

2026 Spring

ENGL4373.060 Public Writing with Technology

Professor: Dr. June Oh

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Office Hours: Mon 10 am – 1 pm, and by appointment

Course Times: Online Asynchronous

Office: Zoom (See Canvas) or CAS 240

Course Information

A seminar in experiential learning requiring a digital project for a local organization or business. Topics include, but are not limited to, public writing, writing for non-profit organization, cooperative writing, citizenship and literacy, economy and writing technology, media and community, machine-assisted writing technologies, and digital writing platforms. End projects may be displayed on a public domain owned by the University.

Course Overview

Re-writing Digital Agency with Ethics of Care

What does it mean to have agency in digital spaces—when you're old?

Drawing on case studies of “granfluencers” and other older digital creators, this course brings together age studies, ethics of care, and digital storytelling and rhetoric to rethink how older adults engage technology through various creative forms of digital writing. Students will pair theory with practice through a public humanities project that highlights care, collaboration, and the power of shared digital agency.

Through readings, discussions, and hands-on creative work, we'll examine how digital writing/design, media culture, and intergenerational collaboration shape experiences of aging online and how relational care can transform what counts as digital literacy.

Student Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain key ideas from age studies, digital literacy/rhetoric, and the ethics of care.
2. Apply theory to real-world contexts through public-facing, collaborative projects.
3. Practice ethical and relational approaches to digital storytelling and writing.
4. Reflect critically on their own digital identities and agency.

Example Core Readings

Readings will be available on Canvas. Selections may include:

- Banerjee, “Aging, Influence, and the Aesthetics of Digital Visibility”

- Berry & King, “Digital Storytelling and the Ethics of Representation”
- Gehrmann, “Granfluencers and the Digital Politics of Care”
- Margaret Morganroth Gullette, *Aged by Culture* (excerpts)
- Michael Fine & Caroline Glendinning, “Dependence, Independence, and Care: The Myth of Autonomy” (2005)
- Sally Chivers, *The Silvering Screen* (excerpts)
- Case studies such as the case of Makrye Park (“Korea Grandma”) and other intergenerational or community digital projects.

Special Course Note:

- Students are required to have reliable access to a laptop and the Internet. Students are responsible for staying updated with course schedules, announcements, and materials. For technical issues, contact Canvas or UT Tyler “Help Now.”
- Students are expected to maintain regular communication with the instructor throughout the semester.
- Students are expected to select their own research, analysis, and creation materials they have access to.
- Students who are taking this course for GIS certificate should contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Course Structure

This class is built as an online class from the ground up. It will ask you to read deeply, write analytically, and collaborate actively.

This class has 3 units. Each week, you will be provided with big ideas and guiding questions to help you through the primary reading materials. We’ll begin with theory (Unit 1), move onto real-world case studies (Unit 2), and finally arrive at creating your own project (Unit 3).

Almost every week, you will post your written response on the discussion board and reply to peers (in a video recording format) to build a collaborative learning space where we share ideas and learn from each other. These assignments are designed to help you practice critical reading, critical analysis, and academic argumentation writing. These will be sometimes informally (“tell me what you think”), sometimes as more formal, evidence-based writing (“analyze this, make an argument, find evidence, etc.”).

Tips for Success

1. **Read and write.** This is an English class. You will be reading and writing a lot. And to state the obvious, that takes time.
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 engaging in the readings and with other students’ ideas on all assignments.
3. **Go beyond what is “required.”** This class will work best if you put your heart into it.
4. **Use Canvas notification settings but don’t trust it to do your job.** Canvas can have 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. Have 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.

Evaluation Summary

Assignment	Weight
Critical Reflection Responses	30%
Public Humanities Digital Project	50%
Final Theoretical Reflection 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.

Important Dates

Jan 26	Census date
March 9-13	Spring break for faculty and students
March 30	Last day to withdraw
April 27-30	Final

Public Writing

All writing done in the class is public writing. As a class, and in small groups, we may discuss what is working in student papers and areas for improvement. All writings done in this class are public and can be publicly shared. Contact me if you would like me to not use a particular draft in class or not share your final project.

Major Assignments

1. Critical Reflection Responses (30%)

Five short written essays connecting course concepts to lived digital experiences to deepen theoretical knowledge to real-world knowledge. Students might analyze a granfluencer, caregiving app, ad for digital aging tech, or intergenerational digital moment (e.g., family FaceTime).

Students will also respond to peers' posts in a video format that meaningfully adds to the conversation.

2. Public Humanities Digital Project (50%)

Students collaborate with a community partner in their later years (e.g., senior center, family member, library, assisted-living community) to design a digital artifact that embodies care-centered digital agency. This will have several components, such as a project proposal, collaboration log, progress report with peer reviews, draft, final artifact, and class presentation.

Possible formats:

- Oral history website
- Short documentary
- Podcast, interview
- Digital showcase (craft workshop, poetry writing, gardening, etc.)
- Social media storytelling campaign amplifying older voices
- Data or visual storytelling on digital inclusion

3. Final Theoretical Reflection Exam (20%)

An essay linking your project to theoretical frameworks of digital agency, identity, and care. Reflect on collaboration, ethics, and learning moments and argue for how your work resists narratives of decline or dependence.

Important 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, .pages files, damaged files) will receive 0.

Late Work

I do not accept late work. There will be no exception to this policy for late work for the discussion posts. I also understand that life happens. If you have circumstances that 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, 1. any unacknowledged AI-facilitated work and 2. 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.

Any assignment with AI-generated, revised, or edited content, other than as permitted by explicit instructions or according to the above policy, will be considered as 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.

To comply with the class AI policy, you will need to disable Copilot in Word and the “Help Me Write” and “Smart Compose” in Google Docs. Note that *Grammarly* and sentence-level language checkers are AI writing assistant tools.

For more, see “University Policies and Information” in the class Canvas shell.

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.

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.

Schedule*

Unit / Week	Focus & Readings	Activities & Discussion Prompts
Unit 1: “In Theory”: Rethinking Old Age and Digital Agency	Weeks 1–4 Gullette, Fine & Glendinning, etc.	Week 1: Introduction & short reflection: What does digital agency mean to you?; Gullette, <i>Submit Response 1</i> Week 2: Successful aging Week 3: The myth of independence and care; Fine & Glendinning; <i>Submit Response 2</i> Week 4: Digital agency, digital literacy; How does care complicate the idea of independent agency online? What might a “care-ful” agency look like?
Unit 2: “In Real World”: Granfluencers and Care-ful Projects	Weeks 5–8 Gehrmann (2022); Banerjee (2023); Berry & King	Week 5: Granfluencers as case studies in shared agency; Berry & King; Dr. Oh’s case study on Makrye Park (“Korea Grandma”); Analyze one granfluencer persona. How does humor, vulnerability, or collaboration challenge ageism?; <i>Submit Response 3</i> Week 6: Tensions and complications; Gehrmann (2022) or Banerjee (2023); <i>Submit Response 4</i> Week 7-8: Research one intergenerational digital project; <i>Submit Response 5</i> Week 9: Spring Break
Unit 3: “In Your World”: Care-ful Digital Storytelling	Weeks 10–13 Work on your project	Week 10: <i>Submit Project proposal</i> Week 11: <i>Submit survey</i> Week 12: Workshop with <i>progress report & Peer Review</i> Week 13: Workshop; <i>Submit your Draft</i>

Unit / Week	Focus & Readings	Activities & Discussion Prompts
	<p>Weeks 14–15</p> <p>Share and Reflect</p>	<p>Week 14: Final project online showcase; <i>Submit Presentation & Final Public Humanities Project with Log</i></p> <p>Week 15: Submit <i>Final Exam</i></p>

*This class has a flexible schedule and content that may change depending on class progress and student interests. See Syllabus Change policy.

*This syllabus is a product of many educators' hard work, generosity, and support, along with my ChatGPT "dummy."
I give special thanks to UT Tyler's English department faculties, staff, and students as well as my former colleagues
at Michigan State University.*