Emergent Digital Cultures familiarizes students with current critical approaches to understanding digital media and the impacts these media have in personal, community, cultural, social, institutional and international life. The course pays particular attention to cultural constructions of emergent digital media and practices. This course introduces graduate students to a variety of disciplinary lenses and conceptual practices, with readings and research ranging from media theory & studies, philosophy of technology, media archeology and history, to science fiction studies as approaches to digital media and cultures. (4.000 Credit hours)

This seminar introduces graduate students to a wide range of critical approaches to emerging digital media from multiple disciplinary practices. The class will survey several texts important to establishing some of the key conceptual frames, including: affect, systems, process, vitalism, new materialism and what comes after, sound, vapor, ecology, embodiment, climate, complexity, and of course, emergence.

Students will better understand where technoculture has come from and how it continues to emerge, changing our lives and our planet. Through a variety of discursive, writerly, and participatory practices, students will exercise their own conceptual and speculative interventions and demonstrate understanding of the nature and obligations of the critical voice and scholarly praxis.

This class surveys several texts important to a contemporary critical theory of emergent digital practices.

**Primary Readings** (these books should be purchased)

- Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Duke 2016)

**Secondary Texts & Excerpts** (these will be provided)

- Paolo Bacigalupi, "The People of Sand and Slag" (2004)
- Rick Dolphijn & Iris van der Tuin, excerpt from *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies* (Open Humanities 2012)
Frances Dyson, excerpt from *Sounding New Media: Immersion and Embodiment in the Arts and Culture* (U of California 2009)

E.M. Forster, "The Machine Stops" (1909)


Friedrich Kittler, excerpt from *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* (Stanford 1999)


Steven Shaviro, excerpt from *Post-Cinematic Affect* (Zero Books 2010)

**Recommended Texts**

Diana Coole & Samantha Frost, “Introducing the New Materialisms,” *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics* (Duke 2010)


**Websites**

A list of relevant websites is provided on the Canvas site for this class.

**Course Structure & Schedule**

The overview of our reading schedule is as follows:

**Week 1:** Introduction / Benjamin  
**Week 2:** Kittler + Forster / Haraway ("Cyborg Manifesto") + Peters + Bacigalupi  
**Week 3:** MLK Holiday / Rickert (Intro; Part 1)  
**Week 4:** Rickert (Part 2, Ch. 5-6) / Rickert (Ch. 7-8; Conclusion)  
**Week 5:** Kember & Zylinska (Intro; Ch. 1, Ch. 4) / K&Z (Ch. 6-7)  
**Week 6:** Midterm Presentations & Essays  
**Week 7:** Shaviro (Intro; Ch. 2, Ch. 4) / Dyson (Ch. 5-6)  
**Week 8:** Wark (Part 1) / Wark (Part 2)  
**Week 9:** Haraway (Intro, Ch. 1-3) / Haraway (Ch. 4-8)  
**Week 10:** O'Neil + Manning & Massumi / Dolphijn & van der Tuin  
**Final:** Project Presentations

Please note that specific reading assignments, including links to PDFs in several cases, are included on the full calendar on Canvas. The calendar is subject to change throughout the quarter, and updates will be made and announced on Canvas.
Course Objectives & Outcomes

The main objectives of this course are:

1) to demonstrate comprehension of theoretical, critical, and methodological approaches to emergent digital practices;

2) to develop analytical and theoretical tools to examine emerging digital objects, spaces, practices, experiences, and other phenomena;

3) to synthesize across course source materials, disciplines and practices in a sophisticated way that yields new networks of knowledge and practice;

4) to apply key concepts and practices introduced in course material to areas of your own interest, knowledge base, and practice; and

5) to integrate projects and presentation in ways that will demonstrate your understanding of the nature and obligations of the critical voice and scholarly praxis.

Assignments & Evaluation

Measures will include discussion participation as well as two projects and their corresponding presentations. Assignment details are provided on Canvas. Grades will consist of the following weights:

- Midterm Presentation (20%)
- Midterm Essay (20%)
- Final Presentation (20%)
- Final Project (30%)
- Participation (10%)

Preparation & Participation

Your preparation for and participation in this course is essential to its success. Being present during class sessions, ready to interact in a focused and engaged way with the material and each other, is your main responsibility.

Primary preparation involves completing the assigned readings the day they are due; taking notes on your reading material; preparing questions and comments to share in class; and making connections to and finding examples of cultural artifacts, events, and experiences that will help illuminate discussion.

Class sessions will be primarily discussion based. Discussion should foster a variety of perspectives on topics and encourage both critical argument and synthesis of ideas. Articulating different sides of issues and evaluating multiple arguments is essential. It is important that you participate in discussions and that you work to express your thoughts in an effective and engaged manner. Considerate listening as well as thoughtful formulation of questions for your peers and the professor are also crucial components of participation in an effective seminar.
**Additional Student Responsibilities**

**CLASS CONTENT:** Students should realize that some readings will be more difficult and time-consuming than others, so you should look ahead and plan accordingly. Difficulty of a text is never a valid reason not to read it, to write in an informed way about it, and to be prepared to ask questions and discuss the text in class. When responsible for writing, project development, and presentation, time management of multiple, parallel tasks is also the responsibility of the student.

The course calendar, assignment details, and any updates will be posted on Canvas. It is your responsibility to keep up with these updates and my announcements through Canvas (not just in class). Be sure that you are set to receive course-related announcements and assignment updates from the Canvas site.

**COMMUNICATION:** Tracking of attendance, discussion boards, and grades will be administered through the Canvas site accessible through DU’s PioneerWeb. Students should use the professor’s email at treddell@du.edu for communication with the professor.

*Contact Information*

Office Hours: Mon/Wed, noon-1:45pm or by appointment

Office: Sturm Hall 216B

Email: treddell@du.edu

Web: [http://mysite.du.edu/~treddell](http://mysite.du.edu/~treddell)

Primary communication with the professor should be through the email address above. Tracking of attendance, discussions, and delivery of grades will be administered through the Canvas site for this course. Be sure that you are set to receive course-related announcements and assignment updates from the Canvas site.

*Email Policy*

If you cannot see me during my office hours, please email me to set up an appointment. I do my best to accommodate appointments within two school days. I usually do not read or reply to email after 5 PM or on weekends (so whenever possible, please communicate with me on a Friday rather than Saturday or Sunday for issues related to a Monday class session). Your questions about assignments should be addressed in class or during office hours as much as possible. Please do not expect last-minute clarification of assignments via email. Students who miss a class session, excused or otherwise, should check Canvas materials before contacting the instructor about work covered in class, assignments, due dates, or other similar material.
Course Policies

Attendance
Attendance of all class sessions is mandatory and expected. Attending class on time is also the responsibility of the student. Presentations and discussions will begin promptly at the start of class. Students are allowed two (2) absences without penalty. Any absence in excess of two (2) will result in a 10% grade reduction of the final grade for the course per absence. All absences will be counted. A student who misses 15 minutes or more of a class (arrives late or leaves early) is considered absent. A student who sleeps will be considered absent. Failure to have work ready to turn in and present by its due date constitutes an absence, will count against you as such, and may result in failure of the assignment. Missing 5 classes will result in a failed grade for the course.

A student may experience absences beyond the permitted two (2) due to documented illness, school-related travel, or religious accommodation. If absenteeism becomes a problem for any reason, we will need to discuss your continued enrollment in the class. In such cases, documentation of illness or other extenuating circumstances may allow accommodation if you request a late withdrawal or incomplete rather than fail the class.

Laptops and Peripheral Devices
Laptops in the classroom are permitted as long as you are staying on task. Please do not use your cell phones or instant messaging device or service in the class. Recording class sessions is not permitted unless you are told otherwise on a case-by-case basis.

The Writing Center
"The Writing Center supports and promotes effective student writing across the University of Denver campus. In a non-evaluative collaborative setting, we help DU students with all kinds of writing projects: class assignments, personal writing, professional writing, and multimedia projects. We serve any student affiliated with the University and invite students in all classes, at all levels of writing ability, and at any stage of the writing process to visit us."

http://www.du.edu/writing/writingcenter/

Disabilities / Medical Accommodation
If you qualify for academic accommodations because of a disability or medical issue please submit a Faculty Letter to me from Disability Services Program (DSP) in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities/medical issues. DSP is located on the 4th floor of Ruffatto Hall, 1999 E. Evans Ave.; 303.871.2372 / 2278 / 7432. Information is also available online at http://www.du.edu/disability/dsp; see the Handbook for Students with Disabilities.

Religious Accommodations
DU students are granted excused absences from class if needed for observance of religious holy days but should contact instructors to make alternate arrangements during the first week of class. Visit DU’s religious accommodations policy for information and a list of religious holidays.

Student Athletes
DU sponsors National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) student-athletes at the
undergraduate level in seventeen different sports. Student-Athlete Support Services are in place to assist these students in their academic work. According to their policies: Student-athletes are responsible for informing their instructors of any class days to be missed due to DU sponsored varsity athletic events in which s/he are participating. Student-athletes are provided with a schedule of travel dates that coincide with class dates and an absence policy to present to instructors. This must be signed by the instructor and is the student-athlete’s responsibility to return the signed forms to an assigned athletics adviser. In the event that a team reaches post-season play (i.e. Conference or NCAA Tournament), letters will be sent to instructors informing them of additional missed class dates. It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to make arrangements with instructors regarding any missed lectures, assignments, and/or exams.

**Student Rights, Responsibilities & Conduct**

All students are expected to abide by the University of Denver Honor Code. These expectations include the application of academic integrity and honesty in your class participation and assignments. More information on student conduct and the honor code at the University of Denver are provided here: [https://www.du.edu/studentlife/studentconduct/index.html](https://www.du.edu/studentlife/studentconduct/index.html)

**Freedom of Expression**

I adhere to the University of Denver's statement of "Freedom of Expression" policy and principles, which announce: "Freedom of expression is crucial to the mission of the University of Denver. Absent a commitment to freedom of expression, the University could neither pursue its three core goals of promoting community, learning, and scholarship, nor promote its key values: excellence, innovation, engagement, integrity, and inclusiveness." More can be found at the links below:

- [https://www.du.edu/facsen/media/documents/foestatement20170519.pdf](https://www.du.edu/facsen/media/documents/foestatement20170519.pdf)
- [https://www.du.edu/facsen/media/documents/foexecutivesummary.pdf](https://www.du.edu/facsen/media/documents/foexecutivesummary.pdf)

**Plagiarism**

I expect all assignments to represent the outcomes of your own creative engagement, critical thinking and production efforts. A student found to have plagiarized another’s work – that is, represented someone else’s written word or other media production efforts as your own – will receive an F for the course, and I will report the matter to the AHSS Dean’s office and an Academic Misconduct report will be filed.
Grading Policies

Below are general statements of grading standards for my classes. Specific requirements, learning outcomes, and evaluative measures are included with each assignment.

A (94-100%); A- (90-93%) = generally, this grade is reserved for those works that surpass expectations by:

- sophisticated writing, critical thinking, creative work, and/or production skills;
- incorporation of multiple, different concepts, creative approaches and techniques with excellent results;
- outstanding use of source materials, research analysis, and synthesis of own content;
- great contribution to a deeper understanding of works and artists from production, cultural and theoretical perspectives;
- consistently original and substantial contributions to class discussions, projects and assignments.

B+ (87-89%); B (84-86%); B- (80-83%) = meets criteria and in some areas exceeds expectations by:

- very effective writing, critical thinking, creative work, and/or production skills;
- incorporation of multiple, different concepts, creative approaches, and/or techniques, usually with very good outcomes;
- original use of source materials, research analysis, and synthesis of own content;
- your work contributes to a deeper understanding of works and artists from production, cultural and/or theoretical perspectives;
- frequent original or substantial contributions to class discussions, projects and assignments.

C+ (77-79%); C (74-76%); C- (70-73%) = fulfills all requirements. The grade recognizes:

- satisfactory writing, critical thinking, creative work, and/or production skills;
- a tendency to stick to one or two familiar concepts, creative approaches, and/or techniques;
- a reliance on untreated source materials, lack of research analysis, and little synthesis of own content;
- your work states the obvious and does little to contribute to an understanding of works and artists from production, cultural or theoretical perspectives;
- infrequent or rushed and undeveloped contributions to class discussions, projects and assignments but keeps up with the schedule.

D+ (67-69%); D (64-66%); D- (60-63%) = fails to fulfill some requirements. The grade recognizes:

- less than satisfactory writing, critical thinking, creative work, and/or production skills;
- sticks to one key concept, creative approach, or technique;
- a reliance on untreated source materials, lack of research analysis, and no synthesis of own content;
• your work is insubstantial and fails to contribute to an understanding of works and artists from production, cultural or theoretical perspectives;
• rushed and undeveloped contributions to class discussions, projects and assignments, and some inability to keep up with the schedule.

**F (0-59%) = fails all requirements. The grade recognizes:**

• an inability to master anything more than basic writing, critical thinking, creative work, and/or production skills;
• an inability to incorporate key concepts, creative approaches, and/or techniques;
• an over-reliance on source materials, lack of research analysis, and no synthesis of own content;
• your work is incomplete and poorly developed in terms of its contribution to understanding of works and artists from production, cultural or theoretical perspectives;
• lack of contributions to class discussions, unfinished projects and assignments, and failure to keep up with schedule.

**Academic Integrity**

I expect all assignments to represent the outcomes of your own critical thinking and production efforts. A student found to have plagiarized another’s work – that is, represented someone else’s written word or other media production efforts as your own – will receive an F for the course, and I will report the matter to the AHSS Dean’s office and an Academic Misconduct report will be filed.