



Gerald Lucas



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# Overview

## NMAC 3108 | Summer 2018 Online

**Writing for Digital Media teaches writing skills for a digital age. This project-oriented course will focus on collaborative editing.**

Digital media differs from that of print in several key ways, and because of these differences, to use digital media successfully, writers must develop specific skills for its mastery. A project-oriented course, NMAC 3108 introduces students to these skills, encourages them to develop an online professionalism, provides multiple opportunities to develop digital literacies, and teaches them to become fluent practitioners of new media. As this section of WritDM is taught fully online. Please be sure you are [aware of the implications](#) before attempting it.

## Introduction

Welcome to NMAC 3108, Writing for Digital Media. The document you're reading is your syllabus. Everything you need for this class is on this page or linked off of it. Bookmark it now and return here if you get lost or confused.

Since this is an online section, I have tried to make the lessons and procedures as simple to follow and to understand as possible. That said, there is bound to be a bit of confusion, at least at first. Do your best to work through it by carefully and completely reading this document (and links). I promise, there is an answer to your

question. If all else fails, you may contact me or ask a question on the troubleshooting forum (see below). Trust yourself to follow directions and find the answers. Be careful and deliberate.

Also, use this syllabus as a model for how you should approach digital writing as a college student and a professional.

**If you are uncomfortable making decisions, researching your own answers, and working on your own, you may be more comfortable in a traditional, face-to-face section.**

This course will probably be unlike any college course you have ever taken. It is designed to let you – the students – discover and create your own knowledge using the powerful digital devices and platforms we all have access to. I'm assuming, since you're taking this class online, that you are comfortable with working by yourself, are confident in your ability to take risks, do not need the constant reassurance of an authority figure, and have a basic Internet literacy. You will learn more about my approach shortly.

For a head start on how to approach all work in this course, see "How to Do Well in My Class," "[Research & Response](#)," and "Be an Expert."

Again, read this document through carefully before beginning. You might want to take notes as you go, jotting down questions you have. I bet they are answered by the time you're ready to begin the first lesson.

## Course Information

- Writing for Digital Media (WritDM)
- NMAC 3108
- 3 Hours
- Summer 2018
- Fully Online

**Note:** links below generally lead to three web sites: D2L, LitMUSE (Dr. Lucas' general course web site), and WikiEdu.org. Please do not let off-site links confuse you.

# Instructor Information

- Gerald Lucas
- [gerald.lucas@mga.edu](mailto:gerald.lucas@mga.edu)
- Office: CoAS-117 (Macon campus)
- Office Hours: Online by appointment. Please email to set up a video conference.
- Phone: 478-471-5761

Since this is a fully online course, office hours will be virtual. I try to make myself as available as much as possible during the first couple weeks of a semester, including evenings and weekends. If you need to talk with me, email a couple of times you are available and we'll arrange a video conference. Please do not expect a response after 5pm on weekdays or anytime during the weekend. I may be available, but I also need some down time. Thanks for your understanding.

## Goals

In this course, you will use lessons, texts, and daily practice to improve your writing for the screen while developing your online, professional persona. Specifically, students will develop:

- writing skills most appropriate for several platforms on digital media;
- a professional persona that targets a specific expert community; and
- a collaborative sense of composition.

You will read, write, and workshop (discuss each other's work online for the purpose of improvement). Though this class teaches you how to target a digital audience and the basics of how to publish writing for the web, it is not a technology class; it is primarily a writing class, though we will address various digital media throughout. That said, our primary concern is writing, not the tech we do it with.

**Again, if you are uncomfortable researching and figuring out some things on your own, this may not be the section of NMAC 3108 for you.**

## Student Learning Outcomes

By successfully completing the course, students will demonstrate:

- The ability to analyze and evaluate issues in new media and communication.
- Proficiency writing for the web.
- Proficiency collaborating on a writing project.

## Texts

The following texts will be necessary throughout the semester. The class' main required text, Carroll's *Writing for Digital Media*, may be purchased or rented as an ebook.

- Barr, Chris. *The Yahoo! Style Guide*. St. Martin's Griffin (2010). RECOMMENDED
- Carroll, Brian. *Writing and Editing for Digital Media*. Routledge (2017). REQUIRED
- Lynch, Patrick J. and Sarah Horton. *The Web Style Guide*.
- Various links (Web sites, videos, and PDFs) within lessons.

## Requirements

- **Wikipedia (50%)** – Assignments leading to writing a new article from scratch or making significant contributions to one or more Wikipedia articles. Read the directions »
- **Blog (30%)** – One polished blog post for the course blog (publication). [Read the directions](#) »
- **Daily Work (20%)** – Anything not part of the other two requirements, including exercises, discussions, and workshops.

## Links

- Wiki Edu Dashboard
- [Editing Wikipedia](#)

- Writing Top Ten – an overview of writing for digital environments
- Digital Citation – used for all digital writing in this class, when applicable
- Link Logic – a short primer on linking
- The Editor's Checklist – avoid common editing errors
- Writing in the Liberal Arts – common conventions when writing in college
- How to Do Well in My Class

## Lessons

Each lesson, beginning with "Introduction" under Table of Contents to the left, details what you're responsible for that week. These lessons are designed to keep you working consistently: try to set aside time daily where you can work on each lesson. This schedule guarantees a regular accrual of knowledge leading up to your major writing projects. Complete each activity in order, following links and reading carefully. Post logistical questions on the Help > Questions forum.

**Do not try to do everything at the last minute or all at one time. You will not succeed and your grade will suffer.**

## Policies

Students are held accountable for knowing and practicing each of the following course policies. Consider them like the law: the excuse "I didn't know" will carry no weight. As a Middle Georgia State University student, it is your responsibility to read, understand, and abide by the [MGA Student Code of Conduct](#). Students may withdraw from the course and earn a grade of "W" up to and including the midterm date: **July 3, 2018**. After midterm, students who withdraw will receive a grade of "WF." Students are encouraged to read the [withdrawal policy](#) before dropping/withdrawing from class.

## Attendance

Attendance is based on weekly participation. While students may work within lessons at their own pace, there will be assignments and milestones due each week. In other words: students are required to submit work regularly. I

recommend working a bit each day for consistency and to facilitate learning. Any registered student who does not submit work the first week will be counted as a no-show. Large gaps in participation (more than a week of not working) will be grounds for failure.

## Deadlines

Late work is unacceptable and will receive a zero. Technical problems do not excuse late work. Plan ahead and turn in your work on time; if you do your work in a timely fashion, computer problems will not be an issue. Please be aware of the D2L maintenance schedule and plan accordingly. Last-minute work submissions are ineligible for revision for a higher grade.

## Plagiarism

Willful or accidental plagiarism will result in automatic failure of this class (with a grade of an "F") and will be pursued to incite the utmost penalty for such dishonesty. Academic falsehood, in any form, will constitute class failure. [Read More »](#)

## Research

All writing in this course should be supported with both primary (readings I assign you) and secondary (sources you find yourself) texts. All suppositions must be supported with evidence, whether they appear on a forum post, a blog post, or a Wikipedia article. In other words: **research is an integral component of everything you do in this course**. Any ideas that are not supported might as well not be written. [Read More »](#)

For this course we use Digital Citation to cite all of our sources when blogging. [Read More »](#)

## Technology Requirements

All students should have a newish computer with dependable Internet access. A tablet for reading PDFs is convenient, but not a requirement of the

course. Students should check the course site daily for updates. Students are responsible for working out all of their technical difficulties.

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Last Updated: **30 May 2018.**



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