

Scott Sundvall  
Office: 4412 Turlington  
Contact: [sundv004@ufl.edu](mailto:sundv004@ufl.edu)  
Office Hours: W 6-8 and by appointment

## ENG 1131 – WRITING THROUGH NEW MEDIA: SURVEILLANCE

“Surveillance is a key dimension of the modern world.”

—David Lyon



### Course Description

As detailed in the English department course guidelines, “The goal of the course is to introduce students to the transition underway between literacy and post-literacy (electracy) in contemporary culture. One difference from ENC 1102 besides the object of study is the method of study: writing **through** media. Students not only analyze and interpret media works but also use ‘creative’ forms and practices to explore the production of meaning. ENG 1131 with its overview of pop media is distinguished from ENC 1145 special topics and ENG 2300 film analysis.”

To approach the above general goals of ENG 1131, we will focus on the question of “surveillance.” Whether desired or resisted (or both), surveillance (broadly conceived) has been around since the formation of “subjects” (and “subjectivities”). The rapid

advancement of digital technologies, however, has renewed a litany of questions concerning surveillance as a concept and as a practice. While the colloquial understanding of surveillance brings to mind the State watching over its subjects, we will consider how ubiquitous technologies have expanded vision to such a degree that the practice of surveillance becomes something everyday and commonplace: watching and being watched on social media platforms (e.g, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram); reality television and films (*COPS*, *Catfish*, *The Real World*, *The Bachelor*, etc.); corporations tracking your online movements and consumer habits (data-mining/dataveillance); the leaking of files (think of the nude celebrity scandal, or the recent SONY hack); or even counter-surveillance (sousveillance), such as Edward Snowden's establishment of Wikileaks. As such, we will begin by rethinking surveillance not merely as the invasive intrusion of the powers-that-be into our private lives, but rather as a generalized practice which we desire, produce, and engage with everyday.

Methodologically, this course will use the concept and practice of surveillance as a means by which to teach writing through (new) media. Readings will recursively examine the intersections of ubiquitous computing, emerging modes of digital surveillance (State surveillance, dataveillance, social media), and writing/rhetoric within and through the digital institution. Screening periods will be used to show filmic representations of surveillance, as well as to think through the camera itself as a surveillance technology.

The course will be divided up into six units:

1. Surveillance and Ubiquitous Computing (UbiComp)
2. Semiotics and The Production of Meaning
3. Power, Commodity, and Surveillance
4. Surveillance Aesthetics
5. The Speculative Future of Surveillance
6. Surveillance Re-View

### **Assignments**

*Facebook He(u)retics: Social Media Writing and Rhetoric – 20% of Final Grade*

This assignment will teach the rhetorical invention of everyday composition by using:

- a familiar digital space and the various media afforded by it (images, videos, memes, etc.);
- the ubiquity of vision and rhetorical response within such social media spaces (surveillance);
- and the interaction between rhetorical invention within social media platforms and the production of advertisements (dataveillance).

Students will create/invent a digital and scholarly persona/identity using the Facebook social media platform. These personas/identities will interact within a group space designed specifically for the course. Outside of the course group space, these personas/identities will: experiment with genre when composing status updates, notes, and comments; seek an audience for the reception of, and interaction with, their compositions; and track/log their interactions, as well as the advertisements that appear

on their persona's/identity's Facebook home. A detailed assignment sheet and rubric will be given. **Updates due (and assessments given) every three weeks.**

*Weekly Blogs – 15% of Final Grade*

Students will maintain a blog with weekly posts using both literate and electrated methods of composing (i.e., not just words, but also images, videos, links, memes, sound/music, etc.). **Due every Sunday by midnight.**

*Writespionage: Tracking and Surveillance as Rhetorical Practices and Compositions – 25% of Final Grade*

Early in the semester, students will target an area of concern (e.g., binge drinking, unsafe motor practices, gender discrimination, environmental damage, etc.). Throughout the semester, students will use their phones and/or cameras to “track” instances of this concern with photograph and/or video. This project will culminate with the development of a media project that presents an argument addressing their target of concern, along with a written explanation of the production choices they made. A detailed assignment sheet and rubric will be given. **Updates with written rationale due four times throughout the semester; final project due: April 30<sup>th</sup>.**

*Conductive Paper (1,000+ words) – 20% of Final Grade*

Students will write an argumentative paper that synthesizes the argument or rhetorical logic of various texts (articles, books, images, films, etc.). A detailed assignment sheet and rubric will be given. **Due: April 13<sup>th</sup>.**

*Weekly Quizzes – 10% of Final Grade*

Weekly quizzes will be given to test students' completion and comprehension of readings. **Given every Monday.**

*Attendance and Participation – 10% of Final Grade*

**Course Policies**

Statement of Composition Credit

This course can satisfy the General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.aspx>

Statement of Writing Requirement

This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for

writing. For more information, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/writing-and-math-requirement.aspx>

### Attendance and Late Work

Attendance is mandatory and expected. In the event of a necessary absence, please attempt to contact me ahead of time. Habitual absenteeism may negatively impact your grade. Additionally, do your best to arrive on time. Habitual tardiness may also negatively impact your grade. All late work must be approved by me in advance.

Incomplete assignments will not be accepted. For more information, please consult the university's policies at

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

### Behavior

Be polite and courteous—to me and to each other. This generally covers decorous conduct: engaging in civil debate; not talking over each other, or while someone else is talking; staying awake during class; and consuming food and/or beverages in a polite manner.

### Disability Policy

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### Online Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

### Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct->

[honor- code/](#)) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### Harassment

All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

### **Required Texts**

Crandall, Jordan. *Drive*. New York: Distributed Art Publishers, Inc., 2002.

De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

McLuhan, Marshall. *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*. Berkeley: Gingko Press, Inc., 1966.

Ulmer, Greg. *Teleteory*. New York: Atropos Press, 2004.

All additional readings will be provided.

### **Grading**

93-100 = A  
90-92 = A-  
87-89 = B+  
83-86 = B  
80-82 = B-  
77-79 = C+  
73-78 = C  
70-72 = C-  
67-69 = D+  
62-66 = D  
0-61 = F

Note: A detailed assignment sheet and grading rubric will accompany the introduction of every assignment. Please be sure to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding my grading procedure *in advance*.

### Final Grade Appeals

Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant.

### Daily Schedule

#### UNIT 1: SURVEILLANCE AND UBIQUITOUS COMPUTING (UBICOMP)

##### **Jan. 7**

Introductions

Syllabus

Course Overview

Homework: Read “Introduction” and “Surveillance” sections from *The New Media Reader* (Noah Wardrip-Fruin and Nick Montfort, eds.)

##### **Jan. 9**

Introduction to New Media, Rhetoric, and Composition

UbiComp: A Demonstration

Discussion

Homework: Read first 1/3 of McLuhan’s *The Medium is the Massage*

##### **Jan. 12**

Medium as Rhetoric: McLuhan’s Claim

Discussion

Homework: Read next 1/3 of McLuhan’s *The Medium is the Massage*

##### **Jan. 13**

Screening: David Cronenberg’s *Videodrome*

##### **Jan. 14**

Televisual Rhetoric: Cronenberg’s Take on McLuhan

Discussion

Homework: Finish McLuhan’s *The Medium is the Massage*

**Jan. 16**

Iterations of the Rhetorical Image: A Conclusion to McLuhan

Discussion

Homework: Read selections from Greg Ulmer's *Heuretics* and *Avatar Emergency*

**Jan. 20**

Screening: Henry Joost's and Ariel Schulman's *Catfish*

**UNIT 2: SEMIOTICS AND THE PRODUCTION OF MEANING**

**Jan. 21**

The Ulmer Program: Electracy, Heuretics, Popcycle (oh, my!)

Discussion

Homework: Read selections from Ferdinand de Saussure's "Course in General Linguistics"

**Jan. 23**

But What Does "It" Mean: Introduction to Semiotics

Discussion

Homework: Read selections from Roland Barthes' *Camera Lucida*. He(u)retic update due next class.

**Jan. 26**

(Ouch!): Image, Affect, and the Punctum

Discussion

He(u)retic Update Due

Homework: Read selections from Jacques Derrida's "Signature Event Context"

**Jan. 27**

Screening: Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blowup*

**Jan. 28**

The Right to See, The Right to Not Be Seen, and the Right to Not See: Ethics, Ubiquitous Computing and Surveillance, and the Function of Meaning

Discussion

Homework: Read Greg Ulmer's *Teletheory* pgs. Introduction-40.

**Jan. 30**

Ulmer Redux: Electrate Writing, New Media, and Experimentation

Discussion

Homework: Read Ulmer's *Teletheory* pgs. 40-80. Writespionage update due next class.

**UNIT 3: POWER, COMMODITY, AND SURVEILLANCE**

**Feb. 2**

From Out There (Watching) to In Here (Watched): Conduction and Mystory

Discussion

Writespionage Update Due

Homework: Read Ulmer's *Teletheory* pgs. 80-120.

**Feb. 3**

Screening: Peter Weir's *The Truman Show*

**Feb. 4**

Everyone's a Star: Youtube, Facebook, Reality Television, and Electracy

Discussion

Homework: Read Ulmer's *Teletheory* pgs. 120-160.

**Feb. 6**

Reading Film: An Electrate Approach



Discussion

Homework: Read Ulmer's *Teleteory* pgs. 160-200.

**Feb. 9**

Exercise: Making a Mystory

Review

Homework: Read Ulmer's *Teleteory* pgs. 200-240.

**Feb. 10**

Screening: Federico Fellini's *8 ½*

**Feb. 11**

Exercise Continued: Making a Mystory

Review: Mystory and the Story of Surveillance

Homework: Read selections from Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*

**Feb. 13**

Everyone is Watching Everyone: The New Panopticon (or, Death of the Panopticon)

Discussion

Homework: Read Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* pgs. Introduction-42. He(u)retic update due next class.

**Feb. 16**

"Scheming": Space, Surveillance, and Rhetorical Tactics

Discussion

He(u)retic Update Due

Homework: Read De Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* pgs. 43-76.

**Feb. 17**

Screening: Tony Scott's *Enemy of the State*

**Feb. 18**

Writing ← → Aesthetics ← → Representation and/vs. Documentation, Law, Surveillance

Discussion

Homework: Read De Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* pgs. 77-130

**Feb. 20**

The (Digital) City: Vision, Power, Surveillance

Discussion

Homework: Read De Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life* pgs. 130-164.  
Writespionage update due next class.

**Feb. 23**

What We Hear, Read, Write: De Certeau Review

Discussion

Homework: Finish De Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life*

**Feb. 24**

Screening: Bill Condon's *The Fifth Estate*

**UNIT 4: SURVEILLANCE AESTHETICS**

**Feb. 25**

Rhetorical Strategies: Counter-Surveillance and Sousveillance

Discussion

Homework: Read selections from *Throughout: Art and Culture Emerging with Ubiquitous Computing* (Ulrik Ekman, ed.)

**Feb. 27**

How Smart is Your Smartphone? UbiComp, Rhetoric, and Surveillance

Discussion

Homework: Read Jordan Crandall's *Drive* pgs. 1-108

**Mar. 9**

The Question of Subjectivity: Rhetoric and the “Body-Machine-Image” Complex

Discussion

Homework: Read Crandall’s *Drive* pgs. 108-151.

**Mar. 10**

Screening: George Lukas’ *THX 1138*

**Mar. 11**

Review: Surveillance, Rhetoric, Aesthetics

Discussion

Homework: Read Crandall’s *Drive* pgs. 152-191

**Mar. 13**

Conditions of Access: Emergent Media, Art, and Rhetoric

Discussion

Homework: Read Crandall’s *Drive* pgs. 191-216. He(u)retic update due next week.

**Mar. 16**

What We Talk About When We Talk About “Ourselves”: Rethinking Privacy via New Media Art

Discussion

He(u)retic Update Due

Homework: Finish Crandall’s *Drive*

**Mar. 17**

Screening: Richard Linklater’s *A Scanner Darkly*

**Mar. 18**

Blast!: A Conclusion to Crandall

Discussion

Homework: Read selections from Mark Hansen’s *New Philosophy for New Media*

## UNIT 5: THE SPECULATIVE FUTURE OF SURVEILLANCE

### **Mar. 20**

“Post-Cinema”: From Viewing the Screen to Screening Ourselves

Discussion

Homework: Read selections from Jussi Parikka’s *Insect Media*. Writespionage update due next class.

### **Mar. 23**

Invasive Invasions: Ubicomp, Rhetoric, and Surveillance Revisited

Discussion

Writespionage Update Due

Homework: Read selections from Gilles Deleuze’s and Felix Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus*

### **Mar. 24**

Screening: Brian De Palma’s *Blow Out*

### **Mar. 25**

Becoming-Machinic: D&G, Electracy, and Power

Discussion

Homework: Review Deleuze and Guattari

### **Mar. 27**

Review: Deleuze and Guattari

Discussion

Homework: Read the first half of Donna Haraway’s “A Manifesto for Cyborgs”

### **Mar. 30**

Cyborganic Production: The Future that Already Was

Discussion

Homework: Finish Donna Haraway’s “A Manifesto for Cyborgs”

**Mar. 31**

Screening: Richard Clabaugh's *Eyeborgs*

**UNIT 6: SURVEILLANCE RE-VIEW**

**Apr. 1**

Cyborg Ontologies: Being, Surveillance, Rhetoric

Discussion

Homework: Work on Conductive Paper and Final Project

**Apr. 3**

Course Review

Discussion

Homework: Work on Conductive Paper and Final Project. He(u)retic update due next class.

**Apr. 6**

Workshops: Conductive Paper and Final Project

Discussion

He(u)retic Update Due

Homework: Read hand-out on rhetorical development

**Apr. 7**

Screening: Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*

**Apr. 8**

Review Rhetorical Development

Discussion

Homework: Work on peer review assignment

**Apr. 10**

Speculative Rhetorics, Speculative Future: Surveillance Fantasies

Discussion

Homework: Finish peer review assignment. Conductive Paper due next class.

**Apr. 13**

Review Peer Review Assignment

Course Review

Discussion

Conductive Paper Due

Homework: Read selections from William Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*

**Apr. 14**

Screening: David Cronenberg's *Naked Lunch*

**Apr. 15**

(Image) Addiction: Diagnosing Our Desire (To See Everything, Always)

Discussion

Homework: Read selections from Scott Bukatman's *Terminal Identity*

**Apr. 17**

*Moon, Never Let Me Go*, Bukatman: The Rhetoric of What Could Be

Discussion

Homework: Watch clips of surveillance tape (to be provided). Final Writespionage update due next class.

**Apr. 20**

Course Review

Discussion

Writespionage Update Due

Homework: Work on final project. Final He(u)retic update due next week.

**Apr. 21**

Screening: Andrew Niccol's *Gattaca*

**Apr. 22**

Wrap-Up

Discussion

He(u)retic Update Due