

ENG 410/510: Digital Storytelling

Winter 2023 | CRN 25439 / 25446

<https://canvas.uoregon.edu/courses/217181>

<https://tinyurl.com/eng410-notes-2>

Key Info

Class Meetings

MW 10:00-11:20 a.m. in Peterson Hall 105

Instructor

- Dr. Mattie Burkert (“Professor Burkert”)
- Pronouns: she, they
- Contact: mburkert@uoregon.edu | 541-346-0272

If you are awaiting a response to your email or voicemail for longer than two business days, please re-send your message and/or follow up in an alternate modality.

Office Hours

- Thursdays 12:30-3:30 p.m.
- Appointments encouraged: <https://tinyurl.com/officehours-w23>)
- Drop-ins also welcome
- Meet in 235 PLC, or gladly over Zoom by request

Course Description

“Digital storytelling” is a broad term that can refer to a range of new media narrative forms, including digital exhibits, interactive visualizations, dynamic maps and timelines, podcasts, videogames, augmented reality experiences, and social media microfictions, to name just a few. Yet these seemingly high-tech ways of telling stories draw on much older principles and conventions. In this class, you will explore how the ancient practice of storytelling is adapting to our digital world. Together, we will read foundational works of narrative theory and learn to recognize and interpret core elements of plot, characterization, setting, point of view, and audience interaction as they are digitally remediated and reconfigured.

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We will then put these techniques into action through a shared class project that draws on rare historical manuscripts held in the UK National Archives. You will practice curating data and metadata from digitized sources; crafting research materials into dynamic, multimedia narratives; and grappling with questions of perspective, experience, and identity that arise when telling our own and others' stories. This class will help you develop skills that are in high demand across a range of industries and professional careers—including journalism, marketing, creative writing, public relations, advertising, GLAMs (galleries, libraries, archives, museums), public health, political and nonprofit organizing, education, and academia—while making the case that digital storytelling is most effective when it is grounded in insights and theories from the study of literature, folklore, and culture. You do not need to be a Digital Humanities minor or identify as a computer whiz to take this class, as long as you are willing to experiment with new technologies.

Learning Goals

In this class, you will...

- read, summarize, and discuss foundational works of narrative theory;
- apply core concepts from these readings to analyze both analog and digital narrative texts;
- write critically about how digital storyforms adopt and adapt narrative traditions and tropes;
- curate research data and metadata using controlled vocabularies, data dictionaries, and linked open data schemas;
- find, assess, and incorporate reference and scholarly sources through library databases;
- organize and present these materials digitally to tell an engaging and compelling story;
- make and document ethical decisions around project design and data management, taking into account problems of identity, perspective, and evidence that arise when telling others' stories; and
- collaborate effectively in teams.

Required Materials

Technology

You will need day-to-day access to Internet with web browser, Canvas, Zoom, and your UO email account. You are expected to bring a PC or Mac laptop to each class. If you typically use a desktop or a Chromebook, you should plan to check out a loaner laptop from UO Libraries on days when class meets.

Readings

This is a low-cost course: all required course content will be available through Canvas, UO Libraries, or the open web, or will be screened for the class. If you miss a class when material is screened, however, you are responsible for making up

the missed content, which may require paying to buy or rent the media in question.

Core readings will include excerpts from novels by Charles Dickens (*Bleak House*) and Jane Austen (*Persuasion*) and a short story by Toni Morrison (“Récitatif”); examples of digital storyforms including hypertext fiction (Shelley Jackson, “Patchwork Girl”), a podcast (*Serial*), a story published over Twitter (Jennifer Egan, “Black Box”), and a text-based adventure game (Rye Davies, “These Fragments I Have Stored”); selections from influential twentieth-century narrative theorists like Northrop Frye, Tzvetan Todorov, Peter Brooks, Hayden White, and Laura Mulvey; and scholarship by leading new media critics like Espen Aarseth, Ian Bogost, Marie-Laure Ryan, and Dorothy Barry. Graduate students will dig deeper with readings from Vladimir Propp, Sharon Mattern, Katherine Hayles, Lev Manovitch, and others, as well as selections from recent collections and anthologies that address the rise of digital storytelling from the point of view of narrative theory. A full reading list is available on Canvas and is laid out in the schedule below.

Work Expectations

The workload in this class is calibrated to the Provost’s policy on effort per credit hour. The proportion of time spent reading, writing, or completing informal work will necessarily vary from week to week. Likewise, the overall amount of time you spend on this class per week may fluctuate over the ten weeks of the term. The goal, however, is to move somewhat steadily towards the accumulation of 120 person-hours of work per 4-credit course (or 160 hours if taking the course for graduate credit). You are strongly encouraged to track your time using a form like the one below and to be in touch with the professor if your effort routinely or significantly exceeds these suggestions.

Hours:	In class	Reading/preparing for class	Completing assignments	Total
<i>Suggested (undergrad / grad)</i>	<i>3 / 3</i>	<i>6 / 8</i>	<i>3 / 5</i>	<i>12 / 16</i>
Week 1				
Week 2				
...				
Week 10				
TOTAL (undergrad / grad)	<i>30 / 30</i>	<i>60 / 80</i>	<i>30 / 50</i>	<i>120 / 160</i>

Assignments

Ongoing engagement in the course

While the professor maintains careful records of interactions and participation in and outside of class, the primary instrument for evaluating this part of your grade will be **a 2-3 page self-assessment you submit in week 11 (finals week)**. In it, you will respond to a series of structured prompts in order to document and reflect on your learning and contributions to others' learning throughout the term, as evidenced by your:

- attendance and participation (see course policies below);
- careful, attentive reading/viewing of all or nearly all assigned materials;
- the completion of occasional short homework assignments or follow-up activities that conclude or reinforce our work in class;
- meaningful contributions to our term-length group project and to the shared note-taking document; and
- timely and professional communication with the professor and others in the class.

Discussion leadership

At one class meeting, you and a small group of collaborators will deliver a 10-minute presentation in which you summarize one of that day's assigned theoretical readings, apply it to one of our shared narrative readings, and pose questions to guide our discussion. **Students taking the course for graduate credit will give two presentations rather than one, and their presentations will address on one or more of the supplemental advanced readings.**

Midterm project: dynamic timeline (due in week 6)

You will remediate one of our shared narrative / primary source readings or project materials using TimelineJS. Length will vary, but suggested scope is 10 timeline events including full metadata and image/multimedia elements **(15 events for graduate students)**.

Final project: research narrative (due in week 10)

Because the class project is a work of original scholarship related to your professor's ongoing research, you will (with your permission) be credited as a collaborator on any published outcomes. However, the authentic nature of this research also means the outcomes are unpredictable and difficult to assess according to a traditional grading scheme. Instead of your work on the class project being graded directly, then, you will use your newly honed storytelling skills to craft a narrative about the research process itself. You are strongly encouraged to use one of the digital storytelling forms we have studied or another of your choice to present your research narrative. Should you choose to write a traditional essay, it should be about 5-6 double spaced pages. **(8-10 pages for graduate students)**

Course Policies

Grading

Grading Distribution

- 20% Ongoing Engagement & Final Self-Assessment
- 20% Discussion Leadership
- 25% Midterm Project
- 35% Final Project

Grading Criteria

Criteria vary by assignment and are located on the assignment prompt.

Grading Scale

A (plus / mid / minus)	B (plus / mid / minus)	C (plus / mid / minus)	D (plus / mid / minus)	F
98 / 93 / 90	88 / 83 / 80	78 / 73 / 70	68 / 63 / 60	< 60

Late Work

All of the assignments in this class are designed to be build on one another; therefore, they must be completed on time in order to contribute meaningfully to your learning and others' learning. **For ONE assignment, you may use a free 48-hour extension without explanation or penalty.** Simply comment in the Canvas assignment submission indicating that you are using your one free extension. There is no need to email me or to make a formal request.

Your presentation is not eligible for your extension, but you may arrange a date swap as long as you do so at least one week in advance and with the consent of everyone involved (your group members, the other group, and the professor). Such a swap does not count as your one free extension.

Attendance

Missing up to two (2) classes will not impact your grade. For each additional class you miss beyond the first three, your "Ongoing Engagement" grade will be docked by 2 points (out of 20). **Missing 6 classes (the equivalent of three weeks) will result in automatic failure of the course.** Prof. B reserves the right to extend leniency under

extraordinary circumstances and in consultation with the appropriate departmental, college, and university administrative units and policies.

In general, no distinction is made between excused and inexcused absences. Notifying Prof. B in advance that you will be absent is an appreciated professional courtesy, but there is no need to document the reason for your absence. Absences associated with religious observance or official university business are the exception: these do not count against your two “free” absences provided that these absences meet the narrow and specific definitions in the student code and that you notify Prof. B in writing and with appropriate official documentation, within the first two weeks of class. In all cases, it is expected that you catch up what you missed by reading the shared notes, connecting with your classmates, and checking in with the professor about any lingering questions.

Participation

Your active engagement in this class matters for your own learning as well as for the contributions you can make to the learning of others. You are expected to:

- check the course Canvas site and your UO email account regularly for announcements and updates;
- prepare any assigned reading or homework before class on the date indicated;
- read actively, taking notes about any questions, comments, or thoughts you might raise in class;
- remain engaged with and respectful of your peers and the instructor throughout class; and
- participate fully in group discussions and activities.

Speaking up during class is easier for some than others. This class is designed to present opportunities for participation in a variety of modalities, but please do check in with the professor if you are unsure how to enter the conversation. Likewise, listening in class looks different for different bodyminds. You are welcome to support your listening in any way that is not disruptive to others’ learning. Note, however, that the next policy places limitations on the use of recording or computer-aided transcription.

Privacy

It is your ethical responsibility to respect the legally protected privacy of your classmates and what they share in class and online. You may record or transcribe our class discussions, provided that you (1) use only UO-licensed or UO-approved software; (2) store the resulting files locally on your computer and/or in your UO-licensed cloud storage account; and (3) retain them only for your individual use (as you would handwritten notes). It is prohibited to repost, republish, or quote from our class discussions on the web or social media, *even if names/identities are anonymized*, without the express permission of the instructor and your peers. No personally identifiable information, such as street addresses, phone

numbers, or email addresses, should be posted on our course sites or shared note-taking document, nor should any discussion of grades. Any such details arising in the course of class discussion should be redacted from any notes, transcriptions, recordings, etc. to protect against unauthorized access.

You may reuse/republish/remix materials produced by the professor under the appropriate license provided that you adhere to the indicated terms. For example, this syllabus is published under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial license, meaning you may reuse it in part or in whole provided that you credit Prof. B and that you do not sell or make money off of the material.

Accessibility

The professor for this course works hard to create accessible and inclusive learning environments and strives continually to improve. Please notify them if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the [Accessible Education Center](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu) in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Departmental and University Policies

Honoring Native Peoples and Lands

The University of Oregon is located on Kalapuya Ilihi, the traditional indigenous homeland of the Kalapuya people. Following treaties between 1851 and 1855, Kalapuya people were dispossessed of their indigenous homeland by the United States government and forcibly removed to the Coast Reservation in Western Oregon. Today, Kalapuya descendants are primarily citizens of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, and they continue to make important contributions to their communities, at UO, and across the land we now refer to as Oregon.

In following the Indigenous protocol of acknowledging the original people of the land we occupy, we also extend our respect to the nine federally recognized Indigenous nations of Oregon: the Burns Paiute Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and the Klamath Tribes. We express our respect to the many more tribes who have ancestral connections to this territory, as well as to all other displaced Indigenous peoples who call Oregon home.

Basic Needs

Your safety and wellbeing impacts learning. Please contact resources that can help you to thrive and let the professor know if you need any help connecting. Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, is urged to contact the Dean of Students Office (346-3216, 164 Oregon Hall) for support. The [UO Basic Needs Resource Guide](#) also includes resources for food, housing, healthcare, childcare, transportation, technology, finances, and legal support.

Mental Wellbeing

Life in college can be very complicated. Students often feel overwhelmed or stressed, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationships, or just need help navigating challenges in their life. If you're facing such challenges, you don't need to handle them on your own--there's help and support on campus. If your instructor believes you may need additional support, they may express concern and refer you to resources that might be helpful.

University Health Services help students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. If you need general resources on coping with stress or want to talk with another student who has been in the same place as you, visit the [Duck Nest](#) (located in the EMU on the ground floor) and get help from one of the specially trained Peer Wellness Advocates. [University Counseling Services](#) (UCS) has a team of dedicated staff members to support you with your concerns, many of whom can provide identity-based support. All clinical services are free and confidential. Find out more by calling 541-346-3227 (anytime UCS is closed, the After-Hours Support and Crisis Line is available by calling this same number).

Academic Integrity

The [University Student Conduct Code](#) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the students' obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. [Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available here](#). Cases of clearly established plagiarism or cheating will result in an assignment grade of "o" as a minimum penalty; all incidents will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards, as required by the English Department and University.

Reporting of Discrimination, Harassment, and Abuse

Any student who has experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender-based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment may seek resources and help at safe.uoregon.edu. To get help by phone, a student can also call either the UO's 24-hour hotline at 541-346-SAFE [7244]. Students experiencing any other form of prohibited discrimination or harassment can find information and resources at investigations.uoregon.edu or contact the non-confidential Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance at 541-346-3123 or the Dean of Students Office at 541-346-3216 for help. As UO policy has different reporting requirements based on the nature of the reported harassment or discrimination, additional information about reporting requirements for discrimination or harassment unrelated to sexual assault, relationship violence, sex or gender based bullying, stalking, and/or sexual harassment is available in the [Employee Responsibilities](#) section of the Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance website.

The instructor of this class, as a Student Directed-Employee, will direct students who disclose sexual harassment or sexual violence to resources that can help and will only report the information shared to the university administration when the student requests that the information be reported (unless someone is in imminent risk of serious harm or a minor). The instructor of this class is required to report all other forms of prohibited discrimination or harassment to the university administration.

UO employees, including faculty, staff, and GEs, are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This statement is to advise you that your disclosure of information about child abuse to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee's duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following link for detailed information about mandatory reporting: [Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

Academic Disruption

In the event of a campus emergency that disrupts academic activities, course requirements, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to change. Information about changes in this course will be communicated as soon as possible by email, and on Canvas. If we are not able to meet face-to-face, students should immediately log onto Canvas and read any announcements and/or access alternative assignments. Students are also expected to continue coursework as outlined in this syllabus or other instructions on Canvas. In the event that the instructor of this course has to quarantine, this course may be taught online during that time.

Resources

The following resources are available to you as a student.

- [University Health Services](#) or call (541) 346-2770
- [University Counseling Center](#) or call (541) 346-3277 or (541) 346-3227 (after hrs.)

- [MAP Covid-19 Testing](#)
- [Corona Corps](#) or call (541) 346-2292
- [Academic Advising](#) or call (541) 346-3211
- [Dean of Students](#) or call (541)-346-3216

Schedule

General weekly rhythm

Assignments are due at 11:59 p.m. on the due date unless otherwise indicated. Monday classes will usually center on discussion of the assigned readings, while Wednesday classes will typically be hands-on working sessions where you will build technical and research skills through their hands-on application to the term-length group project. In the calendar below, presenters are indicated in (parentheses) following the title of the reading for which they are responsible. However, everyone should complete all of the readings in advance of class on the date indicated.

Detailed calendar

The most up-to-date version of the weekly schedule is always the version on Canvas. If you notice an inconsistency, please email me right away; while awaiting my response, assume the version on Canvas is correct. If you notice an inconsistency within Canvas, let me know, and rest assured I will resolve it in a student-centered way.

Week 1	Topic	Shared Readings	Advanced Readings
Mon 1/9	Welcome	Syllabus	
Wed 1/11	Intro to Digital Storytelling In class: Shelley Jackson, “Patchwork Girl”	Ryan, “Narrative and Digitality” (Prof B) Amabili, “From Storytelling to Scrollytelling”	Quendler, “Media Theory as Narrative Theory”
Week 2			
Mon 1/16	NO CLASS: MLK DAY		
Wed 1/18	Plot and Narrative Structure	Todorov, “Structural Analysis of Narrative” (Group 1) Punday, “UI Time and the Digital Event” (Group 2)	Hayles, “Print is Flat Code Is Deep”

Week 3

Mon	1/23	Print Seriality	Dickens, <i>Bleak House</i> , installment 1 (ch 1-4)	Goodlad, "Seriality" O'Sullivan, "Serials and Satisfaction"
Wed	1/25	Project day: Digitization Guest Lecturer: Michele Pflug	<i>Bleak House</i> facsimiles White, "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact" (Group 3)	

Week 4

Mon	1/30	Seriality in digital media	<i>Serial</i> Season 3, Ep. 1-3 Brooks, "Narrative in and of the Law" (Group 4)	Grossman, et al. "Contemporary Seriality"
Wed	2/1	Project day: Tracing a court case	<i>Serial</i> Ep. 4-5	Anderson, "Past Indiscretions"

Week 5

Mon	2/6	Serial as research narrative	<i>Serial</i> Ep. 6-8	McCracken, "Serial as Digital Constellation"
Wed	2/8	Project day: TimelineJS	Serial interactives/bonus materials Victorian Serials timeline	

Week 6

Mon	2/13	Interaction	Aarseth, "A Narrative Theory of Games" (Group 5) Bogost, "Procedural Rhetoric" (Group 6)	
Wed	2/15	Guest lecturer: Rye Davies	Davies, "These Fragments I Have Stored" Barry, "The House Archives Built"	Gallagher, "Plotting the Loop"
Fri	2/17	MIDTERM PROJECT DUE		

Week 7

Mon	2/20	Characterization	Frye, "The Archetypes of Literature" (Group 7) Morrison, "Recitatif" Austen, <i>Persuasion</i> (excerpt)	Lanser, "The 'I' of the Beholder"
Wed	2/22	Project day: personography		Manovitch, "Database as a Symbolic Form"

Week 8

Mon	2/27	Setting and place	"Pancakes and Silver" "Mining Maps and Views"	Mattern, "Gaps in the Map"
Wed	3/1	Project day: geolocation and mapping		

Week 9

Mon	3/6	Social media storytelling: Twitter	Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (Group 8) Egan, "Black Box"	Thomas, "Tales from the Timeline" Taylor, "From the Baroque to Twitter"
Wed	3/8	Project day, TBD (Prof. B away at a conference)		

Week 10

Mon	3/13	Vibes, content, platform capitalism	Selections from <i>Post45</i>
Wed	3/15	Conclusions	
Fri	3/17	FINAL PROJECT DUE	

Week 11

SELF-ASSESSMENT DUE

ENG 410/510 (W23): The TL;DR Syllabus

Class Meetings: MW 10:00-11:20 a.m. in Peterson Hall 105

Professor: Mattie Burkert (she/they) | mburkert@uoregon.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays 12:30-3:30 in 235 PLC (signup: tinyurl.com/officehours-w23)

Shared Notes: <https://tinyurl.com/eng410-notes>

Required Materials:

- PC or Mac laptop for each class (check out a loaner if need be!)
- all other materials free on Canvas: <https://canvas.uoregon.edu/courses/217181>

Assignments:

- Ongoing engagement (20% of course grade): based largely on your final self-assessment (2-3pp), due in week 11.
- Discussion leadership (20%): 10-minute presentation framing our discussion of one reading (grads do two)
- Midterm project (25%): interactive timeline remediating one of our shared narrative readings or project materials, due 2/17
- Final project (35%): research narrative about your experience of our group project, presented using one of the digital storytelling forms we have studied or in a 5-6pp essay (8-10pp for grads), due 3/17

Late work:

- one free 48-hour extension, no formal request needed (presentation is not eligible, but you may swap dates)
- any further extensions must be negotiated at least one full business day in advance

Attendance:

- miss up to two classes without explanation (notification is appreciated)
- further absences dock your “ongoing engagement” grade by 10%; 6 absences = automatic failure
- you are always responsible for making up content you miss

General weekly rhythm:

- Monday classes: presentations on and discussion of readings and group work (do the readings BEFORE class!)
- Wednesday classes: group / project work
- The most up-to-date version of the weekly schedule is always the version on Canvas

Be sure to turn those Canvas notifications all the way on!