

**Professor Bill Wolff**  
**Technologies and the Future of Writing, Fall 2011**  
**A Module in Introduction to Writing Arts**

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**Module Info**

**Module Location:** Education Hall 2110

**Office Location:** Education Hall 3075

**Contact:** wolffw@rowan.edu, @billwolff

**Module Web Site:** <http://williamwolff.org/courses/tfw-fall-2011/>

**Module Hours:** T/H 4:45 – 6:00

**Office Hours:** T/H 1:30 – 3:00, by appt.

**Office Phone:** send email

**Module Overview**

In this module, we'll investigate technologies and the future of writing by critically engaging in contemporary writing practices in digital environments (e.g. blogging, microblogging, creating a digital writing portfolio, and conducting online research) while grappling with relevant research in the field of rhetoric and writing studies.

Specifically, we'll ask: how do contemporary writing technologies and practices cause us to reconsider our definition of writing as well as constructs like audience, identity, originality, authority, ownership, materiality, and collaboration? To answer this question, we'll be conducting a study of how people are writing in popular online spaces (such as Facebook and Twitter) as well as observing how people are writing in their real life professional spaces. Our findings in these small studies will inform our understanding of what it means to write and be a writer today. From there we will speculate as to where writing is heading in the future.

Complementing our readings and research, we will be introduced to three writing spaces that are becoming important to writers, readers, and teachers:

- a collaborative professional blog using Tumblr (<http://www.tumblr.com>)
- micro-blogging using Twitter (<http://twitter.com>)
- personal online portfolio (application used to be determined)

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

**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. Office hours this semester are T/TH 2:00 – 3:30.

**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. 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 Twitter (@billwolff) and/or email. 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. Twitter is less formal, so feel free to just tweet me questions. Please add the course hashtag (#tfwf11) to all course related tweets.

I’ll get back to your tweets and emails as soon as possible—usually within a day. If I don’t get back within a day, it may be that I did not see your tweet or email for one reason or another, such as an email going in my spam folder. Send me a polite reminder and/or ask me in class if I got it, and I’ll get back immediately.

### **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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 will be calculated in the following way:

The Research Study and Final Essay	40%
Writing Observation and Reflection	20%
Tumbling (includes reading responses)	20%
Tweeting	10%
Portfolio setup	5%
Online and in person communication and collaboration	5%
Total	100%

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<sup>rd</sup> of your final course grade.

Detailed criteria will be provided for each assignment. Missing assignments will receive a 0. **All major assignments must be completed to pass the module.**

If you are having trouble getting a project completed on time (for whatever reason) please let me know about your delays as soon as possible. It is better to complete an assignment late than to not complete it at all, and I am more than happy to work with you so you can complete the best project you can.

I will never mark down or refuse to accept a project because of trouble using computer technology. The software and applications we use are a means to complete the work, not the work itself. They are also often new and still have bugs. I am aware of this and know what can happen. If you run into trouble, let me know as soon as possible so I can help you work through it. There is no reason to sit for hours getting more and more frustrated. Send me an email with as detailed a description of your problem as possible and we'll figure out what is going on.