DIGITAL VALUES

(and how to use them)

ENG 125.033
Fall 2022
M/W 10 - 11:30 AM
Mason Hall G421B
Instructor: Cait Dyche
o-hrs: T 9 - 10 AM

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Values are frequently defined as core enduring beliefs that shape how we behave and evaluate as well as how we justify our actions and assessments, and when put together into a coherent set they become the building blocks of ideologies. They have been studied across disciplines as both personal attributes held by individuals and as shared cultural and social properties. Values spread and materialize through communication—words, images, sound, video. Because of this, they are increasingly shared and maintained through digital media and are articulated in two distinct layers: first-layer values expressed through <u>what</u> is being communicated, and second-layer values expressed through <u>how</u> it is being communicated, <u>by whom</u>, and <u>to whom</u>. In this course, we will explore first- and second-layer values communicated via digital texts of various formats, with the goal of pinpointing our own personal values and gaining insight into how those values are spread and reinforced through media.

Some of the routes of inquiry on which we will embark in this course include: What are the dominant values expressed across digital media? How are they informed by/how do they inform the creation of new communication technologies? How do they spread within/across cultures? What ideologies do they reflect? How can I use them to communicate more effectively in my academic, work, and social lives? We will attempt to answer these questions (and more!) through a thorough consumption, discussion, and analysis of academic texts, digital media (and even some analog media - *v i n t a g e*), and evaluative discourse. We will also experiment with producing a variety of digital media, including (but not limited to!) emoji, Twitter threads, memes, and Snapchat stories.

In addition to meeting the First-Year Writing Requirements, this course will introduce you to critical discourse analysis, a research method that traverses a range of disciplines. Through the consumption, analysis, creation, and revision of a variety of communicative modes and mediums, you will learn to recognize and utilize your own digital values, skills that will be applicable to many fields of study, most professional contexts, and your day-to-day life.

COURSE VALUES:

ACCESSIBILITY

1 <u>I am deeply committed to making this course accessible.</u> If you encounter any issues related to physical accessibility, scheduling, internet or other structural barriers, or any other issues that may impede your ability to participate fully in the class, please reach out to me as soon as possible.

2 Accessibility is also a concept we will engage with as a topic and as a set of practices throughout the course.

3 We will work together to make the course accessible for all, while also interrogating accessibility as a (realized/unrealized) digital value.

AUTHENTICITY

1 The readings, class lectures, and my comments in class will suggest a particular point of view. This perspective is my own and does not have to be yours! A significant part of a college education is learning about the complexity of various issues. It is important that we listen and respect one another but we do not have to agree. A richer discussion will occur when a variety of perspectives are presented. Please express yourself!

2 Part of expressing yourself is being true to your own voice. Please don't attempt to portray someone else's voice as your own in course assignments or class discussion. I will know what you sound like, and I will know when it is not your voice we are hearing.

PARTICIPATION

1 COLLABORATION:
Learning thrives with collaboration. This can look like:

- Treating each other with respect even if there are disagreements of opinion. The internet is irreverent, but our classroom is not.
- Providing thoughtful and in-depth feedback on each other's work.
- Completing all homework and in-class writing and activities so that you can actively contribute to class discussion, pose questions, respond to others, and build upon your learning.
- Listening with intention: being present when people speak.
- Contributing to the course notes throughout the semester

2 ATTENDANCE:
Research shows that writing and learning to write is a social process, so participation via attendance is important. However, the pandemic has underscored the necessity of keeping ourselves and others healthy and in honoring priorities (e.g., caretaking responsibilities) that exist alongside our academic ones. Info on getting COVID tested.

- Missing four class sessions will not impact course credit. If you miss more, please schedule an appointment with me to catch up with course concepts.
- It is good practice to email me regarding an absence; however, if the absence is not religious or university related, I do not expect you to share why you are absent. Religious holidays and university activities with notes do *not* count as absences.
- I will always provide accommodations for absences due to illness or other unanticipated circumstances.

3 CURIOSITY:
While some say that curiosity killed the cat, most forget the second half of the idiom: "…but satisfaction brought it back." Studies show that when we are curious about a subject, we are much more likely to remember information we learn about that subject. Curiosity also allows us to be open to new experiences and ways of thinking, so that we can learn, unlearn, and relearn. Participating with curiosity in this class will look like:
- Sharing "compelling" content to the course discord server
- Being open to new ideas / experiences / ways of thinking / ways of creating
- Taking on a broad understanding of "writing"

COURSE GRADES:

Your success in this class is important to me, so my teaching is grounded in research that shows students arrive in writing classrooms with various language and writing experiences, that we each have personal writing goals, and that it takes each of us different ways, amounts of labor, and learning conditions to work toward these goals. Thus, <u>when you engage in the activities to make this a successful course, you will earn a "B" (3.0) course grade</u>.

Earning a 3.0 course grade entails:

- ADHERING TO COURSE VALUES (see above)
- DEMONSTRATING GOOD WRITERLY PRACTICES:
    - Sustained effort and investment throughout all phases of a project. This means completing each formal submission of the writing process and working through the invisible labor inherent in all writing (e.g. invention, research, drafting, revising).
    - Revise your work substantially and thoughtfully. Revisions are a "re-seeing" of your work with changes to structure, message, analysis, evidence, and more. Revisions respond to your audience's feedback, to the parameters of the assignment, and to your writing goals.
- COMPLETING WORK ON TIME AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS
    - *Revisions*: Revision is an important part of the writing process, so you may revise all assignments. After an assignment receives an "incomplete," you have two weeks to revise. The reason for this deadline is because assignments build upon each other. Please email me when you have completed a revision so I can reassess your work
    - *Missing Work*: Missing work is when I have no record of you submitting it. Because assignments build upon each other, missing work impacts course credit.
    - *Late Work:* Assignments are used in class after they are due, so turning one in late means it will impact your ability to participate. Consistently submitting work on time keeps us on track to successfully complete the course. However, life happens, so here is how you can stay on top of your learning and your course credit:
        - Please email me to request an extension – if you don't email me, I can't arrange an extension.
        - Rough drafts of essays may be submitted late if you email your peer review group members and CC me at least 48 hours before the deadline and then negotiate a new deadline that works for your peers.

How your work is assessed:
- You will receive a "complete" for work that meets assignment expectations as outlined in assignment descriptions, rubrics, and as discussed above.
- Work that does not meet the above expectations will receive an "incomplete."
- For major assignments, you will receive written or aural feedback from me. This feedback is based on rubrics and assignment descriptions.

Grades of "A" (4.0) ask for engagement beyond the engagement to earn a "B" grade. To get an "A" course grade, consistently adhere to the expectations and course values described above and complete three of the following assignments:
- Submit a summary of the weekly readings at least twice during the semester
- "An Accessible _____" assignment add-on component
- Complete two mini-analyses on content from the course discord
- Create questions for class discussion at least three times during the semester
- Volunteer to lead class discussion for one reading

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

DIGITAL VALUES DIARY & PERSONAL NARRATIVE

1   Students will keep track of digital media/communication they engage with over the course of 12 hours in a digital values diary.

2   Students will analyze their digital values diaries. Analytical methods will be demonstrated and practiced during class time, but students will do analysis outside of class time as well.

3   Based on their analyses, students will create a personal narrative in one of the modes listed below that demonstrates the values they hold in the highest esteem based on the observations and analyses of their diaries. Students should use digital texts from their diaries (or other texts they have encountered) to support their narrative.

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Possible Modes:
Instagram Reel/Story (multi-slide)
Twitter thread
Tik Tok
Mini-podcast

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4 Students will peer review their personal narratives in small groups. As a class, we will discuss qualities of narratives that we understood to be "good/compelling" across the modes and come up with a set of values that students should aim to convey in their revisions (aka: the rubric).

5 Students will submit their revised personal narrative.

6 Students will adapt their personal narratives of digital values into an introspective essay (600 - 800 words). In addition to using texts as evidence, students should use concepts and quotes from course readings to support their self-assessments.

7 Students will submit a short reflection on the adaptation process from personal narrative to introspective essay (300 - 500 words). What was easy to translate? What was more challenging to translate? Why do you think that was the case?

COMMUNICATION VALUES RESEARCH PROPOSAL

1 Students will propose a specific form of digital communication to analyze in order to address the following research questions: 1) what values (basic and communicative) are most present in this form?; and 2) what dominant cultural beliefs or ideologies do those values reflect? The proposal should include a description of the digital form, an example text, and a defined corpus of texts that will be included in the analysis. Students should also make a case for why this form of digital communication is worth investigating and what we might learn from it (600-900 words).

2 Students will meet with Cait one-on-one to discuss their proposed research project and any adjustments that need to be made to the proposal.

COMMUNICATION VALUES RESEARCH PAPER

1 Students will submit an introduction with a thesis statement and two pages of analysis for peer review.

2 Students will submit an additional page of analysis and a conclusion for peer review.

3 In class we will discuss qualities of drafts that we understood as "good/compelling" and create a rubric for the final paper.

4 Students will submit revised final papers (1600-2000 words).

A "COMPELLING" _____

1 Students will use the knowledge they produced in their communication values research paper to create a text of the digital form they analyzed. The text should utilize the communication values identified as most prevalent and be a representation of a "compelling" text for that form. Student texts will be shared with the class in the last two class meetings of the semester.

2 Students will submit a self-reflection that addresses how successful they feel they were in producing a "good/compelling" text and conveying the communicative values that informed the creation of the text. Students should also discuss what they learned in the course that they feel will be useful to them in other courses and in everyday life. Self-reflections can be submitted in writing, a voice-recording, or a video.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

	TOPIC	DUE
Aug 29	Introductions	
Aug 31	Basic Values	
Sept 5	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS	
Sept 7	Values Connected to (Digital) Stories	Bring Completed Digital Values Diary to Class
Sept 11		Personal Values Narrative Draft -> Peer Review
Sept 12	Values Connected to (Digital) Stories	
Sept 14	Personal vs Collective Values	Peer Review Feedback Due by Class
Sept 19	Personal vs Collective Values	Revised Personal Values Narrative -> Cait

Sept 21	Values & Emotion [Affect]	
Sept 26	Values, Identity, & Emotion [Affect]	
Sept 28	Second Level (Communicative) Values	
Oct 3	Discourse Communities: Intro	
Oct 5	Discourse Communities: Cute & Funny Animals	Introspective Essay & Adaptation Reflection -> Cait
Oct 10	Discourse Communities: Body Positivity	
Oct 12	Discourse Communities: Video Games	
Oct 17	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS	
Oct 19	Critical Discourse Analysis Workshop	Bring Communication Values Research Data for Workshop
Oct 21		Communication Values Research Proposal -> Cait
Oct 24	One-on-One & Peer Critique Group Meetings (VIRTUAL CLASS)	
Oct 26	One-on-One Meetings & Argumentative Thesis Workshop (VIRTUAL CLASS)	
Oct 31	Discourse Communities: The Irreverent Internet	HAPPY HALLOWEEN!
Nov 2	NO CLASS – WORK ON DRAFTING & PEER REVIEW FEEDBACK	Communication Values Intro + 2 Pages Draft -> Peer Review
Nov 4		Peer Review Feedback Due
Nov 7	NO CLASS – WORK ON DRAFTING & PEER REVIEW FEEDBACK	
Nov 9	NO CLASS – WORK ON DRAFTING & PEER REVIEW FEEDBACK	Communication Values 1 Page + Conclusion -> Peer Review

Nov 11		Peer Review Feedback Due
Nov 14	What Do You Want to Learn About??	
Nov 16	What Do You Want to Learn About??	
Nov 21	NO CLASS – FINISH YOUR RESEARCH PAPER & ENJOY BREAK	Communication Values Research Paper -> Cait
Nov 23	THNAKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS	
Nov 28	How to Be Compelling	
Nov 30	How to Be Compelling	
Dec 4		"A Compelling _____" & Self Reflection -> Cait
Dec 5	"A Compelling _____" Presentations	
Dec 7	"A Compelling _____" Presentations	

That's All Folks!