



## Instructor Information

Instructor: Sarah Bell, PhD (she/her; you can call me Dr. Bell or Sarah)

[redacted for web]

## Description/Overview

This course provides a survey of the basic principles, practices and implications of digital media communication and production. You will engage digital media tools, techniques and processes through hands-on production, readings, discussion and analysis of contemporary issues. This course will combine the practice of creating digital materials with theoretical and historical context.

## Course Materials and Resources

All course readings, videos, and listening assignments are on Canvas. (There are no required textbooks for this course.)

### **Software**

All software will be made available for you to use in the HDMZ. Occasionally, students choose to purchase a personal subscription for Adobe Creative Cloud software at the educational price. **This is NOT REQUIRED.** If you are interested, see the Adobe website for students: <https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/buy/students.html>

## Course Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion on the course, students will be able to

1. Edit digital media artifacts including images and pre-recorded sound using common interfaces (e.g., timeline editors, image layers, etc.).
2. Understand the historical development of digital media from analog predecessors and be able to discuss the social implications of technical change.
3. Identify social, cultural, political, and economic issues related to the creation, use, and circulation of digital media.

## Undergraduate Student Learning Goals

This course provides an *introductory* engagement with the following USLG:

### Goal 7: **Technology**

Students will demonstrate knowledge of technology and its implications in society, and be able to design and/or use technology for creative activities or innovative solutions to problems.

USLG rubrics are here: <https://www.mtu.edu/assessment/undergrad/resources/goals/>

## Grading and Assignments

### Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade points/credit	Rating
<b>A</b>	93% & above	4.00	Excellent
<b>AB</b>	88% - 92%	3.50	Very good
<b>B</b>	83% - 87%	3.00	Good
<b>BC</b>	78% - 82%	2.50	Above average
<b>C</b>	73% - 77%	2.00	Average
<b>CD</b>	68% - 72%	1.50	Below average
<b>D</b>	60% - 67%	1.00	Inferior
<b>F</b>	59% and below	0.00	Failure
<b>I</b>	Incomplete; given only when a student is unable to complete a segment of the course because of circumstances beyond the student's control.		
<b>X</b>	Conditional, with no grade points per credit; given only when the student is at fault in failing to complete a minor segment of a course, but in the judgment of the instructor does not need to repeat the course. It must be made up by the close of the next semester or the grade becomes a failure (F). A (X) grade is included in the grade point average calculation as a (F) grade.		

### Assignments

Grades will be calculated from the following assignments.

Attendance	150
Affordance/constraint presentation	150
Quizzes (3 x 100 pts each)	300
Editing lab	150
Final project/presentation	250
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>1000</b>

### Missed Deadlines

Since assignments for the course are primarily presentations and quizzes, the deadlines are firm. If you have personal circumstances that impact your ability to complete a quiz by the due date, please let me know *in advance* so that we can negotiate an adjustment.

### Course Policies

**Attendance is required.** Attendance will be taken daily and constitutes 15% of your course grade. Lectures, discussions and in-class activities are critical for success in this course and cannot be made up, so it is important that you make it to class. More than three unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade. If you experience an illness or other circumstance that requires you to miss class for more than two days in a row, follow the procedures for having your absences excused by the Dean of Students Office:

<https://www.mtu.edu/deanofstudents/academic-policies/attendance/>

If you are experiencing something that is impacting your success in the course, please let me know so that we can try to find a solution together.

***In class preparation and participation:*** Please complete readings/viewings **before** class, attend class, pay attention during class, and contribute productively.

We are all members of a community where it is our shared responsibility to cultivate a climate where all individuals are valued and where both they and their ideas are treated with respect. Class and small group discussions are part of the learning process in this course. I know that speaking up in class is not comfortable for everyone, nevertheless, please share your perspective and questions. A diversity of experiences and ideas will help us all learn. **Belittling or abusive speech and behavior will obviously not be tolerated.**

***Phones, laptops, and other e-devices:*** Unless you are asked to use your phone as part of the class, please put it away, and remove earbuds. I will send you a cautionary email if I observe you using e-devices in ways that distract you *or those around you* from class activities. If the distraction persists, I may deduct points from your participation grade. You are welcome to use a tablet or laptop to take notes if that is how you learn best.

***Students are not permitted to make audio and/or video recordings in class without my written permission and the consent of all others present.*** Copies of slides used during class are posted to Canvas afterward for your reference.

## **Academic Integrity**

***Student work*** products (essays, projects, etc.) may be used for purposes of university, program, or course assessment. Work used for assessment purposes *will not include any individual student identification.*

***Cheating and plagiarism*** will be reported to the Dean of Students so carefully document any sources used in your work. Please refer to the MTU Academic Integrity Policy at <http://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/policies/p109-1.htm>

Though traditional print plagiarism will likely not be a problem for assignments in this class, we will also be discussing issues related to the use, reuse, and modification of other media artifacts (sound, images, etc.). All media projects must be your own work, or, when appropriate, reuse media that you have *permission* to use, and with proper *attribution*.

***Generative AI:*** as AI becomes integrated into many of our productivity tools and creative software, it is important to reflect on its responsible and ethical use. Some of our class activities and discussions will help us do that. However, course assignments are designed to challenge and practice your own critical thinking and creative abilities. In most cases, use of generative text AI (or “chatbots”) for writing is not allowed. For editing labs, use of the software editing tools (rather than AI suggestions) is required. For other projects, if sound, video, or images have been generated or manipulated with AI, this must be documented as described below.

### ***Citing AI***

You are responsible for all information, text, sounds, and images you include in your work, including anything that is based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate

intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). As with other sources, if you use AI generated content in any submitted assignment, you must provide accurate citations (these often include the prompt you used with the AI tool). For a good discussion, see <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/> (and if you are using APA style, see <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt> ).

If your use of AI tools is not properly documented, you may be violating MTU's academic integrity policy: <http://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/policies/p109-1.htm>

Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways will receive a 0. Repeated violations may result in failing the course.

If you are in doubt about acceptable AI usage in this class, *please ask for clarification*.

## University Policies

Michigan Tech has standard policies on academic misconduct and complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For more information about reasonable accommodations or equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office at 906-487-2212. More information is also available from

[http://www.mtu.edu/ctl/instructionalresources/syllabus/syllabus\\_policies.html](http://www.mtu.edu/ctl/instructionalresources/syllabus/syllabus_policies.html)

Michigan Tech is committed to **advancing the mental health and well-being of its students**. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help or to find additional resources, contact Counseling Services at 906-487-2538 or visit <http://www.mtu.edu/counseling>

## Land and Lakes Acknowledgment

*Nayaano-nibiimaang Gichigamiin* ("The Five Freshwater Seas," the Laurentian Great Lakes) bioregion is the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands and waters of numerous Indigenous nations, including the Anishinaabeg— the Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples. I acknowledge Indigenous peoples as the region's original caretakers and knowledge keepers, and recognize their centuries-long relationships as the foundation for governance of the world's largest system of freshwater that continues into the present day. Our campus is located within *Ojibwe Gichigami* ("Ojibwa's Great Sea," Lake Superior) homelands and ceded-territory.

## Course Schedule\*subject to revision

DATE	TOPIC/ACTIVITY	READING/VIEWING	ASSIGNMENTS
<b>WEEK 1: WHAT IS DIGITAL MEDIA?</b>			
M 8/26	Welcome to class		Review syllabus; <b>complete questionnaire on Canvas</b>
W 8/28	Characteristics of digital media		
F 8/30	Affordances and constraints	Read selection from <i>Design of Everyday Things</i>	
<b>WEEK 2: NO CLASS SESSIONS, WORK ON AFFORDANCE/CONSTRAINT PRESENTATION</b>			
M 9/2	<b>LABOR DAY HOLIDAY – NO CLASSES</b>		
W 9/4	<b>NO CLASS,</b> Dr. Bell is at a conference, but you may meet during class time to work with your partner		
F 9/6			
<b>WEEK 3: AFFORDANCE/CONSTRAINT PRESENTATIONS</b>			
M 9/9	<b>NO CLASS,</b> Dr. Bell is at a conference, but you may meet during class time to work with your partner		
W 9/11	Presentations		
F 9/13	Presentations		
<b>WEEK 4: ANALOG &amp; DIGITAL; INTRO TO IMAGING</b>			
M 9/16	Defining analog & digital		
W 9/18	Imaging history		
F 9/20	Imaging history	Watch “Shirley Card”	
<b>WEEK 5: DIGITAL IMAGING</b>			
M 9/23	Digital imaging	Read “Your iPhone wasn’t Built for the Apocalypse”	
W 9/25	Case study: photojournalism	Watch “These photos ended child labor”	
F 9/27	Digital imaging	Read “The Ultimate Display”	

<b>WEEK 6: DIGITAL IMAGING, CONT'D</b>			
M 9/30	Case study: remediation	Explore links on Canvas	
W 10/2	Emerging technologies	Read "The Illusion of Reality"	
F 10/4	Physics of sound	Watch Crash Course video	
			<b>Imaging quiz due Sunday</b>
<b>WEEK 7: INTRO TO SOUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF RECORDING TECHNOLOGIES</b>			
M 10/7	Early recording technologies	Read Thomas Edison essay	
W 10/9	Sound design	Read "Sound Design and Science Fiction"	
F 10/11	Sound design	Listen to "Sonic Branding" podcast episode	
<b>WEEK 8: SOUND DESIGN AND INTERACTION</b>			
M 10/14	Digital recording technologies		
W 10/16	Meet with project teams		
<b>F 10/18</b>	<b>NO CLASS, October break</b>		
<b>WEEK 9: SOUND/IMAGE EDITING LABS (CHOOSE ONE)</b>			
M 10/21	<b>Meet in the HDMZ Media Studio to complete introductory image or sound editing lab (labs are designed to be completed within three class sessions, and are due Sunday night)</b>		
W 10/23			
F 10/25			
			<b>Sound quiz due Sunday</b>
<b>WEEK 10: NARRATIVE AND INTERACTION</b>			
M 10/28	Narrative	Read "Narrativity" and "Interactive Narrative"	
W 10/30	Interface	Read "Spatiality of Digital Media"	
F 11/1 <small>* last day to drop with W</small>	Interaction	Watch "Development of the Wiimote"	
<b>WEEK 11: ORGANIZING FINAL PROJECTS</b>			
M 11/4	Copyright	Read "Copyright"; watch "Embrace the Remix"	
<b>W 11/6</b>	<b>NO CLASS, coordinate with group to complete contract</b>		

<b>F 11/8</b>	<b>NO CLASS, Attend 41 North Film Festival (November 7-10)</b> Recommended films TBA		
			<b>Group contracts due Sunday</b>
<b>WEEK 12: PROJECT WORK</b>			
M 11/11	Plain and inclusive language		
W 11/13	Accessibility		
F 11/15	Meet with project teams		
			<b>Quiz #3 due Sunday night</b>
<b>WEEK 13: PROJECT WORK</b>			
M 11/18	Meet with project teams		
W 11/20	Meet with project teams		
<b>F 11/22</b>	<b>NO CLASS - FALL BREAK TRAVEL DAY</b>		
<b>FALL BREAK (NO CLASSES), NOV 25-29</b>			
<b>WEEK 14: PRESENTATION OF PROJECTS</b>			
M 12/2	Meet with project teams		
W 12/4	Presentations		
F 12/6	Presentations		
			<b>Project reports due Sunday</b>

***Finals Week***

There is no final exam for this class.