

# Visualizing Environments (Writing Through Media)

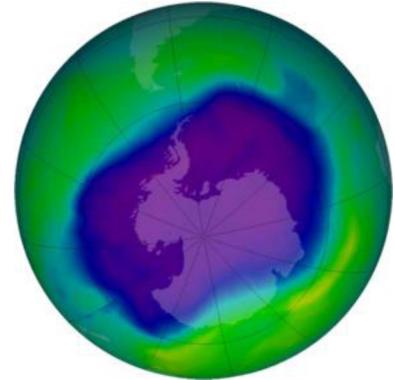
ENGI 131-1802, Fall 2017

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Class Hashtag: #UFVisEnv

Class and Screening Room: Weil 0408E  
Class Period: MWF: Per 6 (12:50pm-1:40)  
Screening Time: MPer. E1-E3 (7:20pm-10:10)  
Office Hours: F Per 5 & MWF by appt.  
Office: Turlington 4341  
Marston Lab (MADE@UF) Hours: W Per 3-4

## Course Description

This course focuses on digital representations of the environment, including technologies such as GIS mapping, augmented reality, gaming, and image tracking. Course topics include representations of ecosystems, borders, (non)humans, economic groups, and environmental disasters in science and popular media. Students will gain valuable writing skills as they navigate the course assignments. They will develop an understanding of environments as texts, and they will hone their abilities to write and interpret arguments across disciplines. The readings and assignments for this course include work in technology, sciences, and the humanities, and students can expect to gain interdisciplinary technical and rhetorical knowledge as they gain writing expertise.



Students will research and write as they design and build digital projects. This class focuses on the question: how does one *see* an environment? Further, what is the difference between “writing,” “seeing,” and “imagining.” How do we, as readers and writers, navigate a technologies which supplant affective images over the physical environment? By asking what it means to visualize an environment, we are also asking what it means to read and write in and through environments. Writing allows us to locate ourselves in relation to the past and future. Thus, we will also consider images and writing allow us to remember and archive environmental events. Students will use various media platforms and will analyze and create visualizations of environmental topics s which otherwise act invisibly in our daily lives.

## General Education Objectives

- This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) *or* Humanities (H).  
This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university’s 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- *Composition courses* provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University *Writing Requirement (WR)* ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing

component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

### General Education Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

### Required Texts

- *White Noise*. Don DeLillo. Penguin Classics, 2009.
- Daily access to UF Email and our Class Website: Canvas. Unless otherwise noted, bring a fully charged laptop and smartphone/tablet to each class meeting.

### Recommended Texts

- *Sustainability: A Reader for Writers*. Carl Hemdl (Ed) Oxford UP, 2013 (Selected readings are all available as open-access online texts).

### Open-Access eTexts

- *Visualizing Information for Advocacy*. Tactical Technology Collective, 2014 (Online at [Vi.suali.singadvocacy.org](http://Vi.suali.singadvocacy.org)).
- *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing*. Charles Lowe and Pavel Zemliansky (Eds.) Parlor Press, 2010 (Online at [Writingspaces.org](http://Writingspaces.org)).
- *Web Writing Style Guide*. Matt Barton, James Kalmbach, and Charles Lowe (Eds.) Parlor Press, 2010 (Online at [Writingspaces.org](http://Writingspaces.org)).

### Assignments

#### Blog, 2500 words (500 words per post)

Throughout the semester, I will ask you to write analytical responses to readings, class discussions, or other relevant topics. Blog posts are focused, crafted, carefully edited and written accessibly for a public audience. They may be assigned in class or for homework. Review the detailed schedule below for specific deadlines. Students will be required to read and respond to two other student posts before the next class.

**Points /100**  
25

#### Econographic Tracking, 1250 words

For this project, students will use Zotero to track the circulation of an iconic representation of ecology or an environmental image (what Sean Morey calls an “econ”) using Laurie Gries’ iconographic tracking method. Students will submit a paper describing their research, methodology, and analysis.

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**Placing Environments, 750 words**

10

Students will work with either Google Maps, Aurasma, or a combination of the two to create a visualization of an environmental crisis, event, or problem. Students will source videos and images, and create voice-over narration. These videos and brief writings will be embedded either in the map, AR application, or combination of the two. Some projects, such as those dealing with ubiquitous images like brand logos, will be ideally suited for AR, whereas remote, specific locations like the gulf dead zone will be ideal for mapping.

**Visualizing Environments, 1500**

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The final project will connect the previous work in the class with a website which describes an unseen ecological problem or event. Ideally, it will bring the blog, the Econographic Tracking and Placing Environments projects into conversation using careful research. Students may choose to build an informational, argumentative website, or they may develop a MEMorial as described by Gregory Ulmer in *Electronic Monuments*. The websites should be written in a descriptive, analytical, reflective, and persuasive manner. Students will build a Wix website which they will workshop the final week of class. Students may split the word count among three modalities in this project (video, audio, and text).

**Class Participation**

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Class participation includes contributing to class discussions; coming to class prepared and on time, participating in class activities; providing adequate drafts for group work; participating once per week on Twitter, and paying close attention to lectures and class activities. In general, students are expected to contribute constructively to each class session. Because this course relies heavily on workshops, students should bring computers and writing tools to each class meeting. This grade includes minor assignments such as weekly writing as well as other homework and classwork assignments.

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**Course Policies**

You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.

**Attendance**

In this course, we will follow a strict attendance policy. **If students miss more than three class periods during the term, they will receive a lowered grade. If students miss more than six periods, they will fail the entire course.** Numerous absences will make it impossible for students to keep up with the course's pace.

The university exempts from this policy **only** those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays, or documented extenuating medical circumstances. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with me prior to the date that will be missed.

Absences, even for extraordinary reasons will result in missing in-class work that cannot be made up; therefore, students can expect absences to have a negative impact on grades. Please note that if students are absent, it is their responsibility to keep up with due dates. If absent due to a scheduled event, students are still responsible for turning major assignments in on time. Tardiness is a major disruption to class. **Please note that being more than five minutes late to class twice is equivalent to one absence.**

As our course focuses on environmental topics, we will be taking two field trips on Saturdays during the semester. Our first field trip is to Devil's Millhopper Geological State Park (about fifteen minutes from campus) on Saturday, Oct. 14th. Our second field trip is to Payne's Prairie State Park (about twenty minutes from campus) on Saturday, Oct. 28th. These trips will replace our Monday screening times. We will be writing brief field reports based on our experience for that week's response.

### **Format & Submission**

All assignments will be submitted electronically via Canvas, either as a link or file upload. Any documents should be submitted in .pdf format.

### **Late Papers/Assignments**

All work is due on the day indicated on the course calendar below. Late class participation assignments are not acceptable in this course and will receive a grade of Zero. Major assignments which are submitted late will lose 10 points with an additional five points deducted for every 24 hours late.

### **Paper Maintenance Responsibilities**

Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.

### **Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

### **Accommodations**

Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.

### **Grades and Appeals**

For information on UF Grading policies, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

### **Course Evaluations**

Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

### **Wellness**

Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

### Classroom Behavior/Netiquette

Please keep in mind that this course includes diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Online or in the classroom, students should always conduct themselves with courtesy, respect, and professionalism. Disrespectful classroom behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from class.

### Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty: <http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>

### Environmental Sustainability

Whenever possible, I will use paper-sparing electronic media to distribute course materials. Consider purchasing electronic editions of assigned texts when they are available, or used copies of print texts. If you do not elect to keep your print books, consider sharing them with others after the semester ends. (For example, you could donate them to the Alachua County [Friends of the Library](#) annual book sale.)

### Course Calendar

Below is the projected calendar for our course. I will notify students of any changes well in advance via email. Students should check email and Canvas regularly for updates. Assignments and readings in the right-hand column are due **before** coming to class, those in the middle column are assignments and topics covered in class.

### Unit 1—Mapping

Date	Daily Topic & Classwork	Homework (Due Before Class)
<b>Week 1</b>		
M Aug 21	-Course overview and introductions.	
M (Wksp)	-Set up Wix blogs/websites. -Blog Post 1 Assigned: “Environmental Topic” -Screen/Discuss: Sean Morev’s MEMorial map: <a href="#">“The Roadkill Tollbooth.”</a>	
W Aug 23	-Introduce Unit 1. -Discuss Gulf Hypoxia. -Activity: Responding to Experts.	Read: Dan Charles, “Putting Farmland on a Fertilizer Diet.”
F Aug 25	-Researching Environmental Issues, Problems, Topics, and Events.	-Read: Elizabeth Kolbert, “The Darkening Sea” <b>and</b> James Purdy, “Wikipedia Is Good for You!?”

Week 2		
M Aug 28	-Writing Field Notes and Reports. -Special Guest: Paul Ramey, speaking about UF's Bat House project.	-Read/Listen to: NPR. " <a href="#">Environmentalists Say 'Threatened' Status For Bats Not Enough.</a> "
M (Wksp)	-Field Trip: Meet at UF Bat Houses (On Campus) at 7:30pm.	
W Aug 30	-Discuss Field Trip and Field Notes. -Work on Blog Post 1.	-Read: <i>Visualizing Advocacy</i> p. 5-43.
F Sept 1	-Class Discussion. -Key Terms in Rhetorical Analysis.	-Read: <i>White Noise</i> (Part 1).

Week3		
M Sept 4	-Holiday (No Class).	
W Sept 6	-In-Class Workshop: Working with Google Maps. -Discuss the <a href="#">Cabot Konners Remediated Superfund Site Man.</a>	-Read: Gary Snyder, "Coming into the Watershed." <b>-Due: Blog Post 1.</b>
F Sept 8	-Class Discussion. -Rhetorical Analysis Activity.	-Read: <i>White Noise</i> (Part 2) <b>and</b> Mike Bunn, "How to Read Like a Writer."

Week 4		
M Sept 11	-Research Activity.	-Read: Randall McClure, "Googlepedia: Turning Information Behaviors into Research Skills."
M (Wksp)	-Topic selection workshop. -Screen/Discuss: <i>Beasts of the Southern Wild</i> , Dir. Benh Zeitlin.	
W Sept 13	-Class Discussion.	-Read: <i>White Noise</i> (Part 3).
F Sept 15	-Due: Comment on Peer Posts. -Blog Post Revision Workshop.	-Read: Beth Hewett, "From Topic to Presentation: Making Choices to Develop Your Writing."

## Unit 2—Image Tracking

Week 5		
M Sept 18	-Introduce Unit 2 -What is an Econ?	Read: Sean Morey, "Florida Econography and the Ugly Cuteness of Econs."
M (Wksp)	Screen: <i>Tapped</i> , Dir. Stephanie Soechtig and Jason Lindsey.	
W Sept 20	-What is Iconographie Tracking? -Blog Post 2 Assigned: "Econ Project Description and Analysis."	Read: Laurie Gries, "Iconographie Tracking: A Digital Research Method for Visual Rhetoric and Circulation Studies."
F Sept 22	-Workshop Tracking Project Plans.	-Bring Econ Project Ideas to Class.

Week 6		
M Sept 25	-Discuss Reading. -Special Guest: Jacob Greene	-Read: Jacob Greene "Premediating Ecological Crisis: A Visual Rhetoric of Florida Sinkholes."
M (Wksp)	-Workshop: Getting Started with Zotero Gries' Image Tracking Method.	
W Sept 27	-Discuss Sarah Lozanova "Starbucks Coffee: Green or Greenwashed?" -Activity: Analyzing Visual Rhetoric in Green washing Ads.	-Laura Bolin Carroll, "Backpacks vs. Briefcases: Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis."
F Sept 29	-Discuss Reading. <b>-Due: Blog Post 2.</b>	-Read: <i>Visualizing Advocacy</i> p. 45-72.

Week 7		
M Oct 2	-Read: "Linda Rodriguez McRobbie, "Should we stop keeping pets?" -Discuss Animal Captivity and Econs.	-Read John Berger, "Why Look at Animals?"
M (Wksp)	-Screen: <i>Blackfish</i> , Dir. Gabriela Cowperthwaite.	
W Oct 4	-Read: "The Last Wolf in Edmonson Co." -Watch: the last known Thylacine (photographed at Beaumaris Zoo in 1933). -Discuss: Econs and Extinction.	-Read: Barry Yeoman, "Why the Passenger Pigeon Went Extinct."

F Oct 6	-Holiday (No Class).	
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Week 8		
M Oct 9	-Discuss Reading.	-Read: Aldo Leopold, "Thinking Like a Mountain."
W Oct 11	-Writing Workshop.	-Read: <i>Visualizing Advocacy</i> p. 73-94.
F Oct 13	-Image Tracking Peer Review.	-Bring Draft to Class. -Read (Optional): Gregory Ulmer, "Metaphoric Rocks."
S Oct 14	-Field Trip to Devil's Millhopper.	

### Unit 3—Augmented Reality

Week 9		
M Oct 16	-Introduce Unit 3. -Read/Watch: " <a href="#">Augmented Reality: BP logo hack.</a> "	-Read: Richard Manning, "The Oil We Eat."
M (Wksp)	-Screen: <i>GasLand</i> , Dir. Josh Fox	
W Oct 18	-Discuss reading and AR as writing.	-Read: Madison Jones and Jacob Greene, " <a href="#">Augmented Vélorationaries.</a> "
F Oct 20	-Tutorial: Working with Aurasma. -Blog Post 3 Assigned: "Writing Place."	<b>-Due: Tracking Assignment.</b>

Week 10		
M Oct 23	-Activity: Brainstorming Placing Environments Proj ects.	-Read/Watch: Nichole Starosielski, " <a href="#">Surfacing, in.</a> "
M (Wksp)	-Screen: <i>Food Inc</i> , Dir. Robert Kinner.	
W Oct 25	-Watch: "Rivers, Dams, and Drive-By Truckers" by Jeff Opperman.	-Jeff Opperman, "Getting to Know Your Bacon: Hogs, Farms, and Clean Water."

	-Activity: Telling the Story of Climate Change.	
F Oct 27	-Class activity: Comparing Berry and Opperman.	-Read: Wendell Berry, “Nature as Measure” <b>and</b> Rebecca Jones, “Finding the Good Argument OR Why Bother With Logic?”
S Oct 28	-Field Trip to Paynes Prairie	

**Week 11**

M Oct 30	-Read/Discuss: Kristen Amett, “The Problem with Writing About Florida.” -Activity: The Poetics and Politics of Place.	-Read: Wendy Adams King, “Through the Looking Glass of Silver Springs: Tourism and the Politics of Vision”
w Nov 1	-Discuss John Moran’s <i>Springs Eternai Project</i> . -Place Writing Discussion.	-Read: <i>Visualizing Advocacy</i> p. 95-118 <b>and</b> Craig Pittman, “Florida’s Vanishing Springs.”
F Nov 3	<b>-Blog Post 3 Due.</b> -Video Editing Tutorial.	

**Week 12**

M Nov 6	-Blog Post 4 Assigned: Field Notes. -Read/Watch: Sarah Emerson, “ <a href="#">HoneyBee Extinction Will Change Life As We Know if</a> ”	-Read: <i>Visualizing Advocacy</i> p. 119-135.
M (Wksp)	Screen: <i>More Than Honey</i> , Dir. Markus Imhoof.	
W Nov 8	-Placing Environments Peer Review.	-Bring Draft to Class.
F Nov 10	-Holiday (No Class)	

**Unit 4—MEMorial**

**Week 13**

M Nov 13	-Introduce Unit 4. -What is a MEMorial?	<b>-Due: Placing Environments.</b> -Listen: <a href="#">S-Town</a> “Episode 1”.
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M (Wksp)	-Listen: <a href="#">S-Town</a> Episodes 2 and 3.	
W Nov 15	-Activity: Telling YOUR Story of Climate Change.	-Read Roman Krznaric, “Empathy and Climate Change” <b>and</b> Catherine Ramsdell, “Storytelling, Narration, and The Who I Am Story.”
F Nov 17	-Research/Writing Activity. <b>-Blog Post 4 Due.</b>	- Read: Kyle Stedman, “Annoying Ways Students Use Sources.”

<b>Week 14</b>		
M Nov 20	-Class Activity: Argument Analysis. -Blog Post 5 Assigned: “Course Reflection.”	-Read: Garrett Hardin, “Tragedy of the Commons.”
W-F	-Thanksgiving Holiday (No Class Nov 22-24).	

<b>Week 15</b>		
M Nov 27	-Writing Workshop. -Form Usability Test Groups and Plan.	-Read: Gregory Ulmer, “Electronic Monuments.”
M (Wksp)	-Watch: <i>Racing Extinction</i> , Dir. Louie Psihoyos.	
W Nov 29	-Writing Beyond Gloom and Doom	-Rachel Carson, “The Obligation to Endure.”
F Dec 1	-Individual Writing Day.	<b>-Blog Post 5 Due.</b>

<b>Week 16</b>		
M Dec 4	-Conduct Usability Tests and Peer Review of Websites.	
W Dec 6	-Class Reflection. -Course Eval.	<b>-Due: Usability Report</b>

<b>Finals Week</b>		
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**-Due: Visualizing Environments Website by Wednesday (12/13) at 2:30pm on Canvas.**

<b>Grading Scale</b>							
A	93-100	B	83-86.9	C	73-76.9	D	63-66.9
A-	90-92.9	B-	80-82.9	C-	70-72.9	D-	60-62.9
B+	87-89.9	c+	77-79.9	D+	67-69.9	E	0-59.9