

Professor Bill Wolff
Technologies and the Future of Writing, Fall 2009
A Module in Introduction to Writing Arts

Course Info

Course Location: Education Hall 2100

Office Location: Education Hall 3075

Contact: wolffw@rowan.edu

Course Web Site: <http://williamwolff.org/courses/tfw-fall-2009/>

Course Hours: T/H 4:45 – 6:00

Office Hours: T 1:00 – 4:00, by appt.

Office Phone: 856-256-5221

Module Overview

In this module we will be considering the relationships among technology, writing, and the construction of virtual spaces. Complementing our readings, we will be introduced to four writing spaces that are becoming important to writers, readings, and teachers:

- a collaborative professional blog using Wordpress (<http://www.wordpress.com>)
- micro-blogging using Twitter (<http://twitter.com>)
- an evolving RSS reader, Netvibes (<http://Netvibes.com>)
- personal portfolio on Blackboard

Specifics requirements for each of these writing spaces will be described in greater detail on a separate assignment page. Students will also write a short final paper that analyzes the use of these spaces.

Module Units

The module will be broken into four, one-week units:

Writing Spaces

In this section we will consider what Jay David Bolter calls writing spaces—online and in-print areas where texts are written, read, and manipulated. We will look at how new media technologies are changing the way people write, compose, and think about both. Our readings will focus on blogging. We will begin to compose collaborative educational/professional blogs using Wordpress.com—a free, open source blog host.

Technological Literacy

Readings will challenge us to rethink our perceptions of technology and the evolving relationship between technology and literacy. Students will be introduced Twitter.

Ownership and Identities

In this section we will look at how identities are constructed in electronic spaces and how electronic spaces are forcing us to rethink questions of ownership. Students will be introduced to Netvibes, a powerful RSS reader.

The Future of Writing

Readings will focus on Web 2.0 and we will consider what it means to compose in the age of YouTube. Students will learn how to connect to their personal portfolios in Blackboard, and will think about how to organize their education as a Writing Arts major at Rowan.

Office Hours

Office hours are designed for you, giving you a more private environment in which we may talk about your work, your performance in class, etc. If you are unable to see me during my office hours, do not hesitate to make an appointment to see me at a different time.

Contacting Each Other

There will be times during the semester when I will need to contact the class and you will need to contact me. I will contact you via your Rowan email account, so please be sure that you are checking it regularly and/or forwarding it to the email service you use most regularly. If you do not know your Rowan email address, you can find it at <http://www.rowan.edu/toolbox/email/#students>.

I am in my office only during office hours and the brief times before and after class. As a result, calling me in my office will not get you an immediate response. I strongly suggest you contact me via email, which I check all day long.

Email, however, tends to be seen as an informal medium. This, however, should not always be the case. All emails that I send to you will have a meaningful subject line and a proper salutation (“Hi Class,” or “Hi Jane,” etc.). The first sentence will notify you of the purpose of the email, and then will get to the heart of the matter. It will end with a formal closing (“Thanks, BW”). I expect the same from any email you send. Any email that does not will immediately be deleted and not responded to.

Students with Disabilities

Your academic success is important. If you have a documented disability that may have an impact upon your work in this class, please contact me. Students must provide documentation of their disability to the Academic Success Center in order to receive official University services and accommodations. The Academic Success Center can be reached at 856.256.4234. The Center is located on the 3rd Floor of Savitz Hall. The staff is available to answer questions regarding accommodations or assist you in your pursuit of accommodations. We look forward to working with you to meet your learning goals.

Grading

Final grades for the module will be based on the following percentages:

- Portfolio (10pts)
 - Organizational Quality, or how well you set up your portfolio
- Blog (30pts)
 - Repetition, or how often you posted and it over a series of days;
 - Variety, or the variety in the types of posts;
 - Quality of discussion about your blog in the final paper

- Twitter (30pts)
 - Total, if you had the required number of at least 3 tweets per day for 21 days;
 - Quality of two blog posts about Twitter: analysis of a follower list; brief review of a Twitter app
 - Quality of discussion about your Twitter stream space in the final paper;
- Netvibes (30pts)
 - Variety, or a variety of different kinds of widgets;
 - Total, if you had the required number of at least 20 widgets and 3 tabs;
 - Quality of discussion about your Netvibes space in the final paper

Late work will result in a 3 point reduction from the appropriate project area. Tardiness is equal to .5 of an absence; you are late if you arrive at class after the sign-up sheet has made its way around the room. The grades you receive at the end of the module will correspond to the letter grades on the overall course syllabus. Your final grade in the module is $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ of your final course grade.