<u>**Intro. to Multimedia Composition: Blogging – Rutgers University**</u>
<u>**Fall 2014 Syllabus**</u>

209 : 01   M 9:50-12:50 (Murray Hall-038)

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> "…a blog is just a format for content. It's a way of presenting information in a linear
> fashion, in reverse chronological order. Ultimately, the blog is only as good as the
> information presented." – Elizabeth Spiers, founding Editor, Gawker.com

Course Description

Students will explore the personal and professional value of being able to create and
update a blog and understand the many purposes and functions of blogs. Students will
become familiar with blogging jargon (posts, tags, archives, etc.), explore
various blogging platforms, learn how to create and update a basic blog, and analyze
exemplary blogs. Writing exercises will focus on developing a distinct, consistent voice
for the web, generating a steady stream of topics, and writing for a specific audience.
Students will also consider how additional media (photos, videos, sound, external links)
can support the text.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Over the course of the semester, each student will create a concept for a blog that he or
she will update throughout the semester, and the class will also maintain a collaborative
group blog. Students will be required to read, respond to assigned course materials,
share their work, and participate in class discussion. **Learning Goals:** Engage critically
in the process of creative expression. [AHr]

Required Materials: Folder, notebook, pen or pencil

Grading

Your final grade will be based on your performance in five areas: attendance/participation,
personal blog posting, group blog posting and commenting, response papers, and a final
paper.

Late work will not be accepted unless you make prior arrangements and have an
adequate need for additional time. Once we agree on an extension, you must submit your
work by the new deadline, or the work will not be accepted.

Attendance/Participation (20%): Attendance is very important for success in this
course. After more than two absences, each subsequent absence will drop your grade
one step (A will become B+, etc.). Tardiness will count as ½ of an absence**.**

Students are expected to attend all classes. However, if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website (https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra//) to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

You will be required to participate in class discussions, regularly read your classmates' blog posts, and collaborate with peers during group assignments.

Personal Blog Posting and Presentation (20%): You will be required to choose an "obsession" or focus for a personal blog that you will update two times per week. You will also be required to actively share your work and seek new readers. At the end of the semester, students will present their personal blogs to the class. (Guidelines to follow)

Course Blog Posting and Commenting (20%): The URL for the course blog is: http://rucreativebloggingfa14.wordpress.com/. Each student will be assigned a date when he/she will be responsible for posting on the course blog. The blog will be updated bi-weekly. All students will be required to comment on every post. (Guidelines to follow)

Response Papers (20%): Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to complete occasional two-pages response papers on an assigned subject.

Final Paper (20%): At the beginning of the semester, students will choose a research focus within the field of blogging. Over the course of the semester, students will gather information and observations about this subject and submit regular annotated bibliographies. A five-page paper, due on the last day of class, will chronicle findings and new insights.

Fall 2014 Schedule (Subject to Change)

Week 1 (9/8/14): Welcome!

What is a blog?
Functions, purposes, and features of blogs

Week 2 (9/15/14): Types of Blogs, RSS Feeds, and Comments

Types of blogs with examples, RSS Feeds
Commenting

Week 3 (9/22/14): Creating a Blog

Choosing a blogging platform
Planning posts, editorial calendars

Week 4 (9/29/14): Incorporating Multimedia

Creative Commons

Formatting images, including video, adding podcasts, basic HTML

Week 5 (10/6/14): Writing for the Web

Selections from *Uncreative Writing*
Identifying your writing style and the writing styles of other bloggers

Week 6 (10/13/14): Writing for the Web

Appealing to a reader who reads on a screen
Visual and textual formatting (*Thinking with Type* by Ellen Lupton)

Week 7 (10/20/14): Organizing and Growing Your Blog

Archiving, tagging, and categorizing posts
Assessing past posts and looking ahead, staying motivated

Week 8 (10/27/14): Sharing and Engaging

Options for social media
Importance of sharing and etiquette – creative ways to share posts

Week 9 (11/3/14): Possibilities of Collaborative Blogging

Guest posting and blogging communities
Group blogs – expanding to magazine, newspaper, academic/professional project

Week 10 (11/10/14): Live Blogging and Transparency

Live blogging
Errors, plagiarism, FTC, liability

Week 11 (11/17/14): The Blogger's Identity

Anonymous vs. identified bloggers
How does a person's blog affect his/her life?

Week 12 (11/24/14): How Long Should You Continue a Blog, and What Else Could It Become?

Lifespan of a blog
What can a blog become?
Blogging and the corporate world; blogging to advance yourself professionally

Week 13 (12/1/14): Final Presentations

Presentations

Week 14 (12/8/14): Final Papers

Final Papers Due