due Wednesday, November 15
300 points

overview

There are four options for this assignment:

**option one:** research and write about the impact of a digital technology on your field of study, major, or ideal career; or

**option two:** research and prepare a thick, well-illustrated, quote-rich definition of digital rhetoric; or

**option three:** research and prepare a "shrine" to a digital rhetorician, mapping, illustrating, and articulating that person’s work and contributions; or

**option four:** pitch something else entirely—for instance, continuing your work with your project one or two, or pitching something that directly leads into your final project.

getting started & doing research

1

First, decide which of the four options above you will pursue for this assignment.

Think about how you will focus your object of study and exploration. Think about what has captured your attention thus far in class. Think about which option will allow you to push further at a concept we’ve been reading about, discussing, and exploring in class.

As you decide which option you want to pursue, you might want to revisit the week 1 materials from class. You may also want to talk to each other and to professors to see what digital technologies they would describe as having an impact on your field of study or ideal career, or how they would define digital rhetoric, or what researcher or scholar whose work they would choose to explore and map.

2

Regardless of which of the four options you choose, you will have to do some research—combing through, assessing and evaluating, and selecting among different sources and resources that help to support your work and your approach for this assignment. Sources to consult include:

- Interview *professors* or *graduate students* in your department; they are professionals in your field, they read publications in your field, and they should be up to date on hot topics in your field.

- Go to the *web sites* published and produced by organizations that represent or are related to your field. Often, these sites include access to or lists of publications relevant to your field, and may even include online articles for you to access.

- Review *trade magazines or journals* published by or for professionals in your field. Every professional field has publications for its members. Take a look at the tables of contents of recent issues of the publications professionals in your field read.
Go to different libraries on campus. There are 12 branch libraries on campus. You may have to go to your dedicated library to find a good selection of journals in your field, for example: the Business Library (50 Law College Building) or the Engineering Library (1515 Engineering Building).

Ask reference librarians; all of the libraries on campus are staffed by wonderfully knowledgeable librarians who should be able to help you identify some of the journals and trade publications written on the topic of your interest.

narrowing your focus & thinking about the product

Again, regardless of which of the four options you choose to pursue, you will have to carefully hone your focus as you work on the product of this assignment, which is dependent upon which option you choose and what sort of product you want to produce.

For instance, if you choose option one, and you are researching and writing about the impact of a digital technology on your field of study, major, or ideal career, you may want to prepare a report and you will need to come up with an angle to explore in the report, such as:

Many people think of copyediting as a task performed by an individual person, alone, equipped with a red pen and a writing manual. Software-based tools—such as the “track changes” feature in Microsoft Word—have, however, transformed the ways in which copyeditors perform their everyday work and deliver that work to authors and publishers. In this report, I review eight articles published in technical communication journals to explore the current digital tools available for copyeditors and to address the ways in which copyediting practices have changed shape with software that facilitates editing work.

If you choose option two, and you are researching and preparing a thick, well-illustrated definition of digital rhetoric, you will have to decide whose work to consider as you prepare your definition and what examples you will draw upon to illustrate your definition.

Defining digital rhetoric is a tricky task—many people have different ideas about what digital rhetoric is, but little work exists that explicitly defines and provides examples for digital rhetoric. To prepare a working definition of digital rhetoric, and, more importantly, to show examples of how digital rhetoric is deployed, I interviewed three scholars who consider themselves to be digital rhetoricians. Within this web site, I first provide an introduction that includes a literature review synthesizing written work on digital rhetoric. Then I link to three pages, each of which has a biography of the three scholars I interviewed; each scholar page presents their definitions and understandings of digital rhetoric. I conclude with my own notions of what digital rhetoric is and why it is an important area of study.

If you choose option three, and you’re creating a shrine to a digital rhetorician, you’ll have to first narrow your focus by selecting one person to research, and then you’ll probably (depending on the breadth of their work) have to decide on an angle from which to explore their work.

In this PowerPoint presentation, I trace and map the work of Cynthia L. Selfe. Cindy Selfe, along with Gail Hawisher, is considered to be one of the founding leaders in the field of computers and writing. To explore her work and show how it has impacted our world, I focus on three articles she has written, and I map how other scholars, theorists, and teachers have applied these three articles to their own work.