

BTMM 4455
Temple University, Fall 2011
New Media Literacies

Synopsis

This course examines the intersection of education and participatory culture, literacy and technology change, the knowledge gap, informal learning and knowledge communities, emerging social skills and cultural competencies across the lifespan.



The concept of literacy is undergoing a transformation as a result of changes in media, technology, education and society. It's always been a slippery concept, actually. Five hundred years ago, it meant the ability to sign one's name to a printed document. Reading comprehension became a component of literacy when printed books flourished during the Enlightenment. During the 20th century, writing composition and literary analysis gained prominence under the literacy umbrella.

To be literate today, one needs to be both a skilled reader and a competent writer, able to use a variety of technology *tools* (the Internet, word processing, graphic design software, digital camera, editing) in different *social contexts* (including for work, leisure and citizenship activities). You need the ability to access, analyze and compose messages using *symbol systems* (language, image, music, sound) across different *modes* (informational, narrative and persuasive) and *genres* (memos, flyers, social media networks, email, web pages, etc). And because literacy is a form of social action, it involves actively navigating a set of power relationships as a member of a *discourse community* (as a family member, a music fan, part of a team, etc).

In this course we'll look closely at the key concepts, assumptions and operating principles of some new media literacies, including visual literacy, information literacy, media literacy, critical literacy, and digital literacy. We'll consider whether new media literacies exacerbate or ameliorate the digital divide, contributing to knowledge gaps and socio-economic and structural inequalities in the education system. These are some of the questions we will address in this course:

- How do new media literacies develop among children, adolescents and young people both in and out of school?
- What kinds of activities and instructional practices best support learning?
- How does scholarship in new media literacies build new knowledge in the field?
- What are some of the personal, social, cultural, political and economic consequences of changing conceptualizations of literacy?

One source of momentum for new media literacies comes from the variety of stakeholders interested in the topic, including business leaders, government policymakers, community education leaders, K-12 teachers, as well as educators and scholars from

fields as diverse as linguistics, developmental psychology, English, educational technology, cultural studies, and communication. In exploring the relationship between theory and practice, we'll examine the practices of youth media communities and educators. We'll identify sources of support for and resistance to new media literacies and look at why competence in digital and media literacy is being debated by educational leaders, policymakers and the business community.

Faculty

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Course Meeting Times and Location

Tuesdays – Thursdays, 2 – 3:20, Anderson 001

Required Text:

Hobbs, R. (2011). *Digital and Media Literacy: Connecting Culture and Classroom*.

Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin/Sage.

Course Goals and Objectives

After completing this course, you will:

1. Deepen awareness of yourself as a literate individual and reflect on the diversity of the new literacy practices that you use in the workplace, for leisure and citizenship, and as part of daily life.
2. Gain knowledge of how changes in society and technology shape the concept of literacy from the point of view of linguists, child development experts, educators, and information and communication scholars.
3. Gain knowledge of how literacy practices embody ideologies about the relative value of authorship, collaboration, technology, authority and social power.
4. Appreciate the variety of instructional practices that are used to develop the new media literacy competencies of children, adolescents and adults.
5. Strengthen your reading comprehension and critical reading skills in responding to texts in a variety of genres and forms.

6. Gain research skills in locating and evaluating information to develop your expertise on a topic of special interest related to the course.
7. Develop your writing skills and improve the ability to compose messages and share ideas using a variety of symbol systems and technologies.
8. Activate your creativity, critical thinking and collaboration competencies in creating and implementing original work.

Course Requirements

Specific details about assignments will be available under “Assignments” on the course Blackboard site.

Weekly Response Papers (30%)

Students will engage with the content of the course through various types of academic and creative work, including blogging, screencasting and other forms of expression and communication.

Final Research Project or Creative Proposal (30%)

Working individually or with a partner, you examine a specific topic related to the course, gather information to acquire expertise on the topic, develop an original argument, and write a scholarly paper communicating their ideas. Alternatively, you may create a series of lesson plans, develop a multimedia production, or plan another type of creative project with permission from the instructor. In either case, intermediate deadlines will help structure the learning experience. You post their work online and make a formal presentation of your work to the class.

Midterm and Final Examination (30%)

An open-book, open-note midterm and final exam assess your ability to apply knowledge gained from this course to applied practical problems in the real world.

Class Participation (10%)

Attendance, quality of class preparation, in-class participation, contribution to the learning of others, and leadership are evaluated at the semester end.

Grading

Grades represent the instructor’s assessment of your work as compared to clearly identified criteria for evaluation and in relation to the performance of others in the class. A grade of A represents outstanding or exceptional work; an A- indicates high quality but not outstanding work; a B+ represents high quality work but with some limitations or evident weaknesses; a B indicates competent, satisfactory work. A B- in a graduate level course suggests that the student's work is lacking in some important way. A grade of C+ or C represents seriously flawed work. In most classes that would mean doing the assignments but misunderstanding fundamental concepts or presenting them in an unacceptable form. A grade of D represents failure and will be given only if assignments

were extremely poorly executed or other failure to adhere to norms of appropriate student conduct. Work not submitted by the deadline will be awarded an F.

There are no make-up opportunities for missed exams, homework or other assignments. Please do not ask for an exception. Because media businesses rely on strict adherence to deadlines, this instructor employs a similar deadline standard. Please do not ask for an exception.

Approach to Writing Skills Development and Policy on Revision

You will develop your literacy competencies (speaking, listening, reading, writing, critical analysis of media, and media composition) by exploring the topics and issues in this class. Weekly informal writing is used every week to help you discover what interests you most about what you are learning. Most writing students do in this course will be public, to be shared with classmates using a collaborative writing tool. Students will read each other's work and get feedback from "critical friends." Revision is an integral part of the writing experience so you are encouraged to revise up to two of your weekly writing projects for a replacement grade. Revisions will be accepted on the last day of class.

Policy on Disabilities and Special Needs

If you have a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation. Also contact Disability Resources at (215) 204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for documented disabilities.

Policy on Plagiarism

Students are expected to produce substantial amounts of writing for this course, and it is expected that you will be the author of all the work you submit. Depending on the context and situation, penalties for plagiarism may range from a reduced grade on an assignment to failing the course. Students should use the American Psychological Association (APA) citation format for identifying all materials used for reference and information gathering. Please consult the instructor(s) if you have questions on how to identify the information sources that you use in preparing your work.

Policy on Attendance and Class Participation

Attendance at all classes is expected as a sign of your intellectual curiosity and commitment to the learning process. The instructor will use class attendance as one element to assess class participation. More than one missed class in the semester will lower the course grade.

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Course Schedule
Fall 2011
Professor Renee Hobbs

PART I	THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON LITERACIES OLD AND NEW
Week 1 August 30 – Sept 1	Introduction to the Course READ: Hobbs, “Digital and Media Literacy,” Preface, Chapter 1 & 2, (pp. vii – 46)
Week 2 September 6 – 8	Paradoxes of Literacy, Culture and Technology READ: Urban, “Marshall McLuhan and the Book” READ: Bruner & Olson, “Symbols and Texts as Tools of Intellect” READ: Gardner and Jenkins, “How We Got Here” DUE: Weekly Response #1
Week 3 September 13 – 15	Literacy as a Social Practice READ: Gee, “What is Literacy?” READ: boyd, “Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites” READ: Gee, “Good Games and Good Learning” DUE: Weekly Response #2
Week 4 September 20 – 22	The Relationship between Learning and Literacy READ: Wells, “Dialogic Inquiry in Education” READ: Bruner, “The Language of Education” READ: Hobbs, Chapter 3, “Critical Questions, Close Reading” (pp. 47 – 66) DUE: Weekly Response #3
Week 5 September 27 – 29	Old and New Literacies in Early Childhood READ: Dyson, “Where are the Childhoods...” READ: Caravette, “Portrait of the Reader as a Young Child” READ: Mouly, “Visual Literacy” READ: Linebarger & Piotrowski, “TV as Storyteller” DUE: Weekly Response #4
PART II	TOOL LITERACIES AND LITERACIES OF REPRESENTATION
Week 6 October 4 – 6	Stakeholders in New Media Literacies READ: Hobbs, “Multiple Visions of Multimedia Literacy” READ: Robison, “New Media Literacies by Design” VIEW: PBS Digital Media: New Learners of the 21 st Century DUE: Weekly Response #4

Week 7 October 11 – 13	Information Literacy READ: Benett, Maton, Kervin, “The Digital Natives Debate” READ: Inside Higher Ed, “What Students Don’t Know” DUE: Weekly Response #5
Week 8 October 18 – 20	Tool Literacies READ: U.S. Department of Education, Learning Powered by Technology READ: Northcut & Brumberger, “Resisting the Lure of Technology-Driven Design” DUE: Weekly Response #6
Week 9 October 25 -27	Workshop Practice on New Media Literacies Midterm Examination
Week 10 November 1 -3	Representation and its Discontents READ: Hobbs, Chapter 4 “The Power of Representation” (pp. 67 – 80) READ: Kellner & Share, “Critical Media Literacy” DUE: Weekly Response #7

PART III	THEORY AND PRACTICE
Week 11 November 8 – 10	Collaborative Multimedia Authorship READ: Hobbs, Chapter 5 “Composing with Media Across the Curriculum” (pp. 81 – 102) READ: Miller & Borowicz, “New Literacies with an Attitude” READ: Alvermann & Hagood, “Fandom and Critical Media Literacy” DUE: Weekly Response #8
Week 12 November 15 – 17	Discourses of Empowerment and Protection READ: Hobbs, Chapter 6 – 7, “Protection and Empowerment” & “Life Online” (pp. 103 – 142) READ: Willard, “School Response to Cyberbullying and Sexting” DUE: Weekly Response #9
Week 13 November 25 NO CLASS Nov 27 Happy Thanksgiving	Digital Literacy and Democracy READ: Hobbs, Chapter 8, “What in the World” (pp. 143 – 166) READ: Hobbs, Chapter 9, “Infusing DML Across the Curriculum” (pp. 167 – 187) READ: Rheingold, “Using Participatory Media and Public Voice” READ: O’Neill, “Media Literacy and Communication Rights”

Week 14 November 29 – Dec 1	Student Presentations DUE: Presentation
Week 15 December 6	Synthesis DUE: Weekly Response #10
Friday, Dec 9	DUE: Final Paper or Project
TBD	Final Examination

READINGS

- Alvermann, D. & Hagood, M. (2000). Fandom and critical media literacy. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 43(5), 436 – 44
- Bennett, S., Maton, K. & Kervin, L. (2008). The ‘digital natives’ debate: A critical review of the evidence. *British Journal of Educational Technology* 39(5), 775 – 786.
- Boyd, D. (2007). Why youth (heart) social network sites: The role of networked publics in teenage social life. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, identity and digital media*. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Bruner, J. (2006, 1982). The language of education. *In search of pedagogy volume II: The selected works of Jerome S. Bruner* (pp. 80 – 90). New York: Routledge.
- Bruner, J. & Olson, D. (2006, 1978). Symbols and texts as tools of intellect. *In search of pedagogy volume II: The selected works of Jerome S. Bruner* (pp. 21 – 34). New York: Routledge.
- Caravette, L. (2011). Portrait of the reader as a young child. *Children and Libraries* 9(2), 52 – 57.
- Dyson, A. H. (2001). Where are the childhoods in childhood literacy? An exploration in outer (school) space. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy* 1(1), 9 – 39.
- Gardner, H. & Jenkins, H. (2010). Appendix: How we got here. Our Space: Being a responsible citizen of the digital world. Available:
<http://newmedialiteracies.org/our-space-being-a-responsible.php>
- Gee, J.P. (2005). Good games and good learning. *Phi Kappa Phi Forum* 85(2), 33-37.
- Gee, J. P. (1989). What is literacy? *Journal of Education* 171(1), 18-25.

- Hobbs, R. (2011). *Digital and media literacy: Connecting culture and classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin/Sage.
- Hobbs, R. (2006). Multiple visions of multimedia literacy: Emerging areas of synthesis. In M. McKenna, L. Labbo, R. Kieffer & D. Reinking (Eds.), *International handbook of literacy and technology*. Volume II (pp. 15 – 28). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum Associates.
- Inside Higher Ed (2011, August 22). What students don't know. Available: http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/08/22/erial_study_of_student_research_habits_at_illinois_university_libraries_reveals_alarmingly_poor_information_literacy_and_skills
- Kellner, D. & Share, J. (2007). Critical media literacy, democracy, and the reconstruction of education. In D. Macedo & S. Steinberg (Eds.), *Media literacy: A reader* (p. 3 – 23). New York: Peter Lang.
- Linebarger, D. & Piotrowski, J. (2009). TV as storyteller: How exposure to television narratives impacts at-risk preschoolers' story knowledge and narrative skills. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology* 27, 47 – 69.
- Miller, S. & Borowicz, S. (in press). New literacies with an attitude: Transformative teacher education through digital video learning tools. In M. Finn & P. Finn (Eds.), *Teacher education with an attitude*. State University of New York Press.
- Mouly, F. (2011). Visual literacy: Exploring this magical portal. *Children and Libraries* 9(1), 12 -14.
- Northcut, K. & Brumberger E. (2010). Resisting the lure of technology-driven design: Pedagogical approaches to visual communication. *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* 40(4), 459 – 471.
- O'Neill, B. (2010). Media literacy and communication rights: Ethical individualism in the new media environment. *International Communication Gazette* 72, 323 – 338.
- Rheingold, H. (2008). Using participatory media and public voice to encourage civic engagement. In W.L. Bennett (Ed.), *Civic life online: Learning how digital media can engage youth*. (pp. 97 – 118). The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Robison, A. (in press). New media literacies by design: The Game School. In K. Tyner (Ed.), *New media literacy*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Urban, W. (2004). Marshall McLuhan and the book: A reconsideration. *Historical Studies in Education* 16(1), 139 – 154.

Wells, G. (2000). Dialogic inquiry in education: Building on the legacy of Vygotsky. In C. Lee and P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Willard, N. (2011). School response to cyberbullying and sexting: The legal challenges. *Brigham Young University Education & Law Journal 1*, 75-125.

U.S. Department of Education (2010). Learning Powered by Technology. National Education Technology Plan. Available: <http://www.ed.gov/technology/netp-2010>