

Remix and Remediation: The Art of Form and Style



ENG 1131 – Writing Through Media – Summer A 2015
May 11 – June 19

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary goal of this course is to teach students the tools and vocabulary needed to critically engage with and write about cultural objects in our contemporary media age. The class will focus both on "big picture" questions relating to the ways in which new forms of media and technology may significantly alter fundamental aspects of human experience, as well as on more local and formal concerns relating to the signifying practices of different types of media.

Our class will specifically focus on ideas of Remix and Remediation. In popular terms, a Remix alters elements of a song to create something new while still retaining aspects of the original. Likewise, a Remediation changes form or method of transmission, but often attempts to stay true to a narrative or argument. Yet, how does a Kanye song change when remixed in response to a Taylor Swift moment? What influence does Google have in algorithmic composition of poetry? How has 140 characters, Snapchat filters, and concepts of "un-friending" altered the way we communicate and compose? And how is technology changing the way audiences understand and access various forms of information, in turn facilitating new forms of authorship and commentary? Working with various print, digital, aural, visual, and experiential texts, the class will analyze how remixing and remediation alter both form and content, working through changes in production, circulation, and reception. Beginning with basic principles of rhetorical analysis, the course will address methods of argument and organization in various types of media, tracing the role of author, audience, form, and style. Building on this foundation, students will then work to understand how form and style both centralize and

de-center media, acting as a driving force of production embedded in a specific culture, content, and context. Ideas of transition and adaptation will challenge interpretations of the ‘creative’ and ‘original’ as students remix and remediate classic works as well as their own ‘new’ media. Students will not only write critically *about* our objects of study, but will also have the opportunity to produce original work.

That said, this is still a writing class, and to that end much time will be spent during class periods covering different aspects of writing, and you will be expected to heavily revise and polish all major writing assignments prior to submission. To facilitate improvement, peer review sessions will be held in class and I will set up times to meet with each of you to discuss your writing individually.

REQUIRED TEXTS/MEDIA

Instagram/Flicker
Twitter

Paul Miller – Sound UnBound (ISBN: 9780262633635)
Scott McCloud – Understanding Comics (ISBN10: 006097625)
Additional Readings provided on Canvas

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

1) Podcast (1000 words)

You will work with a partner (if you so choose) to create a podcast in the style of another podcast. This, in other words, is an exercise in style and imitation. Choose a podcast, analyze it, step into its shoes, see how it orders and represents the world. Diagnose the content and style. Then choose a concept, a theme, a topic that would work with the character of the original podcast—and make your own podcast in the style of the imitated podcast. The key to the assignment is to dive deep and make sense of the original podcast – diagram the structure, analyze the elements, work to adapt your podcast to best represent the character of the original. You should see your podcast as an episode of the original – able to fit in the archive and match the other episodes. You will be responsible for conceiving, researching, scripting, recording, and editing your own podcast. Your deliverables will be a 10-12 minute podcast + Style analysis + written comparative rhetorical analysis.

20% of final grade – 200 points

2) Scene analysis (1500 words)

You will choose a scene from one of the films screened in class (or on our list) and write an essay discussing the formal choices made by the director, considering the scene’s camerawork, content, mise en scene, and effects. The goal here will be to train you in the reading of cinematic texts and to gain a better understanding of how films communicate.

25% of final grade – 250 points

3) Photojournalism Project + Twitter + 1000 word accompanying texts + 1200 word reflection essay (2200 words)

For the assignment, you will document a local issue or event in both images and written accounts. The first text will be a photo essay, written through Instagram. Then, you will remediate the same essay through Twitter posts. You will then choose a third form to remediate your essay. You may choose any form for writing your final remediation and we will discuss in class how different media remix the original text. As with the podcast assignment, you will also write a short essay in which you reflect critically upon the differences between the forms and the changes remediation and remix brought to the essay's meaning and method of communication.

25% of final grade - 250 points

4) Discussion Posts (2000 words)

Each week you will respond to a discussion post, reflecting on current in class topics as well as readings and supplemental texts. Discussion posts should engage the critical ideas of remix writing and analyze texts for examples. In essence – each discussion post should help you critically engage materials and work through concepts building towards your final essay.

20% of final grade – 50 points each

5) Participation

Much of our time will be devoted to discussing the texts we are reading in class. Active, engaged participation in discussions and classroom activities is expected.

10% of final grade - 100 points

GRADING SCALE

A = 93% = 4.0	A- = 90% = 3.67
B+ = 87% = 3.33	B = 83% = 3.0
B- = 80% = 2.67	C+ = 77% = 2.33
C = 73% = 2.0	C- = 70% = 1.67
D+ = 67% = 1.33	D = 63% = 1.0
D- = 60% = .67	E = >60% = 0.0

NB: You must pass the course with a “C” or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C) and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit (E6). You must turn in all papers totaling 6,000 words to receive credit for writing 6,000 words. PLEASE NOTE: a grade of “C-” **will not** confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement.

GRADE APPEALS: Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available in the English Department Offices. You will need to contact Carla Blount, Program Assistant to the Director of Writing Programs, for details if you wish to file an appeal.

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/gordon.aspx>

GENERAL CLASSROOM POLICIES

Publicly Available Work

Our course will involve electronic sharing or posting of personally identifiable student work or other information with persons not taking or administering the course. Students will be asked to give consent allowing disclosure of personally identifiable work. No student is required to consent as a condition of taking the course. If a student does not want to consent, he or she has the right to ask the instructor for an alternative, private means of completing the coursework.

Cell Phones/Computers

For the sake of class, we will endeavor to focus our technologies on the requirements of the course = All cell phones must be set to silent ring at the start of class. Anyone caught using their phone will be asked to leave and counted absent for the day. Similarly, the in-class computers should be used for class-related activities only and should remain turned off at all other times.

Attendance

Attendance is required. You are allowed **three (3) absences.** **For every absence exceeding this, your final grade will drop by 5 points. If you miss more than six (6) classes, you will automatically fail the course.** Exemptions from this policy will apply only for absences involving court-mandated events, such as jury duty and trial testimony, and university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with me prior to the date that will be missed.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are absent it is still your responsibility to make yourself aware of all due dates. You are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

Tardiness: Please do not come late to class; arriving late disrupts the entire class. If you enter class after roll has been called, you are late. Two instances of tardiness count as one absence. Tardiness will also lower your participation grade.

Paper Submission

Submit all papers as hard copies using MLA format. **Late papers will not be accepted.**

Plagiarism

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

If you are caught plagiarizing, you will automatically receive a failing grade for that assignment, and this incident will be reported to the UF Dean of Students, which may lead to your failing the course, in addition to other penalties.

Classroom Behavior

Challenge others, engage ideas, dare to disagree, but be nice.
Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.
UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>

Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Remix and Remediation Schedule

Film Screening

Written Assignment Due

Readings marked with a * are found on Sakai

Unit I: Media and Experience

May 11 – 15 - Week 1: Everything is a ReMix

M Introduction/Syllabus - What is a Remix? Everything is a REMIX

T Close Reading and Analysis – Making Claims

- John Berger - Ways of Seeing*

W **Podcast Day** - Go over assignment and analysis.

H The Rhetorical Situation – Style and Persuasion

- Purdue Owl Rhetorical Situation

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/625/1/>

F Advert Analysis

- <http://remixtheory.net/>

DUE: Discussion Post

Screening: T *RIP: A Remix Manifesto* (2007)

H *Wait, Wait Don't Tell Me, Pop Culture Happy Hour*

May 18 – 22 - Week 2: Sound Systems: Sound editing, Sampling, Podcasts

M Sound Systems – Everything is a ReMix (2)

- Marshall McLuhan - The Medium Is the Message – articles
http://individual.utoronto.ca/markfederman/article_mediumisthemessage.htm
- <http://www.psmag.com/nature-and-technology/medium-message-50-years-later-91552>

You Must Have Picked a Podcast

T Workshop – Elements of Style – **bring headphones**

- Popular Music as a Meaning System -
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XzbFczAMQYfex6MFo19COcXgqHTToxeUW0TxLtWOtsE/edit>

W Writing critical essays - Making a Claim, Filling Out the Frame

- Paul Roberts - How to Say Nothing in 500 Words*

DUE: Podcast Style Analysis

H The Record Effect – Video Killed the Radio Star?

- <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2005/06/06/the-record-effect?currentPage=all>
- Kanye West – Runaway*

F Semiotics

- Scott McCloud, Understanding Comics - Chapters 2 & 3
http://www.uic.edu.hk/~amyzhang/teaching/COMP3050/readings/McCloud_Understanding_Comics.pdf
<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B0vtKqkt0q-bNTk1MzlhMmYtMmMyNS00Yzc3LTgzMDEtMjEzNDI3ZmZjMzAx/edit>

DUE: Discussion Post – Podcast Analysis

Screening: T SNL Episodes (TBD), TED videos, workshop

H *Across the Universe* (Taymor 2007)

UNIT II: Signification in Reading Film

May 25 – 29 - Week 3: Adaptation: Semiotics on Screen

M Assignment: Scene Analysis – Everything is a Remix (3)

- Semiotics for Beginners –
<http://visual-memory.co.uk/daniel/Documents/S4B/semiotic.html>
- Understanding the Image – Semiotics cont.
Workshop: Scene Analysis Sample – Shot Breakdown
- <https://longzijun.wordpress.com/2014/04/03/film-scene-analysis-cinematography-and-mise-en-scene-in-american-beauty/>

T Anatomy of a Film

- Adapted: Sergei Eisenstein "Word and Image"*
<https://wordandimageblog.wordpress.com/>
- How to Read a Film*

DUE: Podcast and Critical Response

W Mise en Scene - Camera angles and Shot List reference guide

T "The" Gaze

- Laura Mulvey - Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUcvlJmCVcl>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lxLhcmhPp0>

F **Class Cancelled – Research and Notes Day**

- <http://www.npr.org/blogs/monkeysee/2013/11/25/247146164/what-really-makes-katniss-stand-out-peeta-her-movie-girlfriend>
- http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2013/11/27/hunger_games_gender_role_reversal_the_peeta_and_katniss_relationship_may.html

DUE: Discussion Post

Screening: T *Memento* (Nolan, 2000)

H *No Country for Old Men* (Cohen 2007)

June 1 – 5 - Week 4: Scene Analysis

M Author: Film Meanings and Director Choices – Everything is a ReMix (4)

- Wes Anderson Trailers*

DUE: Shot List

T **Workshop:** Organizing and Outlining

- Anne Lamont – Shitty First Drafts*

W **Discussion:** The Role of the Camera and Semiotics in Film

H Remixing History

DUE: Scene Analysis Rough Draft

F **Workshop:** Revising, Introductions and Conclusions?

Screening: T CONFERENCES

H *Selma* (DuVernay 2014)

Unit III: Storytelling in Words, Sounds, & Images

June 8 – 12 - Week 5: Images and Ideology

M Introduction to Photojournalism Project

- Photo Essays*

DUE: Scene Analysis

T Controlling the Image

- Anne Helen Peterson - Beyonce*
- Twitter discussion

W Photo Remediation Discussion - What kind of image tells a story?

- In Class - Six Word Stories

H Circulation

- Henry Jenkins – If It Doesn't Spread Its Dead*

F Detail and Description - Google Analytics/Twitter Poetry

- The Hairpin - A Guide to Eating Particular Feelings*

DUE: Discussion Post

Screening: T *Jaws* (Spielburg)

H *Bling Ring* (Coppola 2013)

June 15 – 19 - **Week 6: The Remediation is the Message**

M Sound Unbound – Editing Art

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jM69XPC9oel>

T Media Mixology

- Nicholas Carr - Is Google Making Us Stupid?*

W Rinse and Repeat

- Jonathan Lethem, "The Ecstasy of Influence"*

H Photojournalism Presentations

F Final Reflections and Photojournalism Presentations

- **DUE: Photo Remediation**

Screening: T Mixed Media Workshop

H *Exit Through the Gift Shop* (Banksy 2010)

Class Vote of Films

Across the Universe (Taymor 2007)
Exit Through the Gift Shop (Banksy 2010)
Selma (DuVernay 2014)
Bling Ring (Coppola 2013)
RIP: A Remix Manifesto
Memento (Nolan, 2000)
Romeo and Juliet (Lurhman, 1996)
The Great Gatsby
The Wolf of Wallstreet
Gone with the Wind
Mean Girls
Game of Thrones
Dexter
I am Legend
Bladerunner
Black Mirror
Vertigo