Instructor: Prof. Paul Fess  
Meeting Time: Mon/Wed 9:30-10:45am  
Location: Goddard B07  
Email: paulfesshc@gmail.com  
Office: 1 Washington Place, Rm. 407  
Office Hours: Wednesdays; 11:00- 12:30 p.m.

Course Description:
Our society has a complex relationship with technology, one that is persistent and evolving, beneficial and dangerous. Students in this course will investigate such technological issues as censorship and surveillance, the paradoxes of the synthetic, social media-driven life, and the affordances and pitfalls of technological developments. In pursuing these lines of inquiry, we will pay attention to how developments in writing technologies affect our writing processes, and by engaging in comparative media studies, we will use our own experience to understand and question historical information revolutions since the invention of the alphabet. As we examine these areas we will discuss the critical theory of Donna Haraway and N. Katherine Hayles along side new media theory critics like Johanna Drucker and Matthew Kirschenbaum. Readings may include: Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury, Oryx and Crake by Margaret Atwood, and The Circle by Dave Eggers.

Together, we will undertake a series of new media experiments, using digital tools to communicate our research to a public audience. On the course blog, students will analyze the digital objects on which they are dependent by applying the insights gained from engaging with the literary texts and theory. Students will express the results of their exploration in well-developed, thesis-driven, analytical essays accompanied by digital representations of their findings. During the semester you will design your own Word Press project, and in crafting your project you will engage various tools such as hypothes.is, Evernote, Diigo, and digital mapping applications.

Course Objectives
• Students will gain an understanding of key aspects of scholarship about digital writing and uses of new media.  
• Students will engage in both informal and formal writing. The variety of writing assignments will give students the opportunity to experience writing through various media and reflect on the writing process.  
• Students will explore and refine their ideas through classroom discussions and in conversation with their peers. Further, students will practice in-class peer review to grow increasingly aware of audience, readers’ expectations, and the rhetorical devices necessary to convey ideas clearly.

Required Texts:
These are the texts that have been ordered from the NYU bookstore, however, any edition – including e-books of the full texts – may be acceptable if you consult me first.  
• E. M. Forster. “The Machine Stops.” (full text online)  
  http://archive.ncsa.illinois.edu/prajlich/forster.html  
• Margaret Atwood. Oryx and Crake  
• Ray Bradbury. Fahrenheit 451 by  
• Dave Eggers. The Circle
Course Requirements:

- **Short papers (20%)**: There will be two 1200-1500-word position papers due. Topics will be distributed well in advance of the essay due dates and will come out of class discussion. You will be asked to bring in drafts of your papers to participate in writing workshops and peer review sessions. You may rewrite papers for a higher grade provided that you meet with me to discuss the rewrite and submit it within one week. These essays will be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides (follow MLA guidelines as documented in MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th Ed.).

- **Final Paper (25%)**: This essay will be 2500-2700-words in length, and will follow the same formal guidelines as the first two essays. The available topics for this paper will be generated by our virtual and classroom discussions over the semester.

- **Discussion Leading Assignment (10%)**: Each student will lead one discussion on the blog and the first 15 minutes of one class. As discussion leader, you will research the day’s reading, post questions to the course blog, direct our attention to specific parts of the text, and share with us your reading of it. We will discuss the details of this assignment in the first class.

- **Online Participation (25%)**:
  - hypothes.is, Evernote, Diigo (10%): Will be using these three online tools during the semester. As part of our discussion of Forster’s “The Machine Stops” we will also annotate this short story using hypothes.is. Throughout the semester we will use Evernote to compile class notes about material we’re covering, and we will use the social bookmarking tool Diigo in order to collect material from the Web relevant to a discussion on the blog.
  - Blog Contributions (15%): At least two days before each session, the discussion leader will pose questions to the class on the course blog. Each student must respond to the questions by 5:00pm the day before the session. The blog will function as a place to workshop ideas about the texts before we come together to discuss them. Don't be afraid to voice your confusion or frustration here, as those feelings often produce fruitful avenues of inquiry into the text.

- **Writing with maps (10%)**: For this assignment you will be annotating a Google map of New York City and produce a visual “essay” showing some aspect of New York. Details about this assignment will be handed out well in advance.

- **In-class Participation (10%)**: This class only works if you are engaged with the material, so it’s important that you engage class discussion and activities. You must be ready to discuss any assigned reading, participate in group activities and class discussions, and complete ALL writing assignments done both in and out of class.

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**Attendance Policy:**
Attending class is essential to your success, and shows respect for me and your peers. I will allow up to 3 absences over 15 weeks. After 3, you must come speak with me and we will discuss your standing in the course. At the beginning of each class you will complete a short writing assignment. This will be used to take attendance, and if you are late you miss this activity and not be counted as present.

**Academic Honesty:**
Do not plagiarize. Our course site will be public, and you could face legal consequences for stealing other people’s work. Besides that, you can be dismissed from NYU for cheating: “As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website [www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html] for a full description of the academic integrity policy.”

I will go over proper documentation style in the course of the semester in conjunction with OWL at Purdue (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/) and Writer/Designer. If you have questions regarding proper citation practices PLEASE ask me or contact a librarian for help.

**Accessibility Accommodations:**
If you have a disability, please come speak with me at the beginning of the term and contact NYU’s Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980.
Note: I may need to adjust this syllabus and course schedule to accommodate pedagogical needs as they arise. We will discuss all changes as a class and the new schedule will be reflected on our course blog.
Course Schedule
The activities listed here are due before the next class begins.
(Schedule subject to change)

Unit 1: Histories of the Digital Present
Week 1
Home: Get your books.
http://archive.ncsa.illinois.edu/prajlich/forster.html

Week 2
9/7: Labor Day; No Class

9/9: Class: Discuss “The Machine Stops”
Annotate “The Machine Stops” using hypothes.is
Home: Finish annotations.

Week 3
9/14: Class: Discuss Eisenstein & McLuhan
Introduction to social bookmarking with Diigo
Introduction to collective class note taking using Evernote
Home: Read Walter Benjamin “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” & Mark B. Hansen “New Media”

9/16: Class: Discuss Benjamin & Hansen
Discussion Leader:
Home: Lev Manovich “Prologue,” “Introduction,” and “What is New Media?”

Week 4
9/21: Class: Discuss Manovich
Discussion Leader:
Home: Read Matthew G Kirschenbaum “Preface” & “Introduction” from Mechanisms
and Geoffrey Nunberg “Farewell to the Information Age”

Unit 2: The ends of privacy
9/23: Class: Discuss Kirschenbaum & Nunberg
Discussion Leader:
Home: Read Dave Eggers The Circle
Prepare 1st Short Paper Draft
Week 5
9/28: Class: Bring 1st Short Paper Draft
Home: Read Dave Eggers The Circle
Read Alexander R. Galloway “Networks”

09/30: Class: Discuss Eggers & Galloway
Discussion Leader:
Home: Read: Dave Eggers The Circle
Read: excerpt from Foucault

Week 6
10/5: Class: Discuss Eggers & Foucault
Discussion Leader:
Home: Dave Eggers The Circle

10/7 Class: Discuss Eggers
Submit 1st Short Paper
Home: Dave Eggers The Circle
Read excerpt from Michel de Certeau “A Very Ordinary Culture”

Week 7
10/12 No Class

10/13: Classes Follow Monday schedule
Class: Discuss Eggers & de Certeau
Discussion Leader:
Home: Read Dave Eggers The Circle

10/14: Class: Discuss Eggers
Discussion Leader:
Home: Read Dave Eggers The Circle

Week 8 Unit 3: Digital Reading

10/19: Class: Discuss Eggers
Discussion Leader:
Home: Sven Birkerts excerpt from “The Gutenberg Elegies” & TBA (excerpt from “Changing the Subject: Art and Attention in the Internet Age”)

10/21: Class: Discuss Birkerts
Discussion Leader:
Home: Prepare 2nd Short Paper Draft

Week 9
10/26: Class: Bring 2nd Short Paper Draft
Home: Read N. Katherine Hayles “How We Think,” “How We Read,” and “Tech-TOC”

10/28: Class: Discuss Hayles
Discussion Leader:

Home: Read Johanna Drucker “Distributed and Conditional Documents: Conceptualizing Bibliographic Alterities”

**Week 10**
11/02: Class: **Submit 2nd Short Paper**
Discuss Drucker
Discussion Leader:

Home: Read Ray Bradbury *Fahrenheit 451*

11/04: Class: Discuss Bradbury
Discussion Leader:

Home: Read Ray Bradbury *Fahrenheit 451*

**Week 11**
11/09: Class: Discuss Bradbury
Home: Read Christopher Schmidt “The New Media Writer as Cartographer”

**Unit 4: Digital Writing**
11/11: Class: Discuss Schmidt
Review writing with online maps projects
Discuss writing with maps assignment

Walter Ong “Orality and Literacy: Writing Restructures Consciousness”

**Week 12**
11/16: Class: Discuss Ponti & Ong
Discussion Leader:

Home: Read Donna Haraway “A Cyborg Manifesto: science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century.”

11/18: Class: Discuss Haraway
Discussion Leader:

Home: Margaret Atwood *Oryx and Crake*

**Week 13**
11/23: Class: Discuss Atwood
*Writing with Maps Project due*

Home: Margaret Atwood *Oryx and Crake*
**Week 14**
11/30: Class: Discuss Atwood  
Discussion Leader:  
   Home: Margaret Atwood *Oryx and Crake*
12/02: Class: Discuss Atwood  
   Home: Margaret Atwood *Oryx and Crake*

**Week 15**
12/07: Class: Discuss Atwood
12/09: Class: TBA

**Week 16**
12/14: Class: **Bring Final Paper Draft**

**Final Paper Due 12/18**