DCC 105
Perspectives on Digital Cultures and Creativity

COURSE SYLLABUS

Lecture:	**Sections:**
Tuesdays 4:00 – 5:15pm	*Wednesday 4:00-4:50pm*
PFH 1105	*Wednesday 5:00-5:50pm*
	Thursday 4:00-4:50pm
	Thursday 5:00-5:50pm

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Course Website:
dcc105.wordpress.com

Description:

As the introductory class to the Design Cultures & Creativity Program, this course is designed to familiarize you with a variety of perspectives on digital media, design, creative practices, emerging research in the field, and ways in which the DCC program can augment and extend your chosen majors. Throughout the course, we will focus on topics such as community and social media, the history of technology, design in everyday life, identity, privacy, mobile technologies, infrastructure, e-waste, and the digital divide. Coupled with these lectures, we as a class will engage these ideas through hands-on explorations such as redesigning the university lecture, collectively tracking down the surveillance cameras on campus, the creation of a flash mob, repairing broken technologies, work toward solutions for those who don't have access to digital media, and a creative misuse of algorithms. This class will be cool.

What You Will Learn in this Class (Some of Our Course Objectives):
- You will learn about how technology impacts identity and community (and has done so throughout history).
- You will learn what makes good design in everyday life and will explore ways in which *all* aspects life are designed.
- You will gain a greater awareness of how your data is being tracked and the pervasiveness of surveillance around you.
- You will understand the trajectories of ubiquitous and mobile technologies and how these media can transform a public space.
- You will gain a deeper understanding of the tangible objects in the world that are required for the internet to exist.
- You will be able to better assess the sustainability and environmental impact from digital technologies.
- You will gain skills to be able to repair broken technologies (and why repair is an intervention into a culture of planned obsolescence).
- You will learn deeper causes and solutions for the digital divide.
- You will gain a deeper understanding of how digital technologies are transforming the creative process.

Required Texts:
All readings will be available through online links in the syllabus or posted on Canvas (myelms.umd.edu)

Grades:
- Twitter: **15%**
- Active Engagement   **15%**
- Quizzes: **15%**
- WordPress Blog and Portfolio: **15%**
- Self-Portrait Assignment and Reflection: **15%**
- End of Year Self Evaluation Paper: **25%**

Twitter Responses:
You will need a Twitter account to interact with the in-class lectures. You may set up a separate account just for this class. Please be sure to email your username to your discussion leader. Please note, your Twitter account cannot be set to private (so that your tweets are searchable by other students in the class).

You must post to Twitter at least once during each lecture on Tuesdays. All tweets must include the hashtag **#dcc105**.

Your baseline score is out of 15 percent; exceptional posts and uses of Twitter may garner you a bonus score up to a maximum of 18 percent (giving you 3 percent extra credit in the course). To gain the 3 bonus percentage points (for a total of 18 percent for the semester), you must post especially insightful posts, provide useful links to outside material, or offer consistently helpful and engaged responses to classmates' posts. Tweeting multiple times in a week will not make up for days that you did not tweet or were absent.

I recommend downloading a Twitter application to use during class. Recommend applications include HootSuite, Tweetdeck, Janetter, or simply the Twitter homepage.

Note: for students who don't have a laptop or smartphone, iPads will be available for you during each lecture. You may instead send tweets during class by using the text message feature on your phones. You must text your message (140 characters maximum) to 40404 after setting up your cellphone at www.twitter.com/devices.

Your Twitter Responses are worth 15% of your grade (with a possible 18% based on quality of tweets).

Active Engagement:
Your active engagement grade is determined by your participation in all lectures, discussions, and hands-on explorations; attendance at 1 Design Camp (which is a 2-part workshop); and 1 of the following: guest speakers in DCC, approved public lectures across campus, approved art events, attendance at one our film series showings and discussions. To sign up for Design Camps and other limited attendance events, visit: http://dcc.umd.edu/app.

Quizzes:
Each week that has readings associated with it in the schedule will have a quiz on those readings. These quizzes will cover the material in the readings and may also contain content from a previous lecture. These quizzes, which are mainly multiple choice, matching, and the occasionally short answer question, are designed only to make sure that you are keeping up with the readings and attending lectures. There are no trick questions; if you have done the readings and taken notes on the lectures throughout the week, you will get a good grade on these quizzes. These quizzes are taken on our Canvas and must be completed prior to lecture each Tuesday (except for the days that have no reading, i.e., days where we'll be doing a "Hands-On Exploration"). Each quiz will be available on Canvas for 24 hours prior to the lecture. Once lecture begins on these days, the quiz will be closed and cannot be taken if missed. For example, a quiz due by lecture on Tuesday will be available starting at 4pm on Monday and will cover topics discussed in the readings due for that day and may also include questions drawn from the previous lecture. Quizzes are worth 15% of your grade.

WordPress:
You will be given your own WordPress install that will be a part of your entire career in DCC. You will use it in this course for written responses to the course material (and to engage the writing of your fellow classmates), to post your work, and to set up a professional web presence that can be used as you apply for internships and jobs. In future DCC classes, you will continue to use this site as a portfolio for your work and, ultimately, as the main site for your Capstone Project. Your site can be accessed at http://dcc.umd.edu/ followed by your first initial and your full last name. To log in, follow your username by wp-admin. For full details on this aspect of the course, visit "Course Assignments" on the course webpage, which will have a full grading rubric and list of expectations.

Self-Portrait:
For this project, we will be working with several other courses across campus on artistic explorations into the concept of identity and diversity. Through the creation of a self-portrait and

interacting with self-portraits from other classes on campus, we will engage how identity is tied self-perception and in what others see (and understand) when they look at us. In the "selfie era," we make images for others and to also reflect on how we understand ourselves. How can we gain a better understanding of the coded visual cues in those portraits? Are we creating accurate messages about ourselves? For this assignment, you will create a non-traditional self-portrait using imagery of your choosing. A traditional self-portrait is a (mostly) life-like replica of a person, clearly defining facial or other features of the artist. For this self-portrait, however, you are to create an abstraction or symbolic representation of yourself rather than create a literal image of yourself. Think of this as a symbolic (rather than literal or figurative) selfie. Once created, we will engage with other self-portraits on campus and explore identity, labeling, and diversity.

End of Year Self-Evaluation:
Some researchers have suggested that students will likely only retain about 5% of the material covered in a course after several years have passed. This assignment is geared to help you identify the topics covered in this course that have impacted you and are ideas that you would like to carry with you well after the completion of this course. This written assignment will be a self-evaluation reflecting on the topics studied in this course. You must pick two ideas, terms, or concepts covered at some point in this course and discuss how your ideas about these concepts have changed throughout the semester. You must also connect these topics to your larger interests, major, or career goals. The objective is to trace how an idea evolves through analysis and how that idea can have an impact on areas of your life that are important.

Note on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism*: Any source that you draw ideas, quotes, or media (photographs, videos, vectors, schematics, etc.) from must be cited accurately in your writing. If you use any source in your work without correctly citing the work, this constitutes plagiarism. Any intentional plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment and may result in a failing grade for the course and an XF on your transcript.*

Plagiarism:
Category A: Sloppiness. Automatic "0" on paper, with option to rewrite for no better than a "C"
Category B: Ignorance. Automatic "0" on paper, with option to rewrite for no better than a "C"
Category C: Obvious Conscious Cheating. Automatic "0" on paper, with no option for rewriting. You will likely receive a failing grade for the course. You will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and may face the Student Conduct Board in a hearing to determine the consequences of the offense.

For those of you who are not aware of what constitutes plagiarism, here is a breakdown of the various types:
- Buying papers, borrowing papers, or recycling former papers unrevised and claiming these types of papers as your own for your assignment in this course. (This constitutes a Category C offense)
- Cutting and pasting parts of a webpage or borrowing passages from a book for your paper without properly citing these parts and claiming the material as your own for the expressed intent of cheating. (This constitutes a Category C offense)
- Failing to use proper citation style for material you borrow, accidentally. (This constitutes either a Category A or B offense)

Students with Disabilities: The University is legally obligated to provide appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. The campus' Disability Support Services Office (DSS) works with students and faculty to address a variety of issues ranging from test anxiety to physical and psychological disabilities. If a student or instructor believes that the student may have a disability, they should consult with DSS (4-7682, email Dissup@umd.edu). Note that to receive accommodations, students must first have their disabilities documented by DSS. The office then prepares an Accommodation Letter for course instructors regarding needed accommodations. Students are responsible for presenting this letter to their instructors.

—Please Note: This syllabus is subject to change at any time according to the professor's discretion. The assignments below may also include readings handed out in class, which each student is responsible for completing.

Schedule

Week 1 — Course Introduction: Being a Community Through Technology
Sept. 1

Week 2 — The Rise of Digital Society
Sept. 8
* Manuel Castells*,* "The Information Technology Revolution," in *The Rise of Network Society*, Chapter 1

Week 3 — The Design of Everyday Life
Sept. 15
* Donald Norman, "The Psychopathology of Everyday Things," chapter 1 in *The Design of Everyday Things*
* Mark Weiser, "The Computer for the 21st Century." Accessed online at: http://www.ubiq.com/hypertext/weiser/SciAmDraft3.html

Week 4 — Hands-On Exploration: Redesign the Classroom Experience
Sept. 22
* Blog post due by Friday for sections 0101 and 0103
* Blog responses due by the following Monday for sections 0102 and 0104

Week 5 — Identity, Surveillance, and Privacy
Sept. 29
* Anders Albrechtslund, "Online Social Networking as Participatory Surveillance," in *First Monday* 13.3 (2008). Accessed online at: http://firstmonday.org/article/view/2142/1949
* Watch Hasan Elahi on The Colbert Report: http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/167606/may-07-2008/hasan-elahi?redirect=true

Week 6 — Hands-On Exploration: Create Surveillance Maps of the Campus
Oct. 6
- ***DUE by 4pm: Self-Portraits***
- Blog post due by Friday for sections 0102 and 0104
- Blog responses due by the following Monday for sections 0101 and 0103

Week 7 — Mobile Media and the Transformation of Space
Oct. 13
- Michael Bull, "To Each Their Own Bubble: Mobile Spaces of Sound in the City," in *MediaSpace*, ed. Nick Couldry and Anna McCarthy (2003)

Week 8 — Hands-On Exploration: Flash Mob
Oct. 20
- Blog post due by Friday for sections 0101 and 0103
- Blog responses due by the following Monday for sections 0102 and 0104

Week 9 — Materiality in a Wireless World
Oct. 27
- Nicole Starosielski, "Introduction," to *The Undersea Network*
- Watch Andrew Blum, "What is the Internet, Really?" http://www.ted.com/talks/andrew_blum_what_is_the_internet_really.html

Week 10 — Planned Obsolescence and E-Waste
Nov. 3
- Giles Slade, *Made to Break* (excerpts)
- Watch: "The Electronic Wasteland." *60 Minues*. November 9, 2008. CBS. http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=4586903n

Week 11 — Hands-On Exploration: The Art of Repair
Nov. 10
- Blog post due by Friday for sections 0102 and 0104
- Blog responses due by the following Monday for sections 0101 and 0103

Week 12 — The Digital Divide
Nov. 17
- Andy Carvin, "Mind the Gap: The Digital Divide as the Civil Rights Issue of the New Millennium" online at: http://www.infotoday.com/MMSchools/Jan00/carvin.htm
- Vint Cerf, "Internet Access is Not a Human Right," *New York Times*, January 4, 2012, http://nyti.ms/wWTIrC

Week 13 — Hands-On Exploration: Digital Divide Assessment
Nov. 24
- Thanksgiving Break: *No Sections This Week*

Week 14 — Creativity in the Digital Age and Acts of Creative Misuse
Dec. 1
- Watch John Maeda: How art, technology and design inform creative leaders
  http://www.ted.com/talks/john_maeda_how_art_technology_and_design_inform_creative
  _leaders
- Jason Farman, "Creative Misuse as Resistance" in *Surveillance & Society*.

Week 15 — Hand-On Exploration: Code Dance
Dec. 7

Week 16 — Finals Week
- Wednesday, December 16: Self-evaluation paper due by 11:59pm. Upload to Canvas.
  No final exam!