

**For my full teaching portfolio, including sample syllabi and student evaluations, please see:**

<https://publish.illinois.edu/johnrgallagher/>

My teaching centers around digital literacy, social media, and audience theory. My teaching approach is informed by three pillars supporting effective learning: (a) hands-on activities that clarify or augment course concepts, (b) development of metacognition to make overlooked or implicit processes explicit, and (c) translation of course concepts to audiences and applications outside the classroom. This approach appears to work effectively across the nine new course preparations I have taught as a faculty member at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign since 2014: I have been on the prestigious list of “Teachers Ranked as Excellent by Their Students” ten out of a possible twelve semesters taught. Six of these semesters, I was ranked with an “Outstanding” distinction.

Hands-on activities, such as active fieldwork, is a key feature of my pedagogy. In my spring 2018 graduate course, “Digital Rhetoric Methodologies,” we visited the National Center for Supercomputing Applications to better understand the physical, ecological impact of digital technologies. We tested physical computing methods via Arduinos, which are microcontroller computers for creating physical effects in the world. Additionally, we experimented with composing for augmented reality (via the Aurasma app, which is now called HP Reveal), visualizing data, and speculative interface design. In the undergraduate/graduate course, “Writing and Rhetoric in an Age of Algorithms,” I introduced students to an “unboxing algorithms” assignment in the fall of 2018, which tasked students with researching the characteristics of platform’s specific algorithm (or its effects, as specific computational equations are often proprietary). This assignment was directly inspired from my research participants’ experiences with testing how algorithms spread digital discourse.

My graduate course, “Digital Case Study Methods,” (Fall 2020) reflected this hands-on approach, wherein I taught students how to qualitatively code data, such as interview transcripts. In my graduate course “Digital Case Study Methods,” I had two students (Yvaine Neyhard and Rebecca Avgoustopoulos) who applied for and received IRB approval for studying online literacies in an era of COVID-19. I facilitated these students’ design of a qualitative study that included survey and interview protocols. We will work on this project in the spring and summer of 2021. Likewise, in my graduate course, “Audience Theory and Reception Studies,” (Spring 2019) I introduced students to extensive survey design methods and interviews methodologies. I asked students to conduct empirical fieldwork for the final assignment. Two student examples were particularly successful. Writing studies student Lesley Owens designed an original survey about bullet journals, a survey that can be used in her future research because, together, we applied and received IRB permission before the survey was implemented. Jamillah Gabriel, a student in information sciences, conducted a survey of UIUC students of color, inquiring about their experiences with support from the university. Both projects demonstrated excellent survey design, especially considering neither student had seriously implemented a survey prior to enrolling in the course. These examples also reflect the second pillar of my pedagogy, writing for external audiences.

Metacognition informs my pedagogical approach to digital literacy and social media management. Many social media processes are engrained in students’ implicit habits; my pedagogy seeks to document these habits to make them explicit. In my spring 2019 course, “Self-publishing and Digital Branding,” for example, I tasked students with developing an online brand and produce multimedia content across networked platforms. As students progressed in this 8-week assignment, they created personas to develop metacognition of their targeted audiences. (They reworked these personas as the course progressed and their metacognition increased.) I also asked students to write out *netiquettes*, or guidelines for online behavior. Netiquettes develop explicit awareness of rules for digital network: students learn to codify digital behavior on social media networks more effectively. Notably, I had three students in this class blog about feminism from different perspectives: women and motorcycles, body positivity, and women of color. They ended up collaborating and, at my urging, writing guest posts for each other. This

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collaboration helped expose them to different audience expectations, thereby make their own implicit considerations of audience explicit as they navigated these expectations.

Lastly, my teaching philosophy encouraging students to think about how course concepts are applied outside the classroom to external and professional audiences. For undergraduates, this philosophy asks students to write outwards at multiple professional audiences and emerging digital genres. This philosophy connects directly to my research because I document emerging audience expectations, digital genres, and professional responsibilities via interviews of research participants and characterizations of online templates. For instance, I learned about professional activity known as social media campaign concepts (SMCCs) from my interviews with digital writers. SMCCs are typically 3-5 online campaign ideas related to a client's social media brand. SMCCs use images, memes, short videos, or logos accompanied by client-based themes; campaigns last 2-3 months. Social media managers give oral pitches for SMCCs regularly (SMCCs are given on a recurring basis). SMCCs are evaluated by a group of chosen online analytics known at key performance indicators, or KPIs. I assign SMCCs in my upper-level undergraduate professional writing courses (e.g., BTW 490: "Web Development and Social Media Management"). As a deeply collaborative and professional assignment, SMCCs help students learn external expectations of digital media careers while also having the safety and creative protections of a classroom setting. SMCCs also provide students with the experience of composing in different mediums, thereby practicing concrete video, audio, and written editing skills for a digital media career. Upon graduating, several of my students have written me, noting they secured an internship or job because of their familiarity with SMCCs and KPIs. Alternatively, my philosophy asks graduate students to look inwards at the diversity of audiences, audience expectations, and genre conventions within writing studies. I ask graduate students to identify external or professional audiences with whom they aim to join in scholarly conversation. This activity includes performing audience and genre analysis for academic journals.

My mentoring of undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty reflect these three pillars. For instance, I have undergraduate researchers learn hands-on skills, such as web scraping and website development. For the academic year 2018-2019 and spring of 2020, I met bi-weekly with interns from the statistics department, found via the ATLAS internship program. In terms of graduate mentoring, I have begun asking graduate students to consider external audiences by finding target journals for publication. Metacognition and raising awareness of implicit writing practices is central to the mentorship work I have done as part of the strategic instructional innovations program (SIIP) since April 2017. In this capacity, I have mentored multiple faculty members on the teaching of writing, including Nicole Riemer, Amy Wagoner Johnson, Mariana E. Kersh, Mats A. Selen, John Popovics, Blake Johnson, and others. My mentorship approach for faculty is to help them *denaturalize* the writing process they have accumulated since their graduate school experiences. We work together to raise awareness of how, why, and when writing is done, both to enhance the writing done in their research groups as well as in classroom contexts.