English 1102: Composition II
Monsters of Technology
Fall 2008, Section H1, T/R 3:05-4:25, Skiles 302
Film Screenings: Thursdays, 5pm-7pm, Skiles 368

Instructor: L. Andrew Cooper
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Course Description

The word "technology" summons many images: cell phones, computers, and the other gadgets that enable our daily existences, but also nuclear bombs, mutants, and other monstrosities that threaten to blast us from the planet. This course looks at the second category, the dark side of humanity's inventiveness.

We will spin the title "Monsters of Technology" in two directions. The first phase of this course looks at visions of the monsters our sciences might create by defying death (such as James Whale's *Frankenstein*) splitting the atom (such as Gordon Douglas's *Them!*), or rejecting the confines of the human body (such as David Cronenberg's *The Fly*). The second phase looks more closely at the technologies that deliver monstrous visions, focusing on fictions in print (such as H.P. Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness* and Stephen King's *Carrie*) and film (such as John Carpenter's Lovecraft-inspired *In the Mouth of Madness* and Brian De Palma's adaptation of *Carrie*) that stretch the limits of horrific representation.

Course participants determine the subjects for the course's final phase: through well-researched multimedia presentations, students introduce one another to monsters they discover on their own.

Textbooks

All sections of English 1102 rely on Georgia Tech's custom edition of *Everything's an Argumet, 4e,* by Andrea Lunsford and John Ruszkiewicz. This book is available at the Georgia Tech Barnes and Noble and The Engineer's Bookstore. Buying this book gives you access to a website called CompClass that includes an electronic handbook and software we will use during class activities. *Everything's an Argument* might look pretty small for its large price tag, but the digital components it makes accessible justify the price (the e-book, for example, would be much, much more expensive if you had to buy a print version). **The custom textbook and website access are mandatory.**

In addition to the standard textbook package, this section of 1102 will read two novels, also available at the Georgia Tech Barnes and Noble and The Engineer's Bookstore :
- *At the Mountains of Madness: The Definitive Edition*, by H.P. Lovecraft (Modern Library Classics)
- *Carrie*, by Stephen King (Pocket, Mass Market Paperback)

Finally, we will watch movies throughout the semester. All movies are widely available to rent or buy. Unless you want to expand your personal movie collection, I see no reason for you to buy all the films, but I recommend securing copies of films you will use for major assignments.

Objectives and Outcomes

All English 1102 courses at Georgia Tech have objectives (cognitive processes instructors want students to demonstrate) and outcomes (work students do to demonstrate success in those objectives) specified by the University System of Georgia's Board of Regents and by Georgia Tech's Writing and Communication Program (Communication@Tech). Table 1 summarizes those objectives and outcomes.

Table 1. Objectives and Outcomes Specified by the Board of Regents and by Communication@Tech

	Board of Regents University System of Georgia[*]		Georgia Tech Writing and Communication Program	
Rhetoric Rhetoric focuses on available means of persuasion, considering the synergy of factors such as context, audience, purpose, role, argument, organization, design, visuals, and conventions of language.	**Objective** "Understand rhetorical contexts for writing by establishing the writer's role, the audience, and the purpose of the project."	**Outcome** "Use conventions of writing mechanics, usage, and style to communicate effectively for the given audience, purpose, and format."	**Objectives** Understand registers and variations within discourses. Apply strategies for addressing academic and professional audiences.	**Outcome** Create artifacts that demonstrate the synergy of rhetorical elements.
Process Processes for communication —for example, creating, planning, drafting, designing, rehearsing, revising, presenting, publishing—are recursive, not linear. Learning productive processes is as important as creating products.	**Objective** "Approach writing as a way to think and communicate ideas to others."	**Outcomes** "Use recursive processes that include collecting information, focusing, ordering, drafting, revising, and editing." "Demonstrate the techniques and skills of research, integration of source material, and documentation."	**Objective** Explore individual and collaborative processes in multicultural and international contexts.	**Outcome** Construct, select, and deploy information based on interpretation and critique of the accuracy, bias, credibility, authority, and appropriateness of sources.
Modes and Media Activities and assignments should use a variety of modes and media— written, oral, visual, electronic, and nonverbal—singly and in combination. The context and culture of multimodality and multimedia are critical.	**Objective** "Adjust writing to a variety of contexts, including electronic environments."	**Outcome** "Read and respond to various texts for purposes of interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and judgment."	**Objective** Distinguish and evaluate multimodal communication — WOVEN (**W**ritten, **O**ral, **V**isual, **E**lectronic, and **N**onverbal).	**Outcome** Create WOVEN artifacts that demonstrate interpretation, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and judgment.

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[*]Quoted text derives from the "Committee on English Recommendation," *Board of Regents for the University System of Georgia*, http://www.usg.edu/academics/comm/english/level_11012.phtml (accessed July 31, 2008).

In addition to the standard objectives and outcomes, this section of English 1102 has objectives and outcomes related to its specific thematic focus. Table 2 summarizes those objectives and outcomes.

Table 2. Objectives and Outcomes Specified by English 1102H1: Monsters of Technology

Course Themes	Thematic Objectives and Outcomes	
Monsters in fiction Horror stories in fiction and film represent cultures' fears about technologies that test the limits of the human.	**Objective** Interpret and evaluate the ways horror stories' monsters represent both cultures and their fears.	**Outcome** Complete poster, essay, film review, and other assignments, providing rigorous analyses of monsters and their texts.
Monsters from fiction Media technologies such as print and film create monsters that reflect and maybe create cultures' fears.	**Objective** Understand how media technologies shape both the monsters they represent and the cultures that receive them.	**Outcome** Complete poster, essay, film review, and other assignments that provide rigorous analyses of monsters and their texts.
Fictions and culture Fictions in many media offer us countless monsters that can illuminate how cultures view science and technology.	**Objective** Consider how a monster not discussed in class reflects on issues of interest to the course and its participants.	**Outcome** Create a WOVEN research project that informs the class about a monster selected by a collaborative group.

Assignments

Major Assignments (750 points total)
The outcomes in Table 2 refer to the following major assignments, which we will discuss in more detail during class:

1. **Poster (individual effort, 200 points).** Design a poster no larger than 24" by 36" (height by width or width by height) that examines and interprets how a specific monster reflects on a specific culture. You can create a monster of your own and show how its traits are significant in ways comparable to monsters discussed in class, or you can provide a detailed "anatomy" of a monster from a class assignment, providing insights that go beyond class discussion.

2. **Essay (individual effort, 100 points).** Write an essay of 1750-2000 words (approximately 7-8 pages) that explores how two texts discussed in class reflect on a culture's anxieties about technology. Defend a thesis about either how the texts use similar strategies to reflect on a specific aspect of a culture or about how the texts reflect on the same aspect of a culture in significantly different ways. Address both *what* the texts do and *why* what they do is important.

3. **Film Review (individual effort, 50 points).** Post a 500-750 word (2-3 page) review in T-Square's Forums that evaluates a text based on criteria you establish. Discuss the review in class.

4. **Research Project (individual and group efforts, 400 points total).** Select a fictional monster or closely-related group of fictional monsters not discussed in class. Research your monster(s) and inform the class about its/their history and significance through a multimedia artifact and presentation. Note that a "group effort" does not guarantee the same grade for all participants.

   a. *Proposal (individual and group effort, 50 points).* Write and design a one-page proposal that names the monster your group will research and provides the group's rationale for its selection. Explain the role(s) you will play in completing the project. The group rationale may be written collaboratively, but you must write the bulk of the proposal—the explanation of your role(s)—on your own.

b. *Proposal Presentation (group effort, 25 points).* Using a concise handout and a 5-7 minute oral presentation, convince the class and the instructor that the project you propose is viable and worthwhile. Defend your proposal in class discussion.

c. *Annotated Bibliography (individual effort, 50 points).* Using MLA format, list at least four sources you have examined as you have researched your monster(s) and provide concise summaries of what each source will contribute to the project. [Note: after completing this assignment, your group will have at least 20 sources to draw on in its artifact and artifact presentation.]

d. *Artifact (group effort, 200 points).* Create either a website or video that informs the class about the history and significance of your monster(s).

e. *Artifact Presentation (group effort, 50 points).* Summarize and share highlights of your artifact with the class during a 20-minute multimedia presentation. The presentation may include a tour of your website or clips from your video, but the group should not spend the entire time reading from the site or screening the video. Instead, enlighten the class about your artifact and its creation, encouraging us to examine it closely later.

f. *Group Assessment (individual effort, 25 points).* Provide a 500-750 word (2-3 pages) assessment of your group, addressing collective and individuals' performances.

In-Class Writings (100 points total)

During class on four separate occasions, you will write brief argumentative essays in response to specific prompts. Peers and the instructor will assess the essays holistically, and the instructor will assign grades to the essays with progressive maximum values (10, then 15, then 25, then 50 points).

Participation (150 points total)

Participation in class discussions and activities is mandatory. Demonstrate your knowledge of the readings and films, and share your insights. Maintaining class decorum is part of participation: noisy cell phones, disrespectful behavior, and other intrusions lower productivity and, therefore, your grade. "Disrespectful behavior" includes harassment of any kind, directed either at peers or at the instructor. This course will foster discussions of sensitive issues such as gender, race, religion, and sexuality. All viewpoints are welcome, but as individuals express themselves, they should avoid abusive or insulting language. The participation grade also includes scores on any quizzes or assignments not detailed here.

Course Policies

Grading

Each assignment has a point value. Assignments add up to a total of 1000 points. Convert point totals into percentages, and the letter grade equivalents are:

A = 90-100; **B** = 80-89; **C** = 70-79; **D** = 60-69; **F** = 0-59

Failure to complete an assignment will result in 0 points.

Attendance

If you must miss class, email me ahead of time. You have three "freebie" days, classes you may miss without grade penalties. For other absences, you must have official documentation of an illness, injury, or legal obligation that keeps you from class. I will deduct 25 points from your grade for each non-freebie, undocumented absence. Three latenesses constitute an absence. After six absences, you may fail the

course. *Even "excused," documented absences could affect your participation grade if they occur too often.* Attendance at film screenings does not count in the same way as attendance during class meetings, but failure to attend screenings without my prior approval will hurt your participation grade.

Punctual Work

Unless I approve a deadline extension, which is unlikely, I will not accept major assignments after the deadline. You are responsible for all information covered during every class meeting.

Academic Conduct

You are responsible for knowing and abiding by GT's policy for academic integrity. Consult the Honor Code online at http://www.honor.gatech.edu. The following text appears on the website:
"Academic misconduct is any act that does or could improperly distort Student grades or other Student academic records. Such acts include but need not be limited to the following:
- Possessing, using or exchanging improperly acquired written or verbal information in the preparation of any essay, laboratory report, examination, or other assignment included in an academic course;
- Substitution for, or unauthorized collaboration with, a Student in the commission of academic requirements;
- Submission of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another person or person, without adequate credit notations indicating authorship (plagiarism);
- False claims of performance or work that has been submitted by the claimant;
- Alteration or insertion of any academic grade or rating so as to obtain unearned academic credit;
- Deliberate falsification of a written or verbal statement of fact to a member of the Faculty so as to obtain unearned academic credit;
- Forgery, alteration or misuse of any Institute document relating to the academic status of the Student.

While these acts constitute assured instances of academic misconduct, other acts of academic misconduct may be defined by the professor."
Work that violates the Honor Code will receive zero credit and may result in failure of the entire course. I will also report any serious misconduct to the Dean of Students. **To ensure compliance with the Honor Code, all written assignments must be submitted to TurnItIn.com. Written assignments not submitted to TurnItIn will not receive credit.**

Laptop Computer Use

This course requires you to bring your laptop computer to all class meetings. You may only use your laptop for class activities and note-taking. Using the laptop during class for other activities—such as email, web-surfing, or games—is rude and strictly prohibited. Inappropriate laptop use may result in grade penalties and/or expulsion from class.

Disability Notice

If you need accommodations for a disability, please contact me at the beginning of the semester so that we can discuss them. You should also contact Access Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students (ADAPTS) within the first two weeks of the semester so that they can help us to develop reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor call (404) 894-2564 (voice) / (404) 894-1664 (voice/TDD) or visit 220 Student Services Building. For more information visit http://www.adapts.gatech.edu.

The Fine Print

I reserve the right to alter policies and assignments. I exercise this right rarely, but I often provide more detailed information during class. This syllabus is your guide. Keep it. Know it. Love it.

Schedule of Meetings and Assignments

Under "Deadline," you are only responsible for *one* Review. Under "Readings/Viewings,"

- "EAA" stands for *Everything's an Argument*; "EAA 250-281" means read pp. 250-281
- "EB" stands for the e-book; "EB 1.4-1.5, 3.1-3.3" means read sections 1.4, 1.5, 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3
- Other titles or names refer either to films or to articles on electronic reserve via the library

Date	Topics/Activities	Readings/Viewings	Deadlines
8/19	Course introduction; **in-class writing**		
8/21	Key concept review	EAA Preface, pp. GT1-30	
8/26	Research project (teams assigned)	EB 1.4-1.5, 3.1-3.3	Topics due (end of class)
8/28	*Frankenstein*; film review sign-up	*Frankenstein*; EAA 250-281	
9/2	*Bride*; **in-class writing**	*Bride*; EB 2.11	
9/4	Review discussion 1; proposal	EAA 321-367	Review 1
9/9	*Them!*; document design	*Them!*; EB 4.1.1-4.1.14	
9/11	Review discussion 2; oral presentations	EB 3.4-3.8	Review 2
9/16	**Proposal presentations**		Proposal due; presentation
9/18	*The Fly*; poster assignment	*The Fly*; EB 4.1.15-4.2.16	
9/23	*Nightmare on Elm Street*; using visuals	*Nightmare*; Edmundson	
9/25	Review discussion 3; using sources	EB 1.7-1.9, 1.11	Review 3
9/30	*Ringu*; culture and multimodality	*Ringu*; EAA 21; McRoy	
10/2	Review discussion 4; posters	[websites about posters TBA]	Review 4
10/7	**Workshop**		Poster draft due
10/9	**Poster presentations**		Poster due
10/14	FALL RECESS—NO CLASS		
10/16	*At the Mountains*; bibliography	First half of *Mountains*	
10/21	*At the Mountains*; **in-class writing**	Second half of *Mountains*	
10/23	Review discussion 5; essay; sources	Review EB as needed	Review 5
10/28	*The Thing*; "Supernatural Horror"	*The Thing*; "Supernatural"	
10/30	*In the Mouth of Madness*	*In the Mouth of Madness*	Bibliography due
11/4	Review Discussion 6		Review 6
11/6	**Workshop**		Essay draft due
11/11	King's *Carrie*	First half of *Carrie*	Essay due
11/13	King's *Carrie*	Second half of *Carrie*	
11/18	De Palma's *Carrie*; adaptation	*Carrie*; Stam	
11/20	Review Discussion 7		Review 7
11/25	**In-class writing**; **workshop**		Artifact draft due
11/27	THANKSGIVING—NO CLASS		
12/2	**Artifact Presentations**		Artifact due; presentation
12/4	**Artifact Presentations**		Presentation

Film Screenings

All screenings begin at 5pm in Skiles 368.

Date	Film
8/21	James Whale's *Frankenstein* (71 minutes) **NOTE**: This is the version from 1931
8/28	James Whale's *Bride of Frankenstein* (75 minutes)
9/4	Gordon Douglas's *Them!* (94 minutes)
9/11	David Cronenberg's *The Fly* (95 minutes) **NOTE**: This is the version from 1986
9/18	Wes Craven's *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (91 minutes)
9/23	Hideo Nakata's *Ringu* (96 minutes) **NOTE**: This is the Japanese version from 1998
10/16	John Carpenter's *The Thing* (109 minutes) **NOTE**: This is the version from 1982
10/23	John Carpenter's *In the Mouth of Madness* (95 minutes)
11/14	Brian De Palma's *Carrie* (98 minutes) **NOTE**: This is the version from 1976

PLEASE READ, SIGN, AND RETURN THESE STATEMENTS TO DR. COOPER.

I affirm that I have read the entire syllabus and policy sheet for English 1102 H1 and understand the information and the responsibilities specified.

_____
print name
_____
signature
_____
date

DIRECTIONS: Read carefully and check all that apply.

I give my instructor, L. Andrew Cooper, permission to use copies of the work I do for this course, English 1102 H1:
☐ as examples in this and other courses
☐ as examples in presentations and in print and electronic publications

Please indicate how you want to be acknowledged:
☐ Please use my name both in the acknowledgements and with my actual document.
☐ Please use my name in the acknowledgements section but use an appropriate pseudonym with my actual document.
☐ Please use a pseudonym both in the acknowledgements and with my actual document.
☐ Please use my work, but do not acknowledge me in any way.

☐ I do not want my work used as examples in any situations.

_____
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