

## **History of Cyberspace: Metaphor, Place, & Space**

Spring 2007 First Year Seminar 188Q

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Syllabus URL: [http://myslu.stlawu.edu/~pdoty/history\\_of\\_cyberspace.html](http://myslu.stlawu.edu/~pdoty/history_of_cyberspace.html)

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And something evermore about to be.

[William Wordsworth, The Prelude, Book VI](#)

**Rationale:** The Internet has been called "an organization run by nobody," "CB radio with typing," "the native home of [the] Mind," and "...a waste of time, and that's exactly what's right about it." The Internet has been the subject of considerable public policy debate, the focus of research centers at University, and the object of millions of dollars of investment--not always wise investment. The Internet is a medium, but it is a medium that potentially implodes the adage "freedom of the press applies to those who have one." The question is whither the Internet and where is it going. [The Internet is more than a network of networks](#). It is cyberspace. Cyberspace shares much with media, but it is also a place that many consider habitable. Whatever terrain and boundaries the Internet may prove to have (or be), cyberspace offers a fascinating window on people envisioning and interacting with technology. We're going to look through the window. The purpose of this course is to undertake a humanistic examination of the social visions and the social viability of the Internet, examine human computer interaction, and examine what people believe cyberspace to be. This examination will start with, and return to, the idealism that underlies founding visions of the Internet. Hopefully, by starting and finishing with this idealism we can gain an insight or two into where the Internet has gone and is going.

The course will ask students to read and discuss texts, to create at least one PowerPoint presentation, write several short essays, keep a journal, work with bibliographic management software, and create a web site.

### **Readings**

One Must Be an Inventor to Read Well.  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

### **Primary Readings:**

Bush, Vannevar. "As We May Think." *Atlantic Monthly*. July 1945: 101-108.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/194507/bush>

Hafner, Katie and Matthew Lyon. *Where Wizards Stay Up Late: The Origins of the Internet*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Licklider, J C R. "Man Computer Symbiosis." <http://www.memex.org/licklider.html>

Licklider, J C R. "Memorandum for Members and Affiliates of the Intergalactic Computer Network." <http://www.olografix.org/gubi/estate/libri/wizards/memo.html>

Raymond, Eric. *The Cathedral and the Bazaar: Musings on Linux and the Open Source by an Accidental Revolutionary*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Cambridge MA: O'Reilly, 2001.

**Secondary Readings:** These readings are used to supplement discussions we will be having over the course of the semester. When they are to be completed is indicated in the schedule of events. Additional short readings may be added as need or inspiration arises.

Barlow, John Perry. "Cyberspace Declaration of Independence." 9 Feb. 1996. 15 Dec. 2005  
<[http://www.eff.org/Misc/Publications/John\\_Perry\\_Barlow/barlow\\_0296.declaration.txt](http://www.eff.org/Misc/Publications/John_Perry_Barlow/barlow_0296.declaration.txt)>

Barlow, John Perry. "Selling Wine Without Bottles: The Economy of Mind on the Global Net." 13 Dec. 1993. 15 Dec. 2005.  
<[http://www.eff.org/Misc/Publications/John\\_Perry\\_Barlow/HTML/idea\\_economy\\_article.html](http://www.eff.org/Misc/Publications/John_Perry_Barlow/HTML/idea_economy_article.html)>

Felten, Edward. "Nuts and Bolts of Network Neutrality." 6 July 2006. 17 Jan. 2007.  
<<http://itpolicy.princeton.edu/pub/neutrality.pdf>>

Hiler, John. "Google Time Bomb: Will Weblogs Blow Up the Worlds Favorite Search Engine?" *Microcontent News*. 3 March 2002. 15 Dec. 2005.  
<<http://www.microcontentnews.com/articles/googlebombs.htm>>

Maich, Steve. "Pornography, Gambling, Lies, Theft and Terrorism: The Internet Sucks." *MacLeans* 30 Oct 2006. 17 Jan 2007.  
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&bquery=AU+maich%2c+steve&type=1&site=ehost-live>

Nielson, Jakob. "Top Ten Mistakes in Web Design." 2007. 17 Jan. 2007>  
<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9605.html>

Norman, Donald. "The Complexity of Everyday Life." July 2003. 15 Dec. 2005.  
<[http://www.jnd.org/dn.mss/the\\_complexity.html](http://www.jnd.org/dn.mss/the_complexity.html)>

Odlyzko, Andrew. "Content is Not King." *First Monday*. 6.2 (2001):  
<[http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue6\\_2/odlyzko/index.html](http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue6_2/odlyzko/index.html)>

Parker, Ian. "Absolute PowerPoint." *New Yorker*. May 28, 2001: 76-83. (Xerox)

Rosen, Jay. "What's Radical About the Weblog Form in Journalism?" *PressThink* 16 Oct. 2003.

17 Jan. 2007

<[http://journalism.nyu.edu/pubzone/weblogs/pressthink/2003/10/16/radical\\_ten.html](http://journalism.nyu.edu/pubzone/weblogs/pressthink/2003/10/16/radical_ten.html)>

Seipp, Catherine. "Online Uprising." *American Journalism Review*. June 2002. 17 Jan. 2007.

<<http://www.ajr.org/Article.asp?id=2555>>

Sullivan, Andrew. "Society is Dead, We have Retreated into the iWorld." *Sunday Times*. 20 Feb. 2005. 15 Dec. 2005. <[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2088-1491500\\_1,00.html](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2088-1491500_1,00.html)>

Ullman, Ellen. "Memory and Megabytes." *The American Scholar*. 72.4 Autumn 2003. 15 Dec. 2005

<<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&bquery=AU+ullman%2c+ellen&type=1&site=ehost-live>>

Vedantam, Shankar. "Computer Provides More Questions Than Answers." *Washington Post*. 11 December 2006. 17 Jan. 2007. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/10/AR2006121000628.html>>

**Note:** If it becomes apparent that people aren't doing the secondary reading the Instructor reserves the right to start giving quizzes on the shorter pieces. This would be unfortunate--do the reading!

## Assignments

### Journal

[Ralph Waldo] Emerson's organized, persistent, purposeful journal keeping is one of the most striking aspects of his early intellectual life. He wrote constantly, he wrote about everything...He read and indexed and reread what he had written.

Robert D. Richardson Jr. "Emerson: The Mind on Fire"

The purpose of the journal is to create a space where you can construct a coherent whole out of the material you will read for this course, and create a space for you to reflect on the ideas you're encountering and to make sense of them. Your journal will be based on responses to the following topics:

- **Reaction to Letter Writing.** You will be writing a letter, longhand, of at least 100 words and sending it out to someone. You can use pen or pencil. Reflect in your journal on what it was like--how was it different than your usual form of correspondence (I'm assuming most of your correspondence is done electronically). Since this is a personal correspondence, you don't have to share anything about who you write or what you say, rather write about what the experience was like. **This journal entry will be revised into a 2-3 page essay based on my comments to your reaction.**
- **Reaction to Licklider's writing** What we are reading by Licklider is, effectively, a technical paper and an inter-office memo, yet these are, I'm sure you'll agree, very readable papers. Why is this? What is their tone? How does Licklider identify and address his audience? Do these pieces effectively work as essays? (Answering this means, of course, defining what you think an essay is...)
- **Reaction to the Eric Raymond text** Address the question of computing as commodity and what Raymond writes about computing in relation to people's lives. Weigh in...
- **Four entries on an interactive community.** This is your opportunity to read the Internet. You need to find a place or places where people are interacting electronically on a given topic, and you need to lurk, and then write. This can be a discussion group, or it can be a message board, or it can be a blog where there are a lot of readers commenting. The community you choose can be focused on any topic whatsoever, but it has to be a "place" you haven't visited up until now (that is, don't choose something/somewhere that you participated in before the course.) You can write one interactive entry about Facebook.com, but only one. Don't simply summarize what you see--reflect on whether you see significant meaningful communication going on, or are these things one big time-sink. You can reflect on other ideas too, that arise from your reading. Feel free to read/study a community that has to do with your Research Rumpus topic.
- **Two Entries on Secondary Readings.** You need to write two journals about the secondary readings. You can pick two pieces to write about, you can write about four of the essays, you can comment on them all (that would actually be tricky). The point is reflect on the secondary readings that strike a chord with you.

Each entry needs to be 750 words (before you howl, that's less than two pages typed). In your journals you can "rake the muck," play with ideas, contradict yourself, ask questions. You will be graded on how well you engage the topic at hand; on the extent to which you deal in specifics. While you do not have to present a unified argument in a journal, it is expected they will be written in conventional American English. You need to keep an electronic version of the journal, a word document will work just fine. You need to e-mail them to me as soon as you do them, so that I can get my responses to you. You can also set up a blog, and publish your journal (for me and the rest of the world) that way. Each journal entry is due when appropriate, that is when the reading is due. If you write them after class, you can include class discussion in your journals, but don't expect that simply transcribing what was said in class is acceptable. The entries on your interactive community are due at the end of February (I have it in mind you'll do this part of the journal over February). The reading journals are due when you read something you

want to write about, but waiting to turn them in on the last day of class is a recipe for disaster.

### **PowerPoint**

Yet the PowerPoint style routinely disrupts, dominates, and trivializes content. Thus PowerPoint presentations too often resemble a school play-very loud, very slow, and very simple.  
Edward Tufte "PowerPoint is Evil"

In this life you will sit through PowerPoint presentations...the purpose of this assignment is to make sure that at least once you got a chance to think about and discuss what makes a good/useful PowerPoint presentation. Working in teams of three or more you will prepare a PowerPoint on one of the people who figure prominently in the development of the Internet (and who is not J.C.R. Licklider or Vannevar Bush). You'll need describe who the man you've studied is, and argue the significance of their contributions to the development of the Internet. Here is the list of men we're going to research:

- Norbert Weiner
- Robert Taylor
- Vint Cerf
- Larry Roberts
- Paul Baran/Donald Davies
- Douglas Engelbart

It is expected you'll reference what Hafner has to say about your topic, and it is expected that you will come up with several sources for your presentation and cite them (your bibliography will be your last slide). At least one of your sources needs to be contemporary with the accomplishments of the man you present. You will need to have at least two illustrations. The slide show must be at least seven slides long. You will be presenting your PowerPoint to the class, and your presentation, along with your slide show, will be the basis of your evaluation.

### **Short Essays**

*Essay? I thought you said sashay!  
This explains everything.  
Ebenezer Doty, Doty Family Home, 1977*

There are a couple of topics that I would like you to address with a unified argument, and so I will ask for four short essays over the course of the semester. These essays will be:

- **Reaction to Writing a Letter** This has already been detailed the journal section of the syllabus.

- **Licklider and Bush** The basis of the course is the promise Bush and Licklider saw for networked information technology. Working from the material we've read by these men, working from the Hafner text, and working from other material you research and may wish to include in your paper, address the of human progress and technology. Do you think the premises that Licklider and Bush are working from about how humans and technology interact are valid? 4 pages .
- **Design** Since you are going to design something, it follows that having a unified theory/statement on design would be useful. What in your opinion makes good design, and what doesn't. Do not limit your discussion to networked information technologies: cite examples from other digital or mechanical technology that are useful in illustrating "what works and what doesn't." Work from the Norman and Neilson readings. 3-4 pages.
- **Portfolio Essay** This is a reflection on the semester, and on the work you do as a reader, writer, and speaker in the class. This assignment works best when you don't simply catalog where you think you've improved, but write about what you've done that is new, what has surprised you. You should comment on whether your perception of human technology has changed over the course of the semester. 2-3 pages.

### Research Rumpuses

Let the Wild Rumpus Start!  
[Maurice Sendak](#), Where the Wild Things Are

Your research rumpus is a topic area that you will examine over the course of the semester. This rumpus will be the topic of your final web project, the topic of an annotated bibliography, and a class presentation. Each rumpus will ask you to consider specific issues, and research, document, and present material you discover. A rumpus is made up of three separate, yet equally important, parts:

- **Bibliography** For your research rumpus you will prepare a minimum twelve-item annotated bibliography of material on your rumpus. The bibliography can include books, articles, or web based materials, and each item in the bibliography must have research value. You will explain this value in your annotations. We will use the MLA format for this course. You are going to construct the bibliography using Refworks. When you submit both the draft and the final versions of your bibliographies submit them in a binder with copies of the articles or web materials you are citing. The printing of all of this material is, admittedly, somewhat retro but it will help us evaluate your annotations. If you cite books you **do not** need to submit the book, or copies of the sections you cite. The Course Mentor will be supervising this assignment. He will lead us through Refworks, you will submit your bibliographies to him, and he will grade them (in coordination with the Course Instructor).
- **In Class Presentation** Working in teams of two, you will answer the question I pose in the description of the rumpus. This will involve reading the material I ask

- you to read, and speaking to what you, as a team, found interesting. The teams have complete control over how the presentation is done. As part of this you will, also, be charged with asking a question. That is we will pair up teams, and you will be asked to formulate a question for the speakers you're paired up with. This will give you a chance to work on active listening, as well as have the experience of fielding questions. Your question will figure into your presentation grade.
- **Final Project on the Web** This will be a web site on your rumpus. This is where you present the research you've done on your topic since you took your topic over (that is, since you gave your presentation). You will refine the argument presented in class into an argument for a significant piece of writing. **It is critical to note that this is a research essay that happens to reside on the World Wide Web.** The purpose of this assignment is not simply to put up a web site with some graphics and something about cyberspace; this is a research essay that will take advantage of hypertext. Don't make the mistake of thinking that just "getting something up" is getting this assignment done. This is the equivalent of a ten page paper. The final project can, and probably should, draw in material from your presentation and your journal. You will submit a rough draft of the content of your Final Project on April 13th. Failure to submit a rough draft on time will result in a .50 penalty assessed against the final grade of your Final Project.

You need to choose a rumpus by our class meeting on February 8th. We need at least two people in every rumpus, and I would like as many rumpuses as possible to be present and accounted for. If everyone signs up for hacking we'll all need to negotiate.

### The Rumpuses

- **Cyberspace in Imaginative Work.** How do imaginative works represent cyberspace, and, more broadly, the relationship between humans and technology? Students in this rumpus will view the first film in the *Matrix Trilogy*, (Warner Brothers 1999), *Tron* (Walt Disney 1982) and *Blade Runner* (Warner Brothers 1991) to explore these questions. From this, students will select other films, and review the secondary literature to form an argument about the nature of the relationship between technology and humans in film. (Students interested in fiction rather than film can visit with me for a list of titles to get started with).
- **Cyberspace in Media.** How have/do the major media reported/report on and characterize cyberspace and netizens? Has the media treatment been fair, has it changed with time, and where does it seem to be going? For their presentation students will present to the class some of the earliest reporting they can find on the Internet, and draw a conclusion about how the media set the stage. From this, students will examine how major media portrayed and portrays people on the Internet and will argue a case for why the media has behaved the way it has
- **Cyberspace as Place.** Students in this rumpus will examine whether or how the Internet builds communities. For their presentation students will contrast material from Howard Rheingold's book *The Virtual Community* with work by Philip E. Agre and present their different views. From this, students will research and

- formulate an argument based on other writers about whether online communities genuinely play a significant role in people's lives.
- **Cyberspace as Personality.** It has been noted that online not everyone is who they seem, once, twice, or three times. For their presentation students in this rumpus will set the parameters of the issue by taking material from *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet* by Sherry Turkle and *Bots: The Origin of New Species* by Andrew Leonard. From this, students will research whether people do indeed construct identities online, and, if so, whether this is a good thing.
  - **Cyberspace as Diary.** Weblogs (blogs) have been making a lot of news. Not only have they been the topic of news stories, blogs command a readership expansive enough to have become, in the eyes of many, a "media" in their own right. Students in this rumpus will think about blogs. For the presentation, students will look at blogs in the recent presidential elections by examining how they were portrayed in "conventional" media, and by identifying several blogs that had enough of an audience to be noticed. Students will contrast the content of these blogs against perceptions of news. From here, students will examine the greater blogosphere by thinking about and researching blogs people keep about their lives and interests, forming an argument about where blogs fit in the tradition of journals, and forming an argument about whether blogs could change concepts and definitions of "media."
  - **Cyberspace as Bad Idea.** There is a body of literature that suggests that spending time online is not time well spent, and may in fact be time detrimentally spent. For their presentation students in this rumpus will set the question by consulting Neil Postman's book *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology* and *War of the Worlds: Cyberspace and the High-tech Assault on Reality* by Mark Slouka. From this, students will develop an overview of "the case against the Internet," and argue whether the fears of writers like Postman and Slouka were indeed well-founded.
  - **Gender and Cyberspace.** The case can be made that cyberspace is a male dominated arena (for example, more men than women generally take this course). What are the gender issues in cyberspace? For their presentation students in this rumpus will take material from *Wired Women: Gender and New Realities in Cyberspace* edited by Lynn Cherny and Elizabeth Reba Weise and outline the issues for the class. From this, students will develop an argument about whether or how gender plays out in cyberspace, and what the implications are for online communities.
  - **What's Happened to Hackers?** As you will see from the course, "hacking" hasn't always meant what it means today. What has happened to hackers and hacking, and how has hacking come to take on such negative connotations. For their presentation students in this rumpus will report on how the media represents "hackers and hacking" and chronicle the transition from "hacking" as described in the Hefner text to significant criminal hackers. From this, students in this rumpus will develop an argument about how "hacking" changed the Internet, and what is at stake for the future of the Internet in privacy and security issues.

## Schedule of Events

*The difference between time and thyme is just  
some crazy HY in the middle of a word.*  
Ebenezer Doty, Doty Family Reunion, 1983

### **January 22-26** Course and Syllabus Introduction

**Reading:** Ullman "Memory and Megabytes," Vedantam "Computer Provides More Questions Than Answers"

**Writing:** Letter & Letter Reaction

**Due:** Letter Reaction 1/26 12:00 a.m. (all times e.s.t.)

### **January 29-Feb 2** "As We May Think"

**Reading:** Bush "As We May Think"

**Writing:** Letter Reaction Essay, Interactive Communities

**Due:** Letter Reaction Essay 2/1 12:00 a.m.

### **Feb. 5-9** Licklider

**Reading:** Licklider "Man Computer Symbiosis," "Memorandum for Members..." Start Hafner

**Writing:** Licklider/Bush Essay

**Due:** Rumpus Topic 2/8 10:10 a.m., Licklider Journal 2/9 12:00 a.m.

### **Feb 12-16** Hafner/Powerpoint

**Reading:** Hafner, Parker "Absolute Powerpoint," Hiler "Google Time Bomb..."

**Writing:** Working on PowerPoint

**Due:** Licklider/Bush Essay 2/15 10:10 a.m.

### **Feb 19-23** PowerPoint/Bibliography

**Reading:** Start Raymond

**Writing:** Rumpus Bibliography, Presentations

**Due:** PowerPoint presentations begin 2/20 at 10:10

### **Feb 26-March 2** Linux Discussion

**Reading:** Raymond Text, Barlow "Cyberspace Declaration..." "Selling Wine Without the Bottles..."

**Writing:** Rumpus Bibliography, Presentations

**Due:** Journal on Interactive Community 3/1 12:00 a.m., Journal on Linux 3/2 12:00 a.m.

### **March 5-9** "Security/Privacy"

**Reading:** Felten "Nuts and Bolts..."

**Writing:** Rumpus Presentations

**Due:** Rumpus Bibliography 3/5 9:00 a.m. Rumpus Presentation Rehearsals 3/7-3/8

**March 12-16** Rumpus Presentations

**Due:** Rumpus Presentations begin 3/13 10:10 a.m.

**March 16-25 Spring Break**

**March 26-30** Consultations and Research

**Writing:** Final Project, Remaining Journals

**April 2-6** HTML & Browsers

**Writing:** Final Project

**April 9-13** Design

**Reading:** Neilson "Top Ten Mistakes...", Norman "Complexity of Everyday Life"

**Writing:** Final Project, Design Essay

**Due:** Final Project Drafts 4/13 12:00 a.m.

**April 16-20** T) Weblogs

**Reading:** Seipp "Online Uprising," Rosen "What's Radical..." Odlyzko "Content is Not King"

**Writing:** Final Project

**Due:** Design Essay 4/17 10:10 a.m.

**April 23-27** Idealism Betrayed?

**Reading:** Sullivan "Society is Dead...", Maich "Pornography, Gambling, Lies..."

**Writing:** Final Project

**April 30-May 4** Last Week!

**Writing:** Final Project

**Due:** Final Presentation Discussions begin 5/2 at 1:40 p.m. Final Projects are due at that moment.

**Complete Portfolio is due Monday May 7th at 5:00 p.m..**

**A note on lap tops...** Given that ODY is wireless and that the course is about computers it would seem to be a natural fit that students would bring lap top computers to class to do their work in their "personal" computing environment. However lap tops leadith unto temptation: namely, multitasking (the temptation to do e-mail during class, write papers for other classes during class, surf to <http://www.pokealexintheeye.com/> during class, etc...) You may bring lap tops to class but if I discover/suspect you of using them in the name of temptation I will most certainly revoke your lap top privileges and it's "back to the wood..." Be clear too that you don't have to bring a lap top; you are welcome to come to class without them.

**Attendance:** I hate empty rooms. You are allowed three absences. A penalty of .25 may be assessed against your final grade for excessive absences.

**Participation:** Class participation figures into the grade. If you steadfastly refuse to participate in class I will subtract a half a letter grade, since it is understood that participation is “part of the job.” What do I mean by “participation?” "Participation" is not simply talking everyday; “participation” is being prepared and looking for opportunities in the conversation where your preparation can energize or alter the flow of shared ideas (think: turn flat water to white water). You don't have to be continually at the fore, but you need to be engaged with the course dialogue to the extent that your personality is part of the course composite. You can trust that if I am not happy with your participation you will hear from me.

**Portfolio:** Like any FYS, you need to create a portfolio representative of the work you've done. Include: copies of everything you write, print out of your PowerPoints (include notes you wrote for yourself if you did your rumpus presentation without a PowerPoint), your journals your bibliographies, all drafts, all the Xeroxes of the research you've done, your final project on CD, **and** copies of all of the e-mail I send you in which I inform you of your grades for particular projects (you **do not** need to include copies of e-mail we exchange on topics other than grades). You'll also need to include your portfolio essay. If you do not submit a portfolio, your journals will not receive a grade (ergo, you flunk 30% of the course).

**Academic Honesty:** Academic Honesty matters. Plagiarism is unacceptable, and if you submit plagiarized work it will be forwarded to the Honor Council. Of course, honest mistakes in citing material are another matter entirely--[please consult pages 148-153 in the Student Handbook](#) for details (or ask me if you have questions).

### Course Grade

Flunked spelling tests  
paper my room, pencil and  
red ink my decor.  
Magic-Marked on Bus Interior, Manchester New Hampshire

**Powerpoint--10%**  
**Essays--10%**  
**Journals--30%**  
**Final Project 50%**  
**Figured As:**  
**Bibliography 25%**  
**Rumpus Presentation 25%**  
**Web Essay 50%**

**Your responsibilities:** Be in class, be prepared, participate, ask questions, offer constructive criticism, be respectful of others, stay healthy!

**My responsibilities:** carry through on the vision of what the course is and where it should go; be able to speak specifically to student questions and concerns; evaluate work

promptly; not get bogged down in details and lose sight of what learning is; and to stay healthy!

### **First-Year Program Philosophy and Goals 2006-07**

The First-Year Program (FYP) and First-Year Seminar (FYS) are the first steps in a four-year process of helping you meet the University's Aims and Objectives and the broader goals of a liberal education. The faculty of the FYP and FYS see themselves as partners and mentors in the process of working with you to acquire the intellectual habits of mind, the writing, speaking, and research skills, and the ethical self-reflexiveness that are at the core of a liberal education. The FYP and FYS will ask you to consider new perspectives on the world and your place in it and will challenge you to confront many of the hidden assumptions you bring to college with you. We hope to open you to new ideas, help you to see the complexity of the way in which knowledge gets produced and used in society, and encourage you to see yourself as an active contributor in making the world a better place. The course topics, the texts you will read, listen to, and watch, the in-class and out-of-class activities you will engage in, and the writing, speaking, and research assignments you will work on are all designed to introduce you to the depth of critical thinking and the quality and complexity of the communication skills that will be expected of you at SLU and as a citizen of an increasingly diverse society.

First and foremost among our goals are those related to your abilities as a communicator. The work of the FYP and FYS asks you to design and deliver written, spoken, performed and/or visual texts that demonstrate basic skills in the relevant modes of communication and with an increasing degree of rhetorical sensitivity. Our focus on "rhetorical sensitivity" means that we expect you to cultivate the awareness that all of your communication, whether formal or informal, involves having to make choices about your messages, whether written, spoken, aural or visual. To become a good communicator, you need to recognize that the creation of meaningful and powerful written, spoken, performed, or visual texts involves both a creator and an audience, and that therefore the voice you adopt in your communication, the audience you imagine yourself communicating to, and the social and ethical context of the content, matter a great deal in creating such texts. One important way to become a better communicator is to become a better critical reader, viewer, and listener, which is why we will ask you to engage challenging materials in a variety of forms and work with you to learn how to interpret them.

Learning to read, listen, write, speak, do research and/or perform well also requires feedback. As faculty, we submit our work for feedback from colleagues all the time, and giving and receiving constructive feedback from both friends and strangers is central to collaborative work in any field and is itself a form of critical thinking and learning. We further recognize that this feedback process is not linear and that good communication requires that you continually rethink, restructure, and revise your work in order for it to be your best. This is why we require that your writing, speaking, and performance assignments be "projects" that include preparatory exercises and multiple drafts or rehearsals, all of which ask you to continue to reflect critically on the choices you have

made in the texts that you produce. Furthermore, we see all of these forms of communication as complementary and intertwined, which is why many of your assignments will ask you to integrate elements of the written, spoken, performed, and visual. Finally, developing good habits of critical inquiry and communication also means reflecting on the ethical dimensions of how your work represents that of others, thus one of our goals is to help you to understand both the nature of academic integrity and the social processes by which knowledge is produced and represented.

To ensure that the program is meeting its stated goals, all FYP and FYS syllabi are read by other faculty in the program to determine if they include a variety of assignments that foster the writing, speaking, research, and critical thinking goals of the program. All FYP and FYS courses have to be approved by faculty in the program before they are offered.

**1/17/07**