

English 250
Literature and Digital Culture
Winter 2020--CRN 26664

Professor Kaufman

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Office: PLC 327

Office Hours: Mondays 2-4 and by appointment

(Except Week 1: Friday 12:30-2:30)

Class Meetings: MW 10:00-11:50

Classroom: 276 ED Bldg.

Course Description

What happens when digital tools and literature meet? What can the “digital turn” in literary studies help us to understand about language, aesthetics, truth, fiction, media, and digital literacy? This is an introductory course to Digital Humanities, or DH—a field that investigates the ways that digital platforms and tools affect, among other things, what we read and how we read. In this course, you’ll have opportunities to learn how to use and study DH tools and methods. Along the way, we’ll consider fiction’s investments in what we take to be real, true, fictional, false, fake, and factual. This course will have particular appeal for those interested in digital publishing, born-digital narratives such as podcasts, data science, distant/close reading, and literary studies. Knowledge of coding languages or digital tools is not required. However, the course *does* require a willingness to experiment with and analyze the uses of digital tools, and an interest in considering how and why fictions are so well poised to test our understanding of truth and fiction.

**This course satisfies a General Education Arts and Letters Group Requirement, is a required course for the DH minor, and serves as a prerequisite for English 470: Technologies and Texts Capstone.

Learning Outcomes

- * To learn how to read and analyze texts with discernment and comprehension and with an understanding of their literary and digital conventions
- * To practice drawing on relevant cultural and historical information to situate texts and literary concerns within cultural, political, and historical contexts
- *To perform critical, formal analysis of literary and other cultural texts
- *To produce focused writing in clear, grammatical prose.
- * To employ logic, creativity, and interpretive skills to produce original, persuasive arguments
- * To learn basic vocabulary and concepts used in literary studies and digital humanities
- * To examine how and why digital tools can be used to study literature
- * To examine how and why literary analysis can be used to study digital and media culture
- * To gain experience working collaboratively
- * To gain knowledge of the way digital tools/technologies operate: how they structure and model information, and how they can be leveraged to make powerful arguments, for better or worse
- * To learn how to use digital tools ethically and thoughtfully to build new knowledge

Required Texts (Available at the UO bookstore). Please get the editions specified below:

Esi Edugyan, *Washington Black* (ISBN: 978-0-525-56324-2)

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818) (ISBN:978-1-55481-103-8)

Limetown (2015) a podcast fiction series created by Two-Up Productions, Season 1

MS Word: <https://it.uoregon.edu/about-office-365>

You will need a gmail account: <https://support.google.com/mail/answer/56256?hl=en>

Work & Assessment

10% Class Participation

40% 8 Lab Notebooks

40% Digital Projects

10% Final take-home exam

Inclusive Learning Environments

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please meet with me soon. Please request that the Accessible Education Center send me a letter outlining your approved accommodations: 164 Oregon Hall, 541-346-1155, or uoac@uoregon.edu.

Please Be Advised

Any UO faculty member who becomes aware of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, or gender-based stalking is required to report that information to a supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity (<http://aaeo.uoregon.edu/>). For confidential help, contact University Health Services (<http://healthcenter.uoregon.edu/>) or Sexual Assault Support Services (<http://sasslane.org/>).

Lecture Notes and Missed Classes

Classes may not be copied, taped, or videotaped. Should you miss a lecture or discussion, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate. Missing class should be a rare event. In no case should you take notes regularly for another student, unless you obtain the Professor's approval. However, comparing notes with a study partner or a small group could assist you with the course and that kind of activity is good.

Tutoring Help

Programs, workshops, courses, tutors, and mentors are among the many resources the Teaching and Learning Center (<https://tlc.uoregon.edu/>) which provides help to students at the University of Oregon. You are *always* welcome to visit the Professor during office hours or by appointment if you'd like extra help with course work.

Academic Integrity

The University of Oregon values academic honesty. Students are informed of the University's expectations about conduct and academic honesty when they matriculate. You are here because you clearly have the ability to engage your own mind in rigorous intellectual work. Consult the [UO's Student Conduct Code](http://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code), also available here: <http://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code> for definitions of plagiarism

and information on documentation should you need it. See your Professor should you have any concerns about documentation and/or academic honesty.

Cases of clearly established plagiarism or cheating will result in an assignment grade of “0” as a minimum penalty; all incidents will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct, as required by the English Department and University.

Internet images are included in plagiarism guidelines. It is not legal to reproduce internet images simply because they are widely available. You are required to reproduce only images in the public domain or those that can be legally reproduced. All images and digital content must contain appropriate permission and source information. We’ll go over this information so you’ll learn how to check and create appropriate metadata for your sources.

Course Expectations and Details

Respect

Each person enrolled in this course is expected to help foster a community of respect. We will read controversial material and I expect that everyone will not always agree, or that your experiences may be much different from those you learn about in the course materials. It is therefore crucial that everyone listen carefully and contribute to class discussion in a thoughtful and respectful manner. I expect active participation from all members of the class.

Please turn cell phones to vibrate or off and place in your bag before class begins. Silence any electronic equipment capable of interrupting class. The use of electronic social media during class time is prohibited

Reading and Class Participation

This class will have some demanding (but fascinating!) reading assignments. We will move at a steady pace and I will expect everyone to keep up. **Please bring to each class the book/text we are reading for that day, paper, and a writing utensil. I will not distribute power point slides or notes, so you should plan to take notes on information covered in class.** To prepare for class, read each night’s assignment with care, take notes to help you keep track of plot and character details, developing questions or observations about the writing, and/or identifying important or confusing passages. You should practice/develop a habit of reading slowly and working in an environment where you will not be distracted.

Quizzes

Unannounced quizzes happen. They tend to focus on the reading due on the day of the quiz. If you are absent on the day of a quiz, you cannot make it up (since it will be “pop”). However, you may drop one quiz grade from your quiz grade average. If you’ve missed one quiz, you can count it as your “dropped” quiz. If you haven’t missed a quiz, the lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Quizzes will count toward your class participation grade.

Writing Assignments

Unless otherwise noted, upload all written work to Canvas as a Word document.

All written work should follow MLA formatting guidelines. See Purdue Owl for instructions on how to prepare your work in MLA format:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html

Late work can be uploaded, but it will be counted as “late.” **Paper grades will be docked 5 points for each day late.** Extensions and incompletes are given only for documented emergencies. I do not accept written work submitted by email.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is mandatory. Your regular attendance is vital to the goals of this course. You may miss two class meetings without penalty. *Your final grade will drop one-third of a letter grade for each subsequent absence unless you and the Professor have agreed upon alternative arrangements.* You are responsible for meeting deadlines that fall on days you are absent. You should attend class on time and remain in the room for the duration of the class period. Please let me know in advance if you need to leave early or arrive late. Repeated late arrival or early departure will affect your final course grade.

**** You do not need to notify the professor if you plan to miss class.**

Professional Correspondence and Email

You should always use professional business protocols when writing to professors. Begin emails by addressing the person by their formal title and name (Dear Professor Kaufman) and end by signing your name. Be sure to indicate which class you’re taking with the professor (some of us teach hundreds of students in multiple courses). All email correspondence should be organized in reverse chronological order; the most recent email should appear on the top of the correspondence with cascading email correspondence below. An adjustment in the “settings” of your email will enable you to set this up as a default (so you only need to make the adjustment once). Do not delete previous emails in this conversation, as the recipient may wish to refresh their memory of what has been discussed.

Class Disruptions

Restrooms should be used prior to or following class to minimize classroom disruptions. If you have a medical situation requiring you to make regular visits to the restroom during class time please let me know during the first week of the term.

You may bring a water bottle, travel mug, or other closed container to class. Food should be consumed preceding or following class.

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Week 1

M 1/6

Introductions: Course, People, Manifesto, Omeka.org, Lab Notebooks

W 1/8

Lab: Introduction to DH Projects

- 1) Create a Gmail account
- 2) Read Drucker, "Analysis of a DH Project" (Questions 1 & 2)
- 3) Review <https://pelagios.org/>

During class you will be given a lab assignment with a writing component.
Bring a computer so that you can work on your notebook during lab time.

Thursday, 1/9 Lab Notebook #1 due on Canvas by 10PM

Week 2

M 1/13

What is Close Reading?

Washington Black Part I

[Six Habits of Reading](#)

W 1/15

Lab: Annotation & Close Reading

Bring *Washington Black* to class

Thursday, 1/16 Lab Notebook #2 due on Canvas by 10PM

Week 3

M 1/20

Class not in session in observance of Martin Luther King Day

W 1/22

Visualizing & Visuality

Washington Black Part II

Thursday, 1/23 Lab Notebook #3 due on Canvas by 10PM

Week 4

M 1/27

Washington Black Part III

W 1/29

Lab 4: What is Media Specific Analysis?

Discussion of two images

Thursday 1/30 Lab Notebook #4 due on Canvas by 10PM

Week 5

M 2/3

Map Stories

Arya's Journey StoryMap

<https://storymap.knightlab.com/examples/aryas-journey/>

Mapping Emotions in Victorian London

[https://www.historypin.org/en/victorian-london/geo/51.5128,-](https://www.historypin.org/en/victorian-london/geo/51.5128,-0.116085,7/bounds/49.675402,-2.481836,53.278967,2.249666/paging/1)

[0.116085,7/bounds/49.675402,-2.481836,53.278967,2.249666/paging/1](https://www.historypin.org/en/victorian-london/geo/51.5128,-0.116085,7/bounds/49.675402,-2.481836,53.278967,2.249666/paging/1)

The Spread of US Slavery

<https://lincolnmullen.com/projects/slavery/>

W 2/5

Lab: Building *Washington Black* StoryMap JS

Thursday, 2/6 Lab Notebook #5 due on Canvas by 10PM

Week 6

M 2/10

Frankenstein Vol. I (47-110)

T 2/12

Frankenstein Vol II (111-160)

Thursday 2/13 Lab Notebook #6 due on Canvas by 10PM

Week 7

M 2/17

Frankenstein, Data, and Distant Reading, Part I

Drucker, "[Distant Reading and Cultural Analytics](#)"

Drucker, "[Data Mining and Text Analysis](#)"

Building a corpus in Voyant

W 2/19

Frankenstein, Data, and Distant Reading, Part 2

Algorithmic critique and Data dangers (Readings TBA)

Posner, "[Investigating Texts with Voyant](#)"

Thursday, 2/20 Lab Notebook #7 due on Canvas by 10PM

Week 8

M 2/24

Born Digital Literature?

Limetown: Episode 1 "What We Know" and Episode 2 "Winona"

W 2/26

Limetown: "A Quick Apology," Episode 3 "Napolean," and "The 911 Call"

Thursday, 2/27 Lab Notebook #8 due on Canvas by 10PM

Week 9

M 3/2

Limetown: Episode 4 “DDoS,” “The Central Question,” “Answers,” Episode 6 “Cost-Benefit Analysis,” and “A Statement from American Public Radio”

W 3/4

Lab: Building an Exhibit Essay

Building the First Transcontinental Railroad

<https://dp.la/exhibitions/transcontinental-railroad/history/>

Best Foot Forward

<https://dp.la/exhibitions/shoe-industry-massachusetts>

Begin building exhibit

No lab notebook due this week

Week 10

M 3/9

Lab: Building an Exhibit continued

W 3/11

Building an Exhibit and Roundup

Take-home Exam distributed. **Exam due on Canvas by 3/16 at noon.**

No lab notebook due this week

WRITTEN COURSEWORK

All work completed for this course should follow MLA guidelines. [See Purdue Owl for details: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_general_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_general_format.html)

All written work should be submitted to Canvas using MS Word, which is free for all UO students. You can install Word by visiting this site: <https://it.uoregon.edu/about-office-365>

Digital course work will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Careful and accurate use and application of digital tools
- Degree to which assignment directions have been followed
- Clarity and accuracy of digital projects
- Demonstration of understanding of the digital tool’s power and abilities

Omeka Rules

- No personally identifiable information, such as street addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses should be made public on our course site.
- You should not discuss grades or the Professor’s comments on the course site.
- All written work should be formal, professional prose, and should be free from grammatical errors, clichés, and disrespectful language. Avoid using acronyms, emoticons, and other features used in social media messages to friends.
- You are permitted to place *only* course assignment materials on our Omeka site. Digital objects or comments unrelated to our course do not belong on the site.
- Be generous and respectful of others.