


Reading and Writing Tech (ENGL4374)

Instructor: Dr. June Oh
Email: joh@uttyler.edu
Class Meeting: Online Asynchronous
Office: CAS (College of Arts and Sciences) 240
Office Hours: Tu/Thu 10-11:30 am; and by appointment

ENGL4374


UT Tyler
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER

CRITICAL MAPPING: TURNING LIT INTO NUMBERS?

Digital Project

QGIS & Literature

Contact Dr. June Oh
joh@uttyler.edu



Course Information

This course is a historical survey course that explores how technological advancements have shaped our reading and writing practices. From orality to script, from printing to digital production, and from digital media to artificial intelligence, this course will emphasize how new technologies have developed the way knowledge is created, communicated, and consumed. (Prerequisite: ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302)

Course Description

What does it mean to study literature? What is its purpose? What's at stake? We'll explore the history, methods, and meanings of literary studies, with a particular interest in how technologies shape the way we read, interpret, and analyze texts. We'll use and evaluate new tools for literary studies not just as technical add-ons, but as interpretive framework, ways of thinking that can transform literary analysis itself.

At its core, this is an experimental, interdisciplinary class. We will combine traditional analysis with computational and geospatial tools, drawing from methods in traditional literary analysis and digital

humanities to ask questions about literature. Students will engage with big-data and quantitative methods (e.g., word frequency), geospatial mapping (e.g., visualizing networks), and cutting-edge critical theories that contextualize these approaches.

Students will reflect on these methodologies through hands-on practice using tools such as QGIS, Excel, sentiment analysis, and generative AI. The latter half of the semester will be dedicated to completing a final project where students construct original, evidence-based arguments through literary maps, visualizations, or data-supported essays. Ultimately, this course is a call to reflect critically and creatively on the act of interpretation itself.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Articulate how technology enables new or different ways of interpretation.
2. Gain basic training in textual and digital/computational literary methods.
3. Evaluate the affordances and limitations of close reading and alternative methodologies.
4. Formulate their understanding of the meaning of literary studies.

Text and Technology

- We will use a range of tools, including QGIS, Excel, Gen-AI platforms, and other online tools. No prior experience is required.
- Students will need reliable access to a laptop and the Internet. Please note that many programs we use generally do not function well on mobile phones or tablets.
- Students should regularly check Canvas (announcements, course schedule, assignments, modules) and emails to stay updated.
- Students are expected to maintain regular communication with the instructor.
- You should be prepared to encounter occasional technical issues such as bugs, errors, or other unexpected “failures.” Flexibility and patience are important as we work through these challenges together.
- All required readings and materials will be provided by the instructor. There are no mandatory textbooks or software purchases for this course. However, students are welcome to buy or subscribe to any of these resources for their own use.

Important Dates

Sep. 8	Census date
Sep. 17	Second drop for non-payment
Nov. 3	Last day to withdraw
Dec. 8	Finals week

Course Grade

Component	points
"In Theory"; Reading response posts	15
"In Practice"; Hands-on workshop	10
Critical Method Journal	10
Short Comparative Essay (Close vs. Distant)	10
Final Geospatial Research Project	35
Final Exam	20
Total	100

Grade Scale

A	90 to	100	points
B	80 to	89	points
C	70 to	79	points
D	60 to	69	points
F	0 to	59	points

Minimum Requirement to Earn a C in the Class

To earn a C or above in the class, students must earn a C or above on all components.

Syllabus Changes

Per the UTT Syllabus Policy: "The information contained in the syllabus, other than the grading criteria and absence and make-up policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice as long as the change is without prejudice to the students." See our class Canvas for course schedule.

Tips for Success in this Course

1. **Read and write.** You will be reading and writing a lot. And to state the obvious, that takes time. Find your joy and its beauty in that.
2. **Engage, deeply.** The online nature of this class will push you to take an active role in the learning process. You will do this by thinking deeply and collaborate with the readings, the instructor, and other students' ideas.
3. **Expect technical failures.** You'll be learning a new software. The learning curve can be steep, and it takes a lot of time to get used to it. I will not be evaluating your mastery of the software. This is an English class. I will be looking for your critical attitude toward it including how you notice, handle, and acknowledge the limits and pitfalls of technology.
4. **Use Canvas notification settings but don't trust it to do *your* job.** Canvas can ensure you receive timely notifications in your email or via text ([Canvas Notification Guide](#)). Note that some assignments like the discussion posts and responses have "hidden" due dates. Buy a planner or keep a digital calendar to help manage your workload.
5. **Ask for help.** If you have questions or concerns, I expect you to reach out to me or your classmates for support. I am happy to help.

Major Assignments

All writings done in this class are public and can be publicly shared. Contact the instructor if you have any issues.

“In Theory”

- a. Reading response discussion posts—short, analytical responses to assigned readings.
- b. May include applying theory to a brief passage or responding to conceptual questions.

“In Practice”

- a. Hands-on training workshops—guided assignments using QGIS, Excel, Gen-AI, sentimental analysis, student-led quantification.

Critical Method Journal

- a. Students will keep a running document where they reflect on their mapping and analysis journey—what worked, what failed, what they learned, and the questions they raised.

Short Comparative Essay

- b. A short essay in which students apply both close reading and distant reading to the same text, and reflect on the differences in insight and method.

Final Geospatial Project

- a. A larger, multi-step project that uses at least one digital tool to explore a literary question.
- b. Includes a proposal, data selection & collection, data set, mapping, progress check-in, final product, and a final research paper.

Final Exam

- a. At the end of the semester, students will write an argumentative and reflective essay regarding the theme of the class.

Course Policies and Resources

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. In an online setting, this means completing assigned tasks. Students who miss more than three weeks' work (e.g., missing discussion, due dates, etc.) will automatically fail the course unless they withdraw by the census date. See “Standard UT Tyler Syllabus Policies” for information on the census date.

Submitting Written Work

To be counted for a grade, written work must be submitted (unless instructed otherwise) via Canvas. Assignments that do not follow the designated format, that are emailed, that are submitted to the wrong drop box, or that I cannot open (e.g., zipped files, ios files, damaged files) will receive 0.

Late Work

I do not accept late work. There will be absolutely no exceptions to this policy for late work for the discussion posts. I also understand that life happens. If you have circumstances that can impact your academic performance, contact me as soon as possible so we can figure out a plan together.

Academic Dishonesty & Disruptive Behavior

This class has a **Zero Tolerance Policy** for academic dishonesty. Any act of academic dishonesty will result in immediate failure of the entire course and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Intervention.

For the UTT definition of “academic dishonesty,” go to the UT Tyler Syllabus Module in the class Canvas shell. Click on “University Policies and Information.” Scroll to the “Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct” section. Click on “Student Conduct and Discipline policy.” Read Section 8-802 “Academic Dishonesty.”

Disruptive behavior will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Intervention and may result in failing the class and/or University sanction. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- hindering other students from working on the tangible learning activities taking place during face-to-face and online class sessions
- talking when the instructor is talking
- repeatedly arriving late and/or leaving early
- using technology for purposes other than working on the tangible learning activities taking place during the class period
- doing something other than working on the tangible learning activities taking place during the class period
- sleeping during class

For the UTT definition of “disruptive behavior,” go to the UT Tyler Syllabus Module in the class Canvas shell. Click on “University Policies and Information.” Scroll to the “Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct” section. Click on “Student Conduct and Discipline policy.” Scroll to Section 8-804 “Certain Other Offenses.” Read item number four “Disruptive Behavior.”

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USE POLICY

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools’ ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler’s Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler’s Academic Integrity Policy.

For this course, I expect all work students submit for this course to be their own. While using artificial intelligence assistance can aid various parts of the writing and analysis process such as brainstorming, managing and analyzing data, editing, and peer review, in such instances, students should clearly indicate how much and which part of their writing and thinking process are facilitated by such programs. In other words, any unacknowledged AI-facilitated work and acknowledged AI-facilitated work *without considerable edition and critical revision* will be considered cheating and will be directly reported. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including full revocation of credit for the assignment, and other sanctions.

Class Conduct

All students are expected to behave in a respectful manner, both in-person and online. Sensitive topics may be addressed during discussion, and passionate opinions are welcome. However, each student should remain respectful and civil. We will approach topics with an understanding of their historical context and cultural nuances, recognizing that some issues may be uncomfortable from a modern perspective.

Contacting the instructor

If you have individual questions, you can set up a time to meet either in-person or via Zoom.

To contact me, use UTT email or Canvas messenger. Per the [UTT Email Policy](#), I will not reply to emails sent from non-UTT email addresses.

Emails and Canvas messages should provide a succinct overview of the topic and be written using complete sentences, reasonably correct grammar, and proper structure. In the subject line list the class (ENGL4374), your name, and a topic.

Calendar*

Week	Theme		Readings	Assignments
1	The meaning of literary studies and <i>the way to do it?</i>		Scott's chapter on close reading	Response 1 (1 original post, 1 response to peer)
2			Bode's "Literary Studies in the Digital Age"	Response 2
3	Overthrown Distant reading		Moretti, "Slaughterhouse" (first 5 pages) Moretti, "The emotions of London"	
4	Digital humanities		Kirilloff, "Computation as context"	Response 3
5	QGIS	Basic training & Your project; research question, data	Tutorials, Student examples, Lake district poetry project	Download QGIS, Start Critical Method Journal

		selection/collection, method		
6		Basic training & Research		Response 4
7	Nuance and value	Map and value	Woods, "Election maps"	
8	QGIS	Basic training & Proposal (IM)		Response 5 Submit proposal with data selection, methodology
9		Basic training & Data set		Submit dataset
10		Map		Progress report
11	Comparative	Analysis		Short comparative essay
12		Result and discussion (RAD)		Submit CMJ, complete data file, & screenshots
13		IMRAD		Submit complete research paper
14		Presentation		Lightning talks presentations
15		Final exam		Final exam

*This class has many hands-on activities that require technical support. The class schedule and due dates may change depending on student progress and interests. See UTT syllabus change policy.

University Policies and Information

Go to our class Canvas for information relating University Policies.

Student Resources

Go to our class Canvas for information relating University Policies.

This syllabus is a product of many educators' hard work, generosity, and support. It is also at this current stage with the help of previous students at UT Tyler. I give special thanks to UT Tyler's English department faculties, staff, and students as well as my former colleagues at Michigan State University.