Computers in the Study of English
English 213, Section A
Spring 2008 Policy Document

"Students who are critically literate are alert to the fact that computers can be dangerous, although their attentiveness is neither superficial nor unfocused. To put it another way, students should be able to recognize and articulate the ways power circulates in technological contexts."
— Stuart A. Selber, *Multiliteracies for a Digital Age*

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Class hours: T/Th 9:30–10:50 a.m.
Class location: 15 Ross Hall
Office hours: T/Th 1:00–3:00 p.m., or by appt.
Course website: http://courses.isucomm.iastate.edu

Textbooks and Materials

- *Creating a Web Page with HTML: Visual QuickProject Guide,* by Elizabeth Castro.

- *Making a Movie in iMovieHD and iDVD 5,* by Jeff Carlson.

- Additional readings will be provided as PDF files or links to HTML documents. You will need approximately 200 sheets of paper for printing these reading assignments. Unless otherwise instructed, please print all reading assignments and bring them with you to class.

- A USB drive (2 GB or larger) for storing your electronic files.

English 213 Overview

English 213 will introduce you to the role that computers play in English studies. Our in-class discussions and readings will help you develop a theoretical and practical understanding of online environments and information management procedures. We will experiment with discipline-specific databases, applications, and online resources, and we will work with computer applications for writing, editing, imaging, and website development. Although we will spend considerable time working with "tools," this is not merely a "skills" course; rather, it is designed to engage you in a thoughtful, critical discussion about *how* we use computers, *why* we use computers, and *who benefits* from the ever-increasing prominence of computers and software programs in academic, professional, and social contexts.

English 213 FAQ

How should I contact my instructor?
The best way to contact me is by email (warnick@iastate.edu). I do my best to respond within twelve hours of receiving email. To meet with me in person, drop by during my office hours (T/Th 1:00–3:00) or email me to set up an appointment.

What should I do if I can't make it to class?
There are no excused absences (see my attendance policy), so you don't need to explain to me why you won't be in class. It is your responsibility to contact one of your classmates to find out what you missed.

What is my course grade so far?
I believe you should always know where you stand with respect to your grades. All grades are entered on the course website, and you can monitor your progress at any time by signing in to your account.

Will spelling, grammar, and punctuation affect my grade?
This is an English class, so you will be expected to adhere to the conventions of standard English. However, I hope you will come to see that little things like spelling and punctuation can have a big impact on the way that your documents are received by your audience.

Do you have a stapler?
No.

English 213 Objectives

General Objectives. Iowa State University has identified six learning outcomes for all sections of English 213. Through readings, class discussions, and assignments, you will learn to:

- identify digital resources useful to the academic study of English.

- manage digital information resources for effective writing and editing.

- effectively search for and obtain useful information from online sources.

- assess technology's impact and application on written and verbal communication, both inside and outside the university.

- analyze the basic verbal and visual rhetoric of printed and electronic texts.

- design, construct, and edit basic images, websites, and movies using software applications.

Specific Objectives. In addition to the university's general objectives, I have established specific goals for this section of English 213. By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- understand and scrutinize the forces that shape computer design cultures and their artifacts.

- critically analyze representations of computers in the public imagination.

- articulate your knowledge of computers and computer software at a conscious level.

- represent your technological work in rhetorical terms; i.e., as responding to a particular audience, context, and purpose.

Class attendance and participation

Most of our class sessions will be conducted in a discussion/workshop format, and you are expected to contribute actively to our discussions and to interact courteously with your peers at all times. Many of our workshop activities cannot be "re-created" outside of class, so regular attendance is important. My attendance policy is simple: I do not differentiate between "excused" and "unexcused" absences—either you attended class or you did not. Hence, you will receive ten points for each day you are present. Because our time in class is limited, promptness is important; if you are tardy, you will lose three points for that day. This policy is flexible enough to allow you to miss a few days of class without seriously affecting your course grade; at the same time, the policy rewards students who attend class faithfully.

Five Simple Things You Can Do to Succeed in this Course

1. Complete the readings. We won't always have time to discus all of the readings in class, but that doesn't mean they're not important. Your ability to succeed on the reading quizzes and the major assignments will be greatly improved if you take the time to thoroughly review and comprehend the assigned readings.

2. Raise your hand. Participating in class discussions is a quick way to earn some easy points, not to mention the fact that lively discussions make class more enjoyable for everyone.

3. Find a friend. When you miss a class and need to find out what we did, your classmates should be your first resource. Find someone you can trust and exchange contact information so you can contact each other when the need arises.

4. Check the website. Changes and additions to the syllabus may be sent via email, but they will always be added to the website. The course website is always the final word on what you should read, what is due, etc.

5. Come see me. I am required to hold four office hours per week. These time slots exist for the sole purpose of meeting with you about English 213, so take advantage of them. When a minor issue arises, see me *before* it becomes a major problem.

Software and Technology

One aim of this course is to increase your technological literacy. Hence, many of your assignments will be submitted electronically, via the course website. In addition, the major assignments will require you to use, at minimum, word processing, image editing, and presentation programs. Our course will meet regularly in a computer lab, which will provide opportunities to learn from and share with your peers. However, you will not be able to complete all computer work in class, so you will either need your own computer or arrange to use one of the on-campus computer labs.

Grading and Evaluation

Overview. Five major assignments will constitute the bulk of your grade for this course. In addition, reading quizzes, several smaller assignments, and regular participation in class discussions will influence your final grade. Major assignments will be penalized one letter grade (from B to C) for every class period they are late. All units must be completed for you to receive a passing grade at the end of the semester. Shorter assignments will normally be worth 10 points, and all short assignments will be averaged together. Because these short assignments relate directly to the topic of discussion each day, they will receive no credit if they are turned in late.

Grading Scale. All major assignments will be evaluated using the following scale:

A	94 – 100
A-	90 – 93.99
B+	87 – 89.99
B	84 – 86.99
B-	80 – 83.99
C+	77 – 79.99
C	74 – 76.99
C-	70 – 73.99
D+	67 – 69.99
D	64 – 66.99
D-	60 – 63.99
F	0 – 59.99

Five Things You Can Do to Annoy Your Instructor

1. Let your cell phone ring in class. When you come to class, turn your cell phone off. If you are expecting an emergency call, let me know in advance and set your phone to vibrate.

2. Send me an incomplete email message. I have no idea who hotchacha@iastate.edu is. When you email me, make sure to sign your name and put the words "English 213" in the subject line.

3. Ignore directions. You will have a great deal of leeway on most assignments in this course, but when I ask you to do something a certain way, it's for a reason. Ignoring directions, even small ones, signals to me that you don't take your work seriously.

4. Fail to proofread. Every modern word-processing program has a built-in spell-check function. Use it. Then check your work for mistakes the software program didn't catch. Repeat as needed.

5. Ask me "Did we do anything important in class on Tuesday?" No matter what we did, the answer will always be the same: Yes, what we did was important, and yes, you're digging your grave every time you ask me that.

Grading Criteria. All major assignments will be evaluated using the following criteria:

A   *Superior Accomplishment.* Shows excellent analysis of the assignment and provides an imaginative and original response. Successfully adapts to the audience, context, and purpose of the assignment. Contains no mechanical errors and requires no revisions. The assignment is ready to be presented to the intended audience.

B   *Commendable.* Shows judgment and tact in the presentation of material and responds appropriately to the requirements of the assignment. Has an interesting, precise, and clear style. Contains minor mechanical errors and requires revision before the assignment could be sent to the intended audience.

C   *Competent.* Meets all the basic criteria of the assignment, and provides a satisfactory response to the rhetorical situation. There is nothing remarkably good or bad about the work, and equivalent work could be sent out in the professional world following revisions to the organization, style, or delivery of the assignment.

D   *Needs Improvement.* Responds to the assignment, but contains significant defects in one of the major areas (context, substance, organization, style, or delivery). The assignment could not be presented to the intended audience without significant revision.

F   *Unacceptable.* Provides an inadequate response to the assignment or shows a misunderstanding of the rhetorical situation. Contains glaring defects in one or more of the major areas (context, substance, organization, style, or delivery). The assignment could not be presented to the intended audience.

Weighted Assignments. Major units and shorter assignments will be weighted as follows:

Diagnostic Assignment	5%
Assignment #1: Mix-CD	10%
Assignment #2: Interrogating the Interface	15%
Assignment #3: Rhetorical Analysis of Social Networking	15%
Assignment #4: Kinetic Text	10%
Assignment #5: Electronic Portfolio	15%
Quizzes	10%
Short Assignments and Class Participation	10%
Attendance	10%
TOTAL	**100%**

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious legal and ethical breach, and it is treated as such by the university. I do not tolerate plagiarism in any form; **if you are caught plagiarizing, you will fail the course and I will report the incident to the university.**

Plagiarism occurs when a writer, speaker, or designer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, images, or other material without fully acknowledging its source by quotations marks, in footnotes or endnotes, and in lists of works cited. In this course, we will draw heavily upon text, audio, video, and other material online; the fact that such material is online does not lessen our obligation to give credit where credit is due.

All work you submit in this class is to be 100% your own work (in collaborative contexts, generated 100% by you and your teammates). As is true of all work done at the university, any secondary sources (articles, images, music, interviews, websites or other electronic media—any content beyond a student's own) must be cited. Some cultures allow un-cited borrowing; in American education, each student must cite every source used. For more information, visit: http://www.lib.iastate.edu/commons/resources/facultyguides/plagiarism/dishonest.html

Occasionally students will *unintentionally* plagiarize material because they have failed to keep track of their sources as they acquire them and use them. In such cases, students claim they were unaware of university's policies on academic dishonesty, feign ignorance concerning what constitutes plagiarism, or try to convince me that their motives were pure. I am not in a position to judge your intentions; as a result, I am obligated to report all cases of plagiarism (regardless of the circumstances) to the university. If you have any questions about plagiarism and how it relates to your work or the work of your team, please talk to me *before* you turn in an assignment. Once plagiarized work has been submitted for a grade, I have no choice but to enforce this policy.

Disability Accommodation

Please address any special needs or special accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs. Those seeking accommodations based on disabilities should obtain a Student Academic Accommodation Request (SAAR) form from the Disability Resources office, located in the Student Services Building, Room 1076 (515-294-6624).

English 213 Syllabus — Spring 2008

NOTE: This syllabus is only an outline. It will change as the semester progresses and does not list readings and shorter assignments. The latest version of the syllabus will always be available online: http://courses.isucomm.iastate.edu

Week	Topic	Major Assignments
1	Introduction to the course; the culture of the mix; analog vs. digital; discuss Mix CD assignment.	Diagnostic Essay due on Friday night.
2	Visual design; multimodality; InDesign lab.	Mix CD Status Report due.
3	History of word processing; discuss Interrogating the Interface assignment.	Mix CD assignment due.
4	PowerPoint; aesthetic and practical aspects of visual presentations.	Select a program for Interrogating the Interface assignment.
5	Screenshots; screencasts; peer-review workshop.	Interrogating the Interface rough draft due.
6	Interrogating the Interface presentations.	Interrogating the Interface assignment due.
7	History of the Internet; social networking; discuss Social Networking assignment.	Select topic for Social Networking assignment.
8	Narcissism, exhibitionism, and privacy.	Social Networking draft due.
9	Image editing; conducting online research	Social Networking assignment due.
10	Spring Break — NO CLASSES	Spring Break — NO CLASSES
11	Literature and new media; discuss Kinetic Text assignment.	Select textual artifact for Kinetic Text assignment.
12	iMovie workshop; peer-review exercise	Kinetic Text rough draft due.
13	Introduction to HTML; discuss Electronic Portfolio assignment.	Kinetic Text assignment due.
14	HTML and CSS coding.	Set up ISU public locker.
15	Writing for the web; web design workshop.	Create HTML resume.
16	Web design workshop; individual conferences.	Electronic Portfolio rough draft due.
17	Final: Portfolio Presentations. (Final Exam Time: Tuesday, May 6, 9:45 a.m.)	Electronic Portfolio due.