

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Literacy and Reading Program

EDRD 833: Literacy and Learning in the Digital Age
3 Credits, Summer 2020
Monday, 4:30-7:10, online

Faculty

Name: Amy Hutchison
Office Hours: By appointment
Office Location: 1506 Thompson Hall, Fairfax campus
Office Phone: 703-993-2166
Email Address: ahutchi9@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/Corequisites

None

University Catalog Course Description

Engages students in an in-depth study of theories and arguments related to digital literacies for academic success. Encourages critical thinking about digital media and how analyzing media involves understanding the text, context, and culture in which messages are produced and consumed. Explores the role of creative production as an active process for academic learning. Engages students in reconsidering the role of digital technology in instruction and the sociocultural practices associated with digital environments.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using asynchronous and synchronous formats via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on May 20 at 12pm.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool. [Delete this sentence if not applicable.]
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download: [Add or delete options, as desire.]
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week:
Synchronous course meetings will be held online on Mondays from 4:30-7:10pm. The remainder of the course is asynchronous. All asynchronous weekly will be due on Sunday nights by midnight.
- Log-in Frequency:
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 4 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation:
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:

Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

- Netiquette:

The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

- Accommodations:

Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

- (a) Critically analyze texts to explain the key characteristics, questions, and arguments about literacy and learning in the digital age.
- (b) Analyze the role that literacy skills play in creating effective multimedia content and compose a digital multimodal composition to demonstrate understanding.
- (c) Demonstrate knowledge of the strategies that strategic readers use in online reading tasks and critique current theories about the cognitive processes employed during online reading.
- (d) Construct a theoretically-informed argument about the role of digital technology in literacy and learning.
- (e) Formulate theoretically-grounded approaches for teaching critical evaluation skills.

Professional Standards

Not Applicable.

Required Texts

Hobbs, R. (2017). *Create to Learn: Introduction to Digital Literacy*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Assigned reading available in Blackboard.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor on Blackboard.

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

NOTE: Instructions for all assignments will be posted to Blackboard within the folder for each module.

Module 1:

- A. Digital Think-Aloud (**150 points**): Using Chapter 11 of the Hobbs text to guide you, you will create a screencast to provide your reaction to the readings this week. Begin by choosing a Type of Screencast from the list on p.182 of the Hobbs text. Then, use the screencast to respond to the following questions: 1) What are some of the key characteristics of literacy and learning in the digital age? 2) Synthesize the two differing perspectives from the readings this week on what it means to be literate in the digital age and, based on that, describe what you think are the essential ideas, questions and/or arguments that scholars should consider as it relates to literacy and learning in the digital age. 3) What has the recent shift to remote learning taught you (or inspired you to consider) about digital literacy?
- B. Choose a segment of one minute or less that you want to share with the class during our Webex meeting on Monday, June 8 (**10 points for sharing and participation in synchronous session**).

Due by midnight on Sunday, June 7. Be prepared to share your one-minute segment with the class during our Webex meeting on Monday, June 8.

Module 2:

Reading Response (**150 points**)

- A. Compose a two-page written response to respond to the following questions: 1) What did these readings teach you about the role that theoretical perspectives play in understanding new literacies? 2) What are new literacies? Use evidence from the readings to support your ideas.
- B. Create a visual image of any kind to represent your response to “What are new literacies?” NOTE: The image can be hand-drawn or digitally created.
- C. Be prepared to share and explain your image to the class during our Webex meeting on Monday (**10 points** for sharing and participation in synchronous session).

Module 3:

- A. Create a Digital Multimodal Composition (DMC) using the instructions in Blackboard. In your DMC, respond to the follow prompt (**150 points**):
What literacy skills must be employed to create effective multimedia content? Cite specific information from the readings to support your thinking.
- B. Compose a one-page or less response to Coiro’s commentary with 5 critiques or questions related to her work. (**50 points**)
- C. Be prepared to share your 5 critiques or questions with the class during our live Webex session (**10 points** for sharing and participation in synchronous session).

Module 4:

- A. Create a Digital Multimodal Composition to represent and critique Cho’s main ideas about the strategies that readers use to comprehend online information (**150 points**). Analyze and critique Cho’s methods for understanding readers’ cognitive processes and represent your critique in your DMC.

- B. Be prepared to share and explain your DMC to the class during our Webex meeting on Monday (**10 points** for sharing and participation in synchronous session).

Module 5:

- A. Create a Digital Multimodal Composition to respond to the following prompt (**150 points**)Based on everything we have read so far, what do you think might be an effective way to teach students how to critically evaluate online information? You may focus on any age or grade level in your response. Use theories and arguments from the readings to support your ideas.
- B. Be prepared to share and explain your DMC to the class during our Webex meeting on Monday (**10 points** for sharing and participation in synchronous session).

Final Project:

In five pages or less, and building on the response you created in the first module of this course, argue and support your position on the following questions (**150 points**):

What are the key characteristics of literacy and learning in the digital age?

What are the most important ideas, questions and/or arguments that scholars should consider as it relates to literacy and learning in the digital age?

-Cite sources from this this class and beyond to support your thinking.

- **Grading Scale**

%	Points	Grade	Interpretation
100	1000	A+	Represents mastery of the subject through effort beyond basic requirements.
94-99	940-999	A	
90-93	900-939	A-	
87-89	870-899	B+	Represents and understanding of and ability to apply theories and principles at a basic level
84-86	840-869	B	
80-83	800-839	B-	
70-79	700-799	C	Denotes an unacceptable level of understanding and application of the basic elements of the course.
<70	0-699	F	

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Class Schedule

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Module	Title/Topic	Dates
Module 1	What does it mean to be literate in the digital age? Readings:	DUE June 7

	<p>1) Hutchison, Woodward, and Colwell (2016; available in Blackboard)</p> <p>2) Chapter 1 from Hobbs</p> <p>Due by midnight June 7 (150 points): Using Chapter 11 of the Hobbs text to guide you, you will create a screencast to provide your reaction to the readings this week. See details in Blackboard.</p>	
Module 2	<p>What are New Literacies?</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>1) Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, Castek & Henry (2013)- Chapter 42: New Literacies: A Dual-Level Theory of the Changing Nature of Literacy, Instruction, and Assessment</p> <p>2) Chapter 1 from <i>A New Literacies Sampler</i>, <u>Sampling “the New” in New Literacies</u> (Knobel & Lankshear, 2009)</p> <p>3) A Review of the Digital Turn in New Literacy Studies (Mills, 2010; available in Blackboard)</p> <p>Due June 14 (150 points): See details in Blackboard</p> <p>Part 1: Compose a two-page paper to respond to the following prompt: What are new literacies? Use evidence from your readings to support your ideas.</p> <p>Part 2: Create a visual image of any kind to represent your response to “What are new literacies?”. Note: The image can be hand-drawn or digitally created.</p>	DUE June 14
Module 3	<p>Where is the literacy and learning in Multimedia Production? What are the prominent theoretical conceptions of digital reading?</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>1) Chapters 2 and 3 from Hobbs (2017)</p> <p>2) Coiro (2020)- Toward a Multifaceted Heuristic of Digital Reading to Inform Assessment, Research, Practice, and Policy. (Available in Blackboard)</p> <p>Due June 21 (150 points):</p> <p>Part 1: Create a Digital Multimodal Composition (DMC) to respond to the following prompt: What literacy skills must be employed to create effective multimedia content? Cite specific information from the readings to support your thinking. See details in Blackboard.</p> <p>Part 2 (50 points): Compose a one-page or less response to Coiro’s commentary with 5 questions or critiques related to</p>	DUE June 21

	her work. Be prepared to share your questions or critiques during our whole class meeting on Monday.	
Module 4	<p>Understanding Strategic Online Reading</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Competent Adolescent Readers' Use of Internet Reading Strategies: A Think-Aloud Study (Cho, 2014; available in Blackboard) 2) Chapter 6 from Hobbs (2017) <p>DUE June 28 (150 points): Create a Digital Multimodal Composition to represent and critique Cho's main ideas about the strategies that readers use to comprehend online information. Analyze and critique Cho's <i>methods</i> for understanding readers' cognitive processes and represent your critique in your DMC.</p>	DUE June 28
Module 5	<p>Communicating with Digital Media & Critical Evaluation of Online Sources</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Chapters 4 & 5 from Hobbs (2017) 2) Critical Thinking Is Critical: Octopuses, Online Sources, and Reliability Reasoning (Pilgrim et al, 2017; available in Blackboard) <p>DUE July 2 (150 points): Create a Digital Multimodal Composition to respond to the following prompt: Based on everything we have read so far, what do you think might be an effective way to teach students how to critically evaluate online information? You may focus on any age or grade level in your response. Use theories and arguments from the readings to support your ideas.</p>	DUE July 2
Final Project	150 points	DUE July 6

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at [703-380-1434](tel:703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at [703-993-2380](tel:703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling [703-993-8730](tel:703-993-8730), or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <http://cehd.gmu.edu/>.