



ENGL794/894

Theories of Networks

Old Dominion University, Online & Norfolk Campus
Spring 2014

- Tuesdays, 7:10-9:10 pm (215 Gornito)
- Asynchronous (regularly due Sundays, 11:59 pm)

Course Website: <http://bit.ly/engl894s14>

Instructor Information

<p><i>Dr. Julia Romberger (Dr. R.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phone 757.683.4012• Email: jromberg@odu.edu• Skype & Google+: julia.romberger	<p><i>Office Hours & Location</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• BAL 4054 (or 2027)• T 2:30-4:00 R 3:00-4:00
<p><i>Dr. Rochelle (Shelley) Rodrigo</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phone: 623-455-6296/757-683-3997• E-mail: rrodrigo@odu.edu• Yahoo, AIM & Skype Instant Message Handle: puptoos74; Google Handle: shellei.rodriiio• Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/shelley.rodriiio	<p><i>Office Hours & Location:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find me in BAL2008 or BAL2027• By Appointment: http://www.doodle.com/rrodrigo

Course Overview

An increasing amount of scholarship in English studies focuses on the interactions between texts and other texts, people, technologies, etc. To account for these various types of relationships between different types of objects a number of theories of networks have emerged. Whether you want to study networks and/or add to the theoretical discussion, you first need to know the key theoretical discussions that help define:

- what and/or who is a network node?
- what types of agency are articulated for various types of nodes?
- how are different types of nodes situated within a network?
- what are the types and directions of relationships between nodes?
- what happens to content or meaning as it travels through a network?
- how do networks emerge, grow, and/or dissolve?

Some of the key theories we will be exploring include: Rhetorical Theories of Context, Physical IT Network/ing, Genre Theories, Hypertext Theory, various theories of Social/ized Networks, Ecology, and Neurology. Some key authors: Bitzer, Foucault, Spinuzzi, Latour, Castells, & Rickert.

Course Objectives

By the end of this class students will be able:

1. Describe and analyze different elements of “networks” as defined in different theories; including (but not limited to): node, connection, agency, circumscription, ...

2. Understand the value of visualizations for conceptualization processes.
3. To understand the major question “why theory?”
4. To articulate the value and limitations of the lenses particular theories provide.
5. To articulate a theoretical framework for describing a methodology.

Required Materials

There are quite a large number of PDF files that you can find in the shared Google docs folder.

The following books are also required:

- Foucault, Michel [*Archaeology of Knowledge*](#)
- Spinuzzi, Clay [*Tracing Genres through Organizations*](#)
- Latour, Bruno [*Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor Network Theory*](#)
- Guattari, Félix [*The Three Ecologies*](#)
- Castells, Manuel [*The Rise of the Network Society*](#)
- Rickert, Thomas [*Ambient Rhetoric*](#)

You will also be required to post your work in different digital environments:

- blog: you can use your own with specific tagging or you can start a new one (we are happy to set you up a blog on the DigitalODU server space)
- mindmap: we will be using Popplet (<http://popplet.com/>) for the course digital mindmapping environment. A free account gives you five mindmaps; if you are already using Popplet, it costs \$3/month or \$30/year for unlimited mindmaps (it costs \$5 for the iPad application that allows you to synch with the online account).

Project Management

To facilitate your work in this distance education setting you need to do the following:

- Use your ODU email account - This is used by Blackboard, and you must check it on a regular basis and use it to contact the instructor.
- Write Engl 784 or 894 in the email subject line - In your email, this must be in the subject line. This will help the instructor and fellow students keep track of emails related to the class.
- Put your initials and the date in file names - When you send a file to your instructors or collaborators, this essential information helps everyone keep track of who was working on which version.
- Bookmark the Course Site - Bookmark it and check it before each class. It will be updated regularly.
- Maintain backup copies - Maintain them religiously. “My computer ate my file” is no longer a valid excuse in this day of cheap flash drives and Google docs.

Attendance

Attendance is required at all scheduled meetings. More than two (2) absences can result in a failing grade for the course. Please note that no distinction is made in this course between excused or unexcused absences. If you must miss class because of a religious holiday or ODU

affiliated extra curricular activity, advance notification must be provided to the instructor to remove the absence from your record.

Excessive late arrival or failure to prepare for class meetings will result in each incident counting as an absence.

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted. If there are truly extenuating circumstances, contact us 24 hours prior to the due date. All portions of each project must be turned in or a failing grade will be given for the entire project.

Assignment Distribution

<u>Case Studies</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • week 5--only apply one theory to the case (15%) • week 10--apply two theories (25%) • week 13--apply two theories (25%) • week 16: MA reflection/PhD network synthesis to describe object of study (35%) 	50%
Reading, Thinking, & Reflecting Notes(drop 2 lowest grades)	20%
Cluster/Mindmap of Reading/Theories	10%
Attendance and Participation (including weekly asynchronous activities)	20%
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale

A+ (100 – 97)	B+ (89–87)	C+(79-77)	F (59 & lower)
A (96-93)	B (86-83)	C (76-73)	
A- (92-90)	B- (82-80)	C- (72-70)	

Please note no D is given for graduate classes.

Incompletes

We will only consider assigning an Incomplete grade if the student has already completed, and passed, 80% of the course. A work plan and schedule for completion must be negotiated prior to the "I" being assigned.

Ethics & Plagiarism

As per the University's Honor Code, you must do your own original work in this course and appropriately identify that portion of your work which is collaborative with others, or which is borrowed from others, or which is your own work from other contexts. Whenever you borrow graphics, quote passages, or use ideas from others, you are legally and/or ethically obliged to acknowledge that use, following appropriate conventions for documenting sources. In this class, the most serious form of academic dishonesty is to recycle another individual's major project under your own name.

If you have doubts about whether or not you are using your own or others' writing ethically and legally, ask the instructor. Follow this primary principle: *If in doubt, ask*. Be upfront and honest about what you are doing and about what you have contributed to an assignment.

Documented Disability

If you have a documented disability, make sure you register with Educational Accessibility. Once you do so, feel free to talk to us about any special accommodations that you may need to fulfill the requirements of this course.

- Web address: <http://studentaffairs.odu.edu/educationalaccessibility/>
- Phone number: 757.683.4655

Course Evaluation

At the end of the semester, you will have an opportunity to evaluate the instructor and the course. This is very important for helping the instructors and the department assess the course. Please take the time at the end of the semester to do these online evaluations.

Online Learning Environments

We will be using a variety of technological, mostly web-based, applications for academic use in ENGL794/894, Theories of Networks, Spring 2014. By default, many of these technologies are open to the public for the purpose of sharing your work with the larger Internet community.

To use the web-based application responsibly please observe all laws and ODU policies that are incorporated into the Codes of Conduct and Academic Integrity. Some specific aspects of law and policy that might be well to remember are prohibitions against copyright infringement, plagiarism, harassment or interferences with the underlying technical code of the software. Some resources to remind yourself about ODU's policies as well as a digital document about laws on copyright and fair use:

- [ODU's Monarch Creed and Honor Code](#)
- [MCCCD Copyright Guidelines](#)

As a student using the web-based applications, certain rights accrue to you. Any original work that you make tangible belongs to you as a matter of copyright law. You also have a right to the privacy of your educational records as a matter of federal law and may choose to set your privacy settings to private and only share with the instructor and your classmates. Your contributions to the various web-based applications constitute educational records. By contributing to the web-based applications, and not taking other options available to you in this course equivalent to this assignment that would not be posted publicly on the Internet, you

consent to the collaborative use of this material as well as to the disclosure of it in this course and potentially for the use of future courses.

Syllabus Contract Form

Student Agreement

The signature below, as well as attendance and participation in this class, signifies that the student has agreed to abide by and adhere to the policies and regulations specified above. It is understood that the instructor may adapt or change this syllabus and the assignments contained within it according to circumstances that may arise during the course of the class. It is the student's responsibility to drop the course if they do not wish to continue. If the student does not drop the course by the appropriate date the student will receive an F.

(Be sure to ask the instructor any questions concerning the syllabus before signing below.)

Student's Name, Printed

Student UIN

Student's Signature

Date