

ENGL 1101: Technologies of Identity

Instructor: Dr. Lisa Hager

Sections : C2 - MWF 8:05 - 8:55 Skiles 317
 A1 - MWF 9:05 - 9:55 Skiles 317
 B3 - MWF 11:05 - 11:55 Skiles 256

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Course Description

The goal of English 1101 at Georgia Tech is to improve students' written and oral communication skills through a rhetorical focus on argument. In this course students explore a variety of non-fiction arguments within the framework of cultural studies. Students learn how to read critically and write effectively as they examine how arguments develop within social, political and historical contexts. To enhance their understanding of a variety of communication modes, students learn how to expand and support their written work with oral presentations, and they explore visual as well as textual arguments. Working independently and collaboratively, students improve their composition skills while gaining a deeper understanding of the contexts that inform effective communication.

The central subject matter for critical analysis in these three sections of ENGL 1101 will be the idea of technology itself and how it both creates and reflects our identities. We will consider the assumptions and possibilities inherent in a number of virtual tools that are geared toward the presentation of one's self, like Facebook and MySpace, blogs, and Second Life, as well as the language and arguments used to talk about them. If, as the saying goes, clothes make the person, then what does one's Second Life avatar or Facebook Page do? As we endeavor to consider this and other ideas, we will seek to answer, in multiple ways, the following questions:

- What does it mean to exist in these virtual spaces?
- How are these spaces a vital part of the college experience? What does it mean to be a "college student"? What does it mean to be a Georgia Tech "student"?
- How does it reflect who we are in "real" life (RL)?
- How do such spaces enable us to go beyond the limitations of RL? How do they replicate those limitations?
- What are the political implications of such spaces?
- What impact have such spaces had on RL?

Stemming from this idea that we analyze the communicative strategies and cultural impact of technological production, these sections of ENGL 1101 will introduce students to the fundamentals of rhetoric and communication. For their own productions, students will develop the ability to recognize the differences in a number of discourse situations and to respond appropriately to those differences. Students will be able to respond critically to a wide variety of "texts" by pinpointing the central argument, explaining supporting evidence, and analyzing effectiveness. Students will thus be asked to create a diverse body of electronic and conventional writing to demonstrate their critical and rhetorical proficiency. Upon completion of the course, students will have been given ample opportunity to both reflect on and participate in the technologies of identity.

Required Texts

- Lunsford, Andrea A. and John J. Ruskiewicz. *Everything's an Argument (EAA)*. Georgia Tech Ed.
- Custom E-book @ <http://bedfordstmartins.com/custom/gatech> (your access code is on the inside front cover of *EAA*)

*Please note that you must buy *EAA* new from the Engineer's Bookstore in order to access the e-book. This text will also be required for ENGL 1102.

Objectives and Outcomes Specified by the Board of Regents and by Communication@Tech

	Board of Regents University System of Georgia		Georgia Tech Writing and Communication Program	
<p>Rhetoric Rhetoric focuses on available means of persuasion, considering the synergy of factors such as context, audience, purpose, role, argument, organization, design, visuals, and conventions of language.</p>	<p>Objective “Understand rhetorical contexts for writing by establishing the writer’s role, the audience, and the purpose of the project.”</p>	<p>Outcome “Use conventions of writing mechanics, usage, and style to communicate effectively for the given audience, purpose, and format.”</p>	<p>Objectives Understand registers and variations within discourses. Apply strategies for addressing academic and professional audiences.</p>	<p>Outcome Create artifacts that demonstrate the synergy of rhetorical elements.</p>
<p>Process Processes for communication—for example, creating, planning, drafting, designing, rehearsing, revising, presenting, publishing—are recursive, not linear. Learning productive processes is as important as creating products.</p>	<p>Objective “Approach writing as a way to think and communicate ideas to others.”</p>	<p>Outcomes “Use recursive processes that include collecting information, focusing, ordering, drafting, revising, and editing.” “Demonstrate the techniques and skills of research, integration of source material, and documentation.”</p>	<p>Objective Explore individual and collaborative processes in multicultural and international contexts.</p>	<p>Outcome Construct, select, and deploy information based on interpretation and critique of the accuracy, bias, credibility, authority, and appropriateness of sources.</p>
<p>Modes and Media Activities and assignments should use a variety of modes and media—written, oral, visual, electronic, and nonverbal—singly and in combination. Contexts and cultures of modes and media are critical.</p>	<p>Objective “Adjust writing to a variety of contexts, including electronic environments.”</p>	<p>Outcome “Read and respond to various texts for purposes of interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and judgment.”</p>	<p>Objective Distinguish and evaluate multimodal communication — WOVEN (Written, Oral, Visual, Electronic, and Nonverbal).</p>	<p>Outcome Create WOVEN artifacts that demonstrate interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and judgment.</p>

Requirements

Three major research papers (and a web log for paper one), one collaborative Second-Life project and presentation, various in-class and take-home assignments (as well as possible pop quizzes), and full participation and contribution to class discussions and activities.

Grade Breakdown

Please remember that you are also responsible for keeping track of your grades in the T-Square gradebook. I will not respond to emails asking for “progress reports.”

Category	Percentage	Point Value
Paper 1: Exploratory Paper and Research Blog	10	50
Paper 2: Informative Research/ Classically Argumentative Paper	25	125
Group Project: Second Life Space and Presentation	35	175
Daily Grades (in-class/take-home assignments, quizzes, etc.)	10	50
LCC Diagnostic Essays I and II	5	25
Participation	15	75
Total	100	500

Point Values	Percentages	Letter Grade
500 – 450	100 – 90	A
449 – 400	89 – 80	B
399 – 350	79 – 70	C
349 – 300	69 – 60	D
299 – 000	59 – 00	F

Major Assignments

Diagnostic Essays I and II (30 minutes to write)

Wednesday, August 27th and November 14th (tentatively)

To assess our program's performance, Communication@Tech asks students in our courses to complete diagnostic exercises. Students in English 1101 and LCC 3401 complete the exercises at the beginning and end of the fall semester, and students in English 1102 and LCC 3401 complete the exercises at the beginning and end of the spring semester. Diagnostics evaluate improvement in students' general communication skills. Successful assessments help us positively present our communication programs to the Georgia Tech administration, the Board of Regents, and many other financially and professionally significant entities within the academic and funding communities. More important, assessments allow us to identify areas of strength and weakness so that we can continue to improve our program.

Paper 1: The Exploratory Essay (three to four pages, worth 50 points)

Dialectic research journal/weblog (at least five entries, 200 words per entry)

Draft Due for Peer Review: Wednesday, September 10th

Final Draft Due: Friday, September 12th

As new students attending this institute, you may have heard of George P. Burdell, the much beloved virtual Georgia Tech student. Created in the early twentieth century, he was virtual before the computer! For this essay, I want you to challenge those assumptions and come up with a working definition of Burdell's identity and the concept of identity. Write a first-person, chronologically organized, **narrative** account of your thinking process as you investigate your question through library research, talking with others, and doing your own reflective thinking. Your job in this short essay is not precisely to finalize a definition of George P. or "identity" but to report on the processes and struggles you encountered as you attempted to find a working definition. At least **five** sources are required for this paper.

Paper 2: The Informative Research Paper (four to six pages, worth 70 points)

Draft Due for Peer Review: Wednesday, November 12th

Final Draft Due: Friday, November 14th

Part I (two-three pages):

Throughout this course, we have encountered a number of technologies that seek to enact or reflect the identity of their users. For this informative research paper, I want you to attempt—using surprising information gathered through research—to expand your reader's view on the impact one of these technologies (your choice) has on how we construct our identities both in VR and RL. (For example, many people might say that playing multi-user games do not count as "real" social interaction or that mobile phone texting skewers the emotional complexity of its users). Your goal is to get your audience to reconsider their original position on an issue. You do not have to argue that the original position is wrong per se, but propose that the given issue has aspects that the common view might not recognize. At least **three** sources are required for this paper.

Part II (two-three pages):

For this half of the paper, you will be writing about the same topic you chose for paper 2, but with a vastly different rhetorical purpose. Using all the methods accrued thus far this semester (wallowing in complexity, asking a "good question," positing a strong thesis, supporting that thesis with solid evidence from your sources, and utilizing effective rhetorical strategies), write a position paper that takes a stand on your controversial issue and argues for a specific course of action accordingly. At least **three** sources are required for this paper.

Collaborative Second Life Space and Group Presentation—Analyzing the Identity Politics, Possibilities, and Problematics of Second Life (1000-1500 total words plus 25 minute group oral presentation)

Final Spaces Due: Tuesday, November 21st

Group Presentations: December 1st-5th

Throughout this unit, we have been familiarizing ourselves with some of the advanced principles of rhetoric by looking at how various writers grapple with Second Life as it specifically relates to categories of identity. In groups of five, analyze a specific aspect of Second Life that you feel makes an argument. Unpack this argument using the terminology discussed in this unit. What is the ultimate message these technologies that are subject of your analysis present? To whom? And what are the consequences?

Your findings will be enacted on Second Life (with detailed explanations of objects, designs etc.), and presented before the entire class. Your group should also prepare a number of discussion questions to involve your own audience—your classroom peers—in the analysis.

Since this is first time that I have used Second Life as part of my class, I welcome your feedback on this assignment during your work on it as well as after you have given your presentation. I am willing to tweak this assignment as we go along, so it's up to you to let me know what is working and, of course, what isn't.

Class and Georgia Tech Policies

Attendance

Students have four absences to use for any reason. I do not require any permission note. After the given four absences, a student's final course grade begins to be reduced 1/3 grade (A- to B+, for instance) for each additional absence. After four absences, there are no excused absences. So use your four absences wisely. You are responsible for information and materials you miss. You should obtain notes from classmates. While I will not repeat an entire class time for a student who misses, I will, however, discuss generally what we did in class and important points we covered.

If you are surfing the web, emailing, or talking on the phone during class time, you will be marked absent; cell phones must be turned off during class. Although sometimes unavoidable, arriving to class late is rude. Students habitually arriving to class late (more than four late arrivals) will begin to accrue absences, one absence for every two lates. In the same context, students are to remain for the entire class. Therefore, leaving the class early will count as a late arrival.

Regular attendance is required, and you should plan to be here for every session. More than three absences during the term will lower your final grade in the course one to three full letter grades. Six or more absences will automatically constitute a final course grade of "F". (Being present means being in class a minimum of 40 minutes.)

Student-Teacher Conferences

Students must meet with me at once a year as their groups plan their presentations. However, I strongly encourage you to see me during office hours (or through appointment) to discuss specific questions about any paper (preferably after peer workshop). While I will read sections of any paper before the final due date, I will only give feedback as directed by a specific question from the concerned student (i.e. "Is my thesis clear enough?" "Does this paragraph do a good job of supporting my thesis?" etc).

Format of Essays

Drafts must be **typed and double-spaced with one inch margins using 12 point Times New Roman font**. Each paper should have in the upper left-hand corner of the first page your name, my name, the course number, and the date. Your last name should also appear next to the page number in the upper right corner of each page. Give each of your formal papers a descriptive title. Papers without adequate Works Cited Sheets and appropriate internal citations, or papers with excessive mechanical problems (more than three errors per page) will be given a grade of 'X' until the student has conferred with me and the problem has been solved. Students who do not meet with me to change the 'X' grade will receive a 0 for the paper. Papers must be turned in at the beginning of the class in which they are due. Late papers will not be accepted. Students must also print out two copies of their final essays, one to be turned in, and one for their own records.

General Checklist for Final Submission of Papers

Turn in all hard-copy papers in a two pocket folder with the following:

- That paper's final draft. (Stapled)
- That paper's first draft. (Stapled)
- The notes taken during peer workshop. (Stapled)
- Signed Student Honor Code Statement
- Any items specific to the assignment as detailed on the individual assignments' requirements sheets

****Any final draft submitted without rough drafts, peer workshop notes, or the research journal will be docked 10 points per missing item. In regards to stapled items, you will be docked 5 points per unstapled. It is your responsibility to have all items stapled before class; I do not carry a stapler with me.**

Submission of Work

Late work: All assignments are due in your class time (collected after roll is taken) on the given due dates. **Work turned in late is docked ten percent for every calendar day it is late.** Work turned in after class on the due date is considered one day late. If you will be absent on a day that written work is due, submit your work via a friend on the due date (by the beginning of class) or submit it earlier. See me if you believe you have *truly* extenuating circumstances.

Note: print your documents before the due date. Printers, computers, and computer disks are notorious for failing just before an assignment is due. Therefore, a broken printer, computer or disk that fails is not an extenuating circumstance; they do such things regularly.

Keep multiple copies of all work in multiple locations!

Participation

This is a class in communication, so your participation is essential. Get involved. Volunteer. Question. Probe. Expect also to engage regularly in a variety of in-class activities and exercises—oral, visual, electronic, and written; individual and collaborative. Bring in at least one “extra” to share during the semester. Share relevant ideas and observations. Bring in copies of relevant clippings and articles. Offer your own experiences. Make connections between what we’re discussing in this class and what you hear elsewhere—for example, what’s going on in other classes, what you hear at conferences, what you hear in our colloquia, what guest speakers say, and so on.

I will evaluate your participation throughout the term. You are to participate actively in review and editing workshops: whenever a workshop is scheduled, you are to have assigned materials ready for the workshop. These materials are due at the beginning of class; a student without materials for a workshop receives a mark against participation on that date.

Discrimination and Harassment

Georgia Tech does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran. This class adheres to those guidelines. Alternative viewpoints are welcome in this classroom. However, statements that are deemed racist, sexist, classist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory toward others in the class will not be tolerated.

No form of harassment or discrimination is allowed in this class. In keeping with the professional nature of this course, only professional behavior is acceptable between the instructor and the students and between students. No harassment of any kind is allowed in class including but not limited to gender, class, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and ethnicity.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

If you require accommodation to compensate for a disability, please speak with me outside of class so that we can identify an appropriate course of action. If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon, preferably in the first week of the semester. Please request that an ADAPTS staff verify your disability and specify the accommodation you will need.

Georgia Tech complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Any student who may require an accommodation under such provisions should contact me as soon as possible and no later than the end of the first week of classes or as soon as you become aware. No retroactive accommodations will be provided in this class.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

You are responsible for knowing and abiding by GT's policy for academic integrity. Consult the Honor Code online at <http://www.honor.gatech.edu>. The following text appears on the website:

“Academic misconduct is any act that does or could improperly distort Student grades or other Student academic records. Such acts include but need not be limited to the following:

- Possessing, using or exchanging improperly acquired written or verbal information in the preparation of any essay, laboratory report, examination, or other assignment included in an academic course;
- Substitution for, or unauthorized collaboration with, a Student in the commission of academic requirements;
- Submission of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another person or person, without adequate credit notations indicating authorship (plagiarism);
- False claims of performance or work that has been submitted by the claimant;
- Alteration or insertion of any academic grade or rating so as to obtain unearned academic credit;
- Deliberate falsification of a written or verbal statement of fact to a member of the Faculty so as to obtain unearned academic credit;
- Forgery, alteration or misuse of any Institute document relating to the academic status of the Student.

While these acts constitute assured instances of academic misconduct, other acts of academic misconduct may be defined by the professor.”

Work that violates the Honor Code will receive zero credit and may result in failure of the entire course. I will also report any serious misconduct to the Dean of Students.

Signed Student/Instructor Agreements

****PLEASE READ, SIGN, AND RETURN THESE STATEMENTS TO DR. HAGER****

I affirm that I have read the entire syllabus and policy sheet for Dr. Hager’s ENGL 1101class and understand the information and the responsibilities specified.

Print Name

Date

Signature

DIRECTIONS: Read carefully and check **all** that apply.

I give my instructor, Dr. Lisa Hager, permission to use copies of the work I do for this course, ENGL 1101:

- as examples in this and other courses
- as examples in presentations and in print and electronic publications

Please indicate how you want to be acknowledged:

- Please use my name both in the acknowledgements and with my actual document.
- Please use my name in the acknowledgements section but use an appropriate pseudonym with my actual document.
- Please use a pseudonym both in the acknowledgements and with my actual document.
- Please use my work, but do not acknowledge me in any way.
- I do not want my work used as examples in any situations.

Print Name

Date

Signature

Print Permanent Address

Print Campus Address