

## **UN1001: Perspectives on Inquiry**

What is Identity?: Exploring Techno-logic selves

Fall 2008

MWF, 12:05-12:55

Bldg.20 (R. L. Smith Mechanical Engineering) Rm.303

Course website: <http://un1001.wordpress.com/>

### **Contact Information**

**Instructor:** Wendy K. Z. Anderson

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**Office Hours:** MWF 10-11am or by appt.

**Course Syllabus On-line at: TBA**

(Syllabus and Calendar are tentative and subject to change. Please check on-line syllabus for latest changes. Any hard copy may be obsolete, so be sure to bring it with you to each class to record all changes.)

### **REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS**

1. 1 gig Flashdrive.
2. Course Readings on Blackboard and course website.
3. Slack, Jennifer Daryl & Wise, J. Macgregor. Culture + technology: A primer. New York: Peter Lang, 2007.
4. Stephenson, Neal. The diamond age or, a young lady's illustrated primer. New York: Bantam Spectra, 1995.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

We will examine how the self is constructed using technological prostheses, such as cell phones and computers, and within technologically mediated environments, such as online Web 2.0 networked spaces like facebook, flickr, blogs, and online and offline gaming environments. We will address the following questions: First, how does technology shape identity? What is the relationship of prosthetic technology to identity? How does a technology's history and cultural context influence its future uses and developments? Second, how do identity politics shape emerging technologies? What is our responsibility for our use and development of new media technologies?

### **COURSE GOALS:**

- to critically consider the mediated environments we participate in.
- to creatively develop effective oral, written and visual communication
- to use reasoning and evidence to support arguments
- to develop thoughtful consideration of others' ideas and positions
- to develop effective learning strategies and time management
- to further MTU's mission to promote diversity, creativity, leadership, and teamwork

### **COURSE EXPECTATIONS/PARTICIPATION**

In order to accomplish the course goals, you must come to each class prepared. This means coming to class on time, as well as completing your readings and outside assignments. Active and informed participation in class discussions is also crucial. In

terms of minor assignment, you are expected to post 10 blog posts over the semester in response to the readings and class discussion. In terms of major assignments, you will be required to complete a **Self Introduction** paper (100 points), a **Favorite Technology** paper (100 points), an **Avatar Portfolio and presentation** (100 points), and a **Game Play with Mediated Identity** paper (100 points) with peer critiques for each assignment.

I reserve the right to give unannounced quizzes at anytime to test the preparedness of the class as a whole, these quizzes will make up the remaining **fifty** points of the class total.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Point Allocation</b>	<b>Total points per category</b>
Blog Posts	<b>10</b>	<b>10 each</b>	<b>100</b>
Self Introduction	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Favorite Technology	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Avatar Portfolio	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Game Play	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Reflection paper	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Peer Critique	<b>4</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>
Revised Portfolio: 4 papers (2 drafts with comments & final) & 2 blog posts	<b>1</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>
Library Visit	<b>1</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
Miscellaneous Points		<b>50 (total)</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Course Total:</b>			<b>1000 points</b>

### **GRADE SCALE**

Your points will be translated into percentages; your final grade will be calculated according to the following **percentage** scale:

- 1000-900 A
- 899-800 B
- 799-700 C
- 699-600 D
- 599-below F

Although such instances are rare, I reserve the right to reward students who have shown dramatic progress with higher grades than the scale suggests. On the other

hand, I will not give a student a lower grade if all projects are completed and absences do not exceed the maximum allowed.

**Note about Incompletes:** The mark of 'I' is inappropriate if, in the instructor's judgment, it will be necessary for the student regularly to attend subsequent sessions of the class. I will give an Incomplete only in cases of extreme emergency.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION & ASSIGNMENTS:** Participation is one of the most important components to the success of the course. All reading and outside assignments are to be completed **prior** to class and **solely by the student** (unless otherwise instructed as collaborative work). This means reading carefully and critically, bringing materials to class, and coming prepared to engage with the ideas and your class. Class investigations are participatory assignments that include critical and active discussions as well as in-class collaborative work.

**ATTENDANCE:** Attendance is welcomed, expected, and mandatory. To best utilize our time, come to class on time. You are considered absent if 1) you are more than 15 minutes late and/or 2) you are unprepared for class. There will be regular in-class work to record your attendance and preparation for class. You may miss **three** sessions without penalty. For every class after the first three, I will lower your final grade by fifty points. After three absences you must attend a conference with me to discuss whether you should continue in this course. **Seven** absences constitute automatic failure of the course.

**WRITING DEADLINES & SUBMISSIONS:** You are expected to submit assignments by the deadlines listed. All written work is due at the beginning of class unless otherwise noted. In order to be considered for a grade, all assignments are to be complete, of the minimum word count, and must conform to MLA documentation and format (word-processed, 12 point legible font, double-spacing, with one inch margins). No out of class papers will be accepted if they are handwritten and all assignments must be accompanied by a computer flashdrive. Late assignments will only be accepted with the specific, prior agreement of the instructor. **No exceptions!!!**

**PORTFOLIO:** Please keep a folder with all written work for the course. Bring this folder with you when you attend conferences. You will submit this at the end of the semester with all major work (rough drafts and revisions), a reflection paper, and a flashdrive. Be sure you keep your copies of all written work with **my original comments** on them.

**CONFERENCES & CONTACT:** I am open to discussing matters pertaining to the course, readings, and your writing; please feel free to contact me via email or phone as well as in person. I hope you will also take advantage of my office hours and email.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICY**

### **Discrimination**

Michigan Tech complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office, at 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head

or the Affirmative Action Office, at 487-3310

### **Academic Dishonesty**

**Cheating:** All written work submitted for a grade in this course must be the product of your own composition. Ideas generated due to reading and group discussion may provide the inspiration for your work, but should not be the sole ideas represented. With collaborative projects, of course, ideas should be representative of the group's work.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting as your own work another individual's ideas, words, data, or research material. The concept applies equally to written, spoken, or electronic texts, published or unpublished. All ideas and quotations that you borrow from any source must be acknowledged: at a minimum, you should give the name of your author, the title of the text cited, and the page number(s) of the citation. The only exceptions to this requirement would involve what is familiar and commonly held (e.g. the fact that the earth is round). You should know that penalties for plagiarism are severe and can entail suspension from the University. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the University policy on Cheating and Plagiarism set forth in Michigan Technological University at [http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic\\_integrity.html](http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html).

Insults, slurs, or attacks of any kind will not be allowed in my class. Any student who engages in this type of behavior in the classroom will be permanently removed from the class. In other words, forced to drop the course, in addition to other possible punishment given by Michigan Technological University (See the Michigan Technological University Community Code of Conduct (Available at <http://www.sa.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/code/conduct9.html>). In order to have an effective teaching and learning environment we must practice both respect and tolerance, without question.

### **THE WRITING CENTER**

The MTU Writing Center (Walker Arts & Humanities Room 107) is a superb resource. The staff is willing to help no matter what stage you're at in your paper, from brainstorming to putting on the final touches. Since writing a good paper entails having other people looking at it and giving you feedback, visits to the Writing Center are highly recommended. See <http://www.hu.mtu.edu/wc/> for more information.

*The Syllabus is Tentative and Subject to Change/Adapt to Each Class of Students.*