Junior Seminar: Digital Humanities
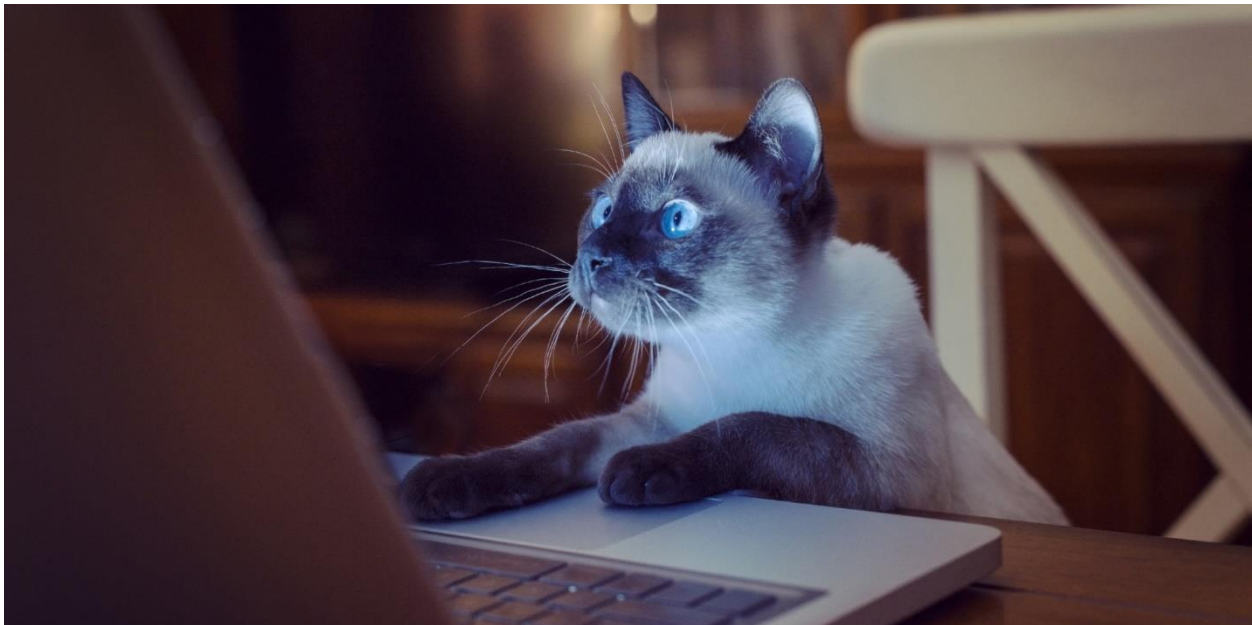## Fall 2018
(01:050:389)

Wednesday, 3:55 – 6:55 PM
Ruth Adams Building 018

Prof. Andy Urban
aturban@rutgers.edu

Office Hours: 11AM – 1PM, Mondays, or by appointment
Ruth Adams Building 205E

Course Description

This course will explore the field of the digital humanities, and how identities, ideas, social behavior, and communication get mediated through digital technologies and mediums. Topics considered may include the meaning of community and civil society in a virtual or cyber age; how digital technologies contribute to the production and reproduction of information; how virtual and digital realities get explored in works of fiction; the research uses of digital archives, databases, and cyber ethnography; and, the tension between human existence as a physical, embodied set of practices, and human existence as a set of digital connections and experiences.

Required Readings:

- Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), ISBN# 9780300215120.

- Tao Lin, *Taipei* (New York: Vintage Contemporaries, 2013), ISBN# 978-0307950178.

Additional required readings – listed in this class schedule portion of this syllabus – will be posted as .pdf files on the course's SAKAI site, in the section titled "Resources." If an assigned reading is marked as "read online," please access the digital version via the link I have provided.

Readings correspond to the day they will be discussed and need to be completed before class meets. You are required to bring readings to class, and there may be occasional spot checks to see if you have done this.

Assignment and Grading Summary:

Details on assignments to follow.

- Collaborative class project: an exploration of what "living in the digital world" means to Rutgers students – 40%, due Wednesday, December 12
    - 40% of your grade is based on a reflexive essay
    - 20% of your grade is based on your group's peer evaluations
    - 40% on my assessment

- Exam – 25%, In-Class, Wednesday, November 14

- Essay on *Taipei* – 20%, due Friday, December 21

- Attendance / Participation – 15%

Attendance is mandatory. Each student is allowed one unexcused absence during the semester. Each additional unexcused absence will result in deductions to your attendance grade.

Participation in class discussions is required. This is how you will demonstrate that you have kept up with the readings and are engaging them critically. If you feel uncomfortable speaking in class or have other questions about how to improve your participation in discussion, I'm happy to meet with you to discuss strategies for improvement in this area.

Grading Scale:

92-100=**A**; 87-91=**B+**; 81-86=**B**; 77-80=**C+**; 70-76=**C**; 60-69=**D**; 0-59=**F**

Note: there are no minus grades at Rutgers.

American Studies Department Learning Goals Met by this Course:

Students will learn to synthesize interdisciplinary sources and methods of analysis and to conduct investigations into American culture and history. Students will learn to use scholarship in history, politics, literature, and art to analyze and interpret the varied experiences, perspectives, and events that define American life. Students will be able to write well; speak articulately; and think critically, analytically, and creatively.

SAS Core Curriculum Goals Met by this Course:

- Students will learn to communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience, and respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, &/or supervisors through successive drafts & revision. [WCr]

- Students will learn to communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry; evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights [WCd]

Class Policies:

SAKAI and Class Announcements:

Please make sure that you are receiving and checking SAKAI announcements via email, as I regularly use this tool to post important information relating to class. You are responsible for the information and instructions posted to SAKAI.

Special Accommodation Requests:

All special accommodation requests should be brought to my attention during the first two weeks of class. Full disability policies and procedures are available for review at: http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/.

Missing Class:

If you have to miss class due to sickness, an emergency, or another excused reason, 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.

Phones and Computers:

Computer and phone use should be limited to activities related to class. If I see you regularly using your phone or computer for purposes unrelated to class, this will result in a deduction from your discussion grade.

Academic Integrity Policy:

http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.

If you are unsure about how to research and write a paper – the most common cause of violations of the academic integrity policy – please ask me for help!

Honor Pledge:

I pledge on my honor that I will adhere to all aspects of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy

By accepting this syllabus and enrolling in this course, you assume responsibility for knowing the above policies and the possible penalties – including suspension and expulsion – should you violate the Honor Pledge.

Class Schedule and Assigned Readings

September 5 (Wednesday) – Introduction

September 12 (Wednesday) – Origins; Definitions

- John Perry Barlow, "Jack In, Young Pioneer!" Keynote Essay for the 1994 Computerworld College Edition, https://w2.eff.org/Misc/Publications/John_Perry_Barlow/HTML/jack_in_young_pioneer.html
- David Berry, "The Computational Turn: Thinking About Digital Humanities," *Culture Machine* (2011).
- Alan Liu, "The State of the Digital Humanities: A Report and a Critique," *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 11, nos. 1-2 (2011).

September 19 (Wednesday) – Cultures of the Internet

- Lyz Lenz, "From Taylor Swift to the world's largest T-shirt cannon: An internet reader," *Columbia Journalism Review*, May 14, 2018, https://www.cjr.org/analysis/web-writing.php (**read online**)
- Amanda Hess, "Why Women Aren't Welcome on the Internet," *Pacific Standard*, January 6, 2014, https://psmag.com/social-justice/women-arent-welcome-internet-72170 (**read online**)
- Kaitlyn Tiffany, "The Story of the Internet, As Told By Know Your Meme," *The Verge*, March 6, 2018, https://www.theverge.com/2018/3/6/17044344/know-your-meme-10-year-anniversary-brad-kim-interview (**read online**)

September 26 (Wednesday) – Online Revolutions? (part one)

- Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas*, Introduction and chapters 1 - 4

October 3 (Wednesday) – Online Revolutions? (part two)

- Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas*, chapters 5 & 6; chapter 9 & epilogue

October 10 (Wednesday) – Digitizing Humanity (part one)
- Sherry Turkle, "Authenticity in the Age of Digital Companions," *Interaction Studies* 8, no. 3 (2007).

Her (2013), directed by Spike Jonze, in-class screening

October 17 (Wednesday) - Digitizing Humanity (part two)
- Emily Witt, "Internet Dating" from *Future Sex: A New Kind of Free Love* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016), 15-37.

"Hang the DJ," *Black Mirror* (2017), directed by Tim Van Patten, in-class screening

October 24 (Wednesday) – Real-World Costs of Technology

- James Glanz, "Power, Pollution and the Internet," *New York Times*, September 22, 2012.
- Brian Merchant, "Life and death in Apple's forbidden city," *The Guardian*, June 18, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/jun/18/foxconn-life-death-forbidden-city-longhua-suicide-apple-iphone-brian-merchant-one-device-extract (**read online**)
- Esther Kaplan, "The Spy Who Fired Me: The Human Costs of Workplace Monitoring," *Harper's Magazine*, March 2015.

October 31 (Wednesday) – Fake News

- Charlie Warzel, "He Predicted The 2016 Fake News Crisis. Now He's Worried About An Information Apocalypse," *Buzzfeed News*, February 11, 2018, https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/charliewarzel/the-terrifying-future-of-fake-news (**read online)**
- Tim Wu, "Facebook Should Pay All of Us," The New Yorker, August 14, 2015.

November 7 (Wednesday) – In-class work on group project; exam review

November 14 (Wednesday) – IN-CLASS EXAM

November 28 (Wednesday) – Fictionalizing Our Digital Existences (part one)

- Lin, *Taipei*, chapters 1 – 3 (pages 3-144)

December 5 (Wednesday) - Fictionalizing Our Digital Existences (part two)

- Lin, *Taipei*, chapters 4 to end (pages 145-end)

December 12 (Wednesday) – IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS