006**

**MWF 9:55-11:10**

**Room: MW WQ224, F D004**

**Scott Rettberg**

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**Office Hours: MWF 9-9:55 AM and by appointment**

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**Web: <http://loki.stockton.edu/~rettbers/nmss06>**

## **About this course**

This course is a wide-ranging survey of the developing field of new media studies, with particular focus on the intersection of technology and literature, on genres of writing developed specifically for the computer and for the network. Readings will include contextualizing historical essays from *The New Media Reader*, hypertext and kinetic poetry on the web, interactive fiction, and essays from *First Person: New Media as Story, Performance and Game*.

Attendance for this course is mandatory. Students missing more than three scheduled class sessions will lose one letter grade step for each absence thereafter. Any evidence of plagiarism will be grounds for failing the course. Instances of plagiarism will also be reported to the office of the Provost for further disciplinary measures.

## **Website**

The paper syllabus is not the “live” version. Our schedule is likely to change over the course of the semester. Page numbers of assignments, paper topic assignments and modifications to the class schedule will be posted to this Website. You are expected to check the site at the start of every week for this updated information.

## **Contacting the Instructor**

The best way to get in touch with me is via email. Please note: when emailing me, be sure to include your name and a brief statement of the email’s topic in the subject line of the email. For example: JOHN DOE MISSING CLASS TOMORROW. I will make every effort to respond to email in a timely manner, though you should not expect an instant response.

## **Required Texts**

Required texts for this course include

*The New Media Reader*, Montfort and Wardrip-Fruin, eds.

*First Person: New Media as Story, Performance and Game*, Harrigan and Wardrip-Fruin, eds.

Online readings.

## **Position Papers and Final Paper**

Students will write six short weblog position papers and write a 7-8 page final paper. Position paper assignments will be posted on the website. There will be eight opportunities to write these brief (approx. 600 word) papers, of which each student must write six. The final paper will be a narrative study of contemporary video game or massively multiplayer online game.

## **Presentations**

Students will make two presentations over the course of the semester: one in which they will present and frame the discussion of an essay from *First Person*, and one presentation of a work of literature online. For each presentation, you will team up with one other student.

## **Creative Use of New Media**

In addition to studying new media literature, students will utilize technology in several projects. Position papers will be posted on a weblog. This semester, we will also work with developing podcasts related to a topic covered in the course. You should expect to do a lot of work with computers this semester, both inside the classroom and at home.

## **Exam**

There will be a final exam covering concepts and readings from the course. The exam will include multiple choice and essay questions.

## **Evaluation**

30%	Position Papers
20%	Final Paper
20%	Final Exam
10%	Podcast
10%	Presentations
10%	Attendance and Participation

Grading is according to the college's +/- system.

## **Schedule of Classes**

### **January**

Fri	13	Course Intro
Mon	16	Martin Luther King Day – No Class
Wed	18	Vannevar Bush "As We May Think" NMR 35-48
Fri	20	Ted Nelson "Computer Lib/Dream Machines" NMR 301-338 Lab – Set up Weblogs
Mon	23	Michael Joyce "Siren Shapes: Exploratory and Constructive Hypertexts" NMR 613-624, Storyspace Hypertexts Position Paper #1 Due
Wed	25	Robert Coover, "The End of Books" NMR 705-710 Storyspace Hypertext
Fri	27	Stephanie Strickland "Moving Through Me as I Move: A Paradigm of Interaction" FP 183-191 and "The Ballad of Sand and Soot"
Mon	30	Caitlin Fisher "These Waves of Girls" Position Paper #2 Due

## February

- Wed 01 Robert Arellano *Sunshine* 69
- Fri 03 Stuart Moulthrop "You Say You Want a Revolution? Hypertext and the Laws of Media" NMR 691-704, Works by Stuart Moulthrop
- Mon 06 Jill Walker "How I Was Played by Online Caroline" FP 302-309  
Position Paper #3 Due
- Wed 08 Kinetic Poetry – Poems that Go
- Fri 10 Kinetic Poetry – Poems that Go
- Mon 13 John Cayley "Literal Art: Neither Lines nor Pixels but Letters"  
Kinetic Poetry – John Cayley, Position Paper #4 Due
- Wed 15 Alan Turing "Computing Machinery and Human Intelligence" NMR  
49-65, Joseph Weizenbaum "Computer Power and Human Reason"  
NMR 367-376, Position Paper #5 Due
- Fri 17 Nick Montfort "Interactive Fiction as 'Story,' 'Game,' 'Storygame,'  
'Novel,' 'World,' 'Literature,' 'Puzzle,' 'Problem,' 'Riddle,' and  
'Machine' FP 310-316
- Mon 20 No Class – President's Day
- Wed 22 Henry Jenkins "Game Design as Narrative Architecture" FP 113-130.  
Interactive Fiction. Position Paper #6 Due
- Fri 24 Interactive Fiction
- Mon 27 Interactive Fiction

## March

- Wed 01 Interactive Fiction
- Fri 03 Podcasting Project
- Mon 06 Podcasting Project
- Wed 08 Podcasting Project
- Fri 10 Podcasting Project
- 13-17 SPRING BREAK
- Mon 20 Podcasting Projects Due – Presentations.
- Wed 22 Markku Eskelinen "Toward Computer Game Studies" FP 36-44  
Position Paper #7 Due

- Fri 24 Espen Aarseth "Genre Trouble: Narrativism and the Art of Simulation" FP 35-44
- Mon 27 Simon Penny "Representation, Enaction, and the Ethics of Simulation" FP 71-84
- Wed 29 Gonzalo Frasca "Videogames of the Oppressed: Critical Thinking, Education, Tolerance, and Other Trivial Issues." FP 85-94  
Position Paper #8 Due
- Fri 31 Jesper Juul "Introduction to Game Time" FP 131-142  
Electronic Literature Presentations #1

## **April**

- Mon 03 Celia Pearce "Towards a Game Theory of Game" FP 143-153  
Electronic Literature Presentations #2
- Wed 05 Eric Zimmerman "Narrative, Interactivity, Play and Games: Four Naughty Concepts in Need of Discipline" FP 154-164  
Electronic Literature Presentation #3
- Fri 07 Janet Murray "From Game-Story to Cyberdrama" FP 2-11  
Electronic Literature Presentations #4
- Mon 10 Ken Perlin "Can There Be a Form Between a Game and a Story?" FP 12-18. Electronic Literature Presentations #5
- Wed 12 Paper Topics Due. Michael Mateas "A Preliminary Poetics for Interactive Drama and Games" FP 19-34. Electronic Literature Presentations #6
- Fri 14 Michael Mateas and Andrew Stern "Façade"
- Mon 17 Camille Utterback "Unusual Positions – Embodied Interaction with Symbolic Spaces" FP 218-226. "Screen" by Noah Wardrip-Fruin.
- Wed 19 Electronic Literature Presentations #7
- Fri 21 Catch-up Day
- Mon 24 Exam Review
- Wed 26 Paper Workshop
- Fri 28 Final Paper Due

## **May**

- Mon 01 Final Exam