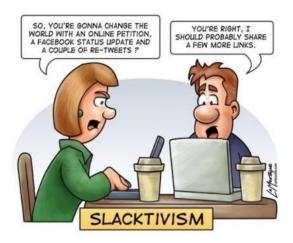# English 1101: Clicktivism and the Culture of Social Media Resistance

Writing and Communication Program
School of Literature, Media, and Communication
Georgia Institute of Technology
Fall 2021

Instructor:	Dr. Suchismita Dutta
Meeting Time and Place:	A5: MWF 9:30- 10:20 Clough 278 B4: MWF 11-11:50 Swann 325 G3: MWF 12:30-1:20 Clough 272
Office Hours:	M/W 1:20 p.m.-2:20 p.m. via BlueJeans
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Course Description

From liaisonwithalison.wordpress.com

"CLICKTIVISM IS TO ACTIVISM AS MCDONALDS IS TO A SLOW-COOKED MEAL. IT MAY LOOK LIKE FOOD, BUT THE LIFE-GIVING NUTRIENTS ARE LONG GONE."- "THE SUBTLE WAYS THAT 'CLICKTIVISM' SHAPES THE WORLD" BY RICHARD FISHER.

Also known as slacktivism, clicktivism or using digital media for facilitating activism often has a bad reputation for being useless and not capable of being compared to physical mass protests. Recent events have shown that clicktivism can not only prove effective in terms of community organizing but it can also reach a global audience. In this course, we will analyze social media's impact on movements like Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, March For Our Lives, among others, and foray into diverse perspectives such as race, cyberculture, identity, and resistance. Throughout the course you will be investigating questions like, is social media a suitable platform

for voicing trauma and violence in our current sociopolitical moment? Should this information be regulated? What role does clicktivism play in our digital media ecosystem today?

Texts may include *Algorithms of Oppression* by Safia Noble, *#HashtagActivism: Networks of Race and Gender Justice* by Sarah Jackson, Moya Bailey, Brooke Welles, "Yasmin" by Moustafa Bayoumi, and "Walking while Black" by Garnette Cadogan. We will also critically analyze the content on websites such as, [Black Lives Matter](#), [Women's March](#), and [March For Our Lives](#). You will be expected to participate in weekly flash writing activities, prepare one conference-style presentation, and create a Portfolio as your final assignment.

Approach to the Course

This course is placed in the intersections of Media Studies, literary studies, and writing studies. Peer review, collaboration with classmates, active participation in classroom discussions, and revision are some of the methods that you will adopt to develop your own writing. The primary goal of this course is to hone your ability to think critically and help you become a more expedient and sophisticated writer. You will work with multiple sources, engage in inquiry-based projects, and present your findings in multimodal formats where appropriate using Georgia Tech's WOVEN (Written, Oral, Visual, Electronic, and Nonverbal) approach. The assignments in this course are designed to be accessible and flexible enough to accommodate each individual student's varied interests. I am also happy to discuss modifications if you have academic or professional interests you would like to relate to the course material and assignment specifications. Please schedule a time with me if you are interested in this option.

Learning Outcomes

- **Rhetoric**: Create purposeful, audience directed artifacts that present well-organized, well-supported, well-designed arguments using appropriate conventions of written, oral, visual, and/or nonverbal communication.
- **Process**: Use recursive strategies, including planning, drafting, critiquing, revising, publishing/presenting, and reflecting confidently.
- **Multimodality**: Develop competence in major communication modalities (WOVEN) and understand that modalities work synergistically.
- **Collaboration**: Be productive in communities of practice—for example, as readers and critics, as team members and leaders—balancing their individual and collaborative responsibilities.
- **Critical Thinking**: Systematically analyze and question information in a manner that identifies and evaluates problems, processes, values, assumptions, and arguments in order to reach understanding, determine solutions, and initiate actions.

Required Texts

WOVENText by Cheryl E. Ball, Jennifer Sheppard, Kristin L. Arola.

All other readings will be available through [Canvas](#).

Summary of Major Artifacts and Activities

Participation – 10%
Our class will be oriented around discussion, so your active participation is essential. Participation will be assessed on three main criteria:

- **Preparation**: come to class on time and ready to work; do the assigned reading and writing.
- **Discussion**: listen carefully to the instructor and other students; respond to others respectfully; ask thoughtful follow-up questions; take notes.
- **Collaboration**: contribute to group projects effectively; put serious effort into peer review; come to office hours.

Flash Writing Fridays (FWF) – 15%
As the name suggests, these weekly writing activities will help you become a more expedient writer and thinker. These are not individually graded assignments, rather these are opportunities for you to practice free writing throughout the semester. The FWF topics may include short journalistic pieces from the *New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *The Guardian*, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution, etc*. It is mandatory to participate in all FWF tasks. If you successfully complete all the FWFs, you will get the full 15% of the total grade.

Artifact 0: First Week Diagnostic Video—5%
Deliverables:

- Diagnostic Video due—8/30
- Reflection due—9/17

You will create a 60-90 second video to introduce yourself, identify the course you are taking, and articulate a challenge you anticipate facing this semester in ENGL 1101. Begin by introducing yourself (name, major, hometown) and identifying your course (teacher, theme) in 10-15 seconds. Your video should articulate a challenge relating to one of the modes—written, oral, visual, electronic, or nonverbal communication—that you'll be engaging with in class projects this semester. What challenges do you expect to face in relation to this mode? How might you overcome these challenges? Use specific examples. You might also use this assignment as an opportunity to set goals for yourself in terms of a specific mode of communication or in terms of developing a specific skill. To submit your video in Canvas: first upload it to "My Media," then embed a link to it in the assignment page. After submitting your video, you will write a one-page reflection considering how and why you made the choices you made in completing the assignment.

Artifact 1: Document the #Hashtag—15%
Deliverables:

- Proposal—due 9/17
- Draft—due 9/25

- Reflection due: TBD

You will document the journey of a #Hashtag of your choice. I expect you to seek answers to questions like: How did the #hashtag start? Who started it? What was its reception like? How/why did it get "viral"? The goal of this project is to help you analyze the enormous power of the "#" and its stronghold over the entire social media ecosystem. You will investigate the various ways in which the "#" sign has redefined identity politics, the racial schema, and important socio-cultural and environmental issues globally. I encourage you to use relevant images and our secondary reading list as reference.

This piece should be about 1500 words.

Artifact 2: Life Writing Artifact—15%

Deliverables:
- Proposal—due 10/8
- Final—due 10/22
- Reflection due: TBD

The goal of this project is to use life writing to formulate blogs about Yasmin's experiences. By giving Yasmin's experiences a voice on the digital platform, you will reflect on her experiences while creating an open space for her to express her struggles at school., thoughts and feelings with the world. Since life writing is an ever-evolving form that allows us to document our own histories, you should use this platform to think critically and analyze Yasmin's encounters with institutional bias well. You may choose to write one long 2000-word blog or two short blogs 1000-words each.

Artifact 3: Conference Style Poster Presentation in a Panel—15%

Deliverables:
- Abstract—due 11/1

The goal of this project is to use all the elements in W, O, V, E, N methodology. You are expected to form a panel (4 members max), work collaboratively, and make a poster related to ideas of student activism in the digital and physical world. Each presenter will have approx. 5-6 minutes (approx. 25 mins per panel) to talk about a part of the project. Please keep in mind that your panel should follow a common theme and your individual, mini oral presentations must connect the central idea cohesively.

Final Portfolio—25%

Deliverables
- Contents page due—12/10

For the culminating assignment, you will submit a multimodal reflective portfolio in lieu of a final exam. For your multimodal reflective portfolio, you will select evidence from your body of work produced in the course, provide a context for this evidence, and describe the ways in which the evidence supports your argument that you have grown as a communicator. You should identify not only what you rhetorical, aesthetic, and technical choices you made, but why you made them in relation to the course outcomes. Your portfolio must include: 1) Reflective Introduction to the Portfolio: A page for a 1,200-1,800 word essay that introduces your portfolio and strategically employs multimodal elements such as images, videos, audio files, and/or links

to accompany your text and demonstrate to your audience how your communication habits have evolved. 2) Artifact 0: A page for your multimodal diagnostic video, which you produced during the first week of class, along with a reflection answering the directed reflection questions about the artifact. 3) Artifacts 1-3: A page for each of three additional artifacts that together best reflect your work and development in the course, along with an introductory paragraph and short reflections (150-200 words) answering the directed reflection questions for each artifact. These artifacts should highlight your development in all WOVEN modes. Your portfolio will be due during our final exam period.

Grading Scale

Percentage	Grade	Description
98-100	A+	Superior performance: rhetorically, aesthetically, and technically. Brilliant conception and exceptional execution. No errors.
93-97	A	
90-92	A-	
87-89	B+	High quality performance: rhetorically, aesthetically, and technically. Good conception and strong execution. Few errors.
84-86	B	
80-83	B-	
77-79	C+	Average performance: rhetorically, aesthetically, and technically. Acceptable conception and competent execution. Some errors.
74-76	C	
70-73	C-	
67-69	D+	Below average performance: rhetorically, aesthetically, and technically. Flawed conception and poor execution. Many errors.
64-66	D	
60-63	D-	
0-59	F	Unacceptable performance: rhetorically, aesthetically, and technically. Failure to meet even minimum criteria.

Covid Statement

Given the times we are in, your health and well-being should be your primary concern. Keeping that in mind, I encourage you to wear an appropriate face covering in class. The classroom is a shared, enclosed space and I strongly believe wearing a mask will ensure your safety. For more information please see, current CDC guide to masks.

Late Assignments

All assignments are due by the time and date specified. I will not accept late work without granting advance permission via email, and permission is not guaranteed. Late work will cause your grade for the assignment to decrease by one letter grade for each day (not class day) the assignment is late. This includes weekends. Email me as soon as possible if you feel your situation warrants an exception to this rule. Bring appropriate documentation to this meeting. Emergencies will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

In the case of group/collaborative work, failure to contribute to the group's project in a timely and reasonable manner will result in the student in question failing that particular assignment. Specifics and extenuating circumstances will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Missing and Missed Assignments

Except for your absences officially exempted by the Institute or exceptional and unanticipated situations, I do not allow students to make up missed quizzes, presentations, or in-class assignments. Missing work is counted as a "zero."

Please familiarize yourself with the Georgia Tech Writing and Communications Program's Common Policies about evaluation rubrics (grading), course completion, attendance requirements, participation in class, non-discrimination, the Communication Center, accommodations, academic misconduct, syllabus modifications, and learning outcomes. You will be responsible for these policies, and when you sign the Statement of Understanding, you affirm you are familiar with these policies.

Communication

Please allow a minimum of 24 hours for me to respond to all emails. Students are expected to check their email at least once a day. Emails in reference to team projects should CC all team members. All submitted files must have the student's name in the file name: for example: Smith_ResearchReport.docx. A 10% penalty will be deducted for all assignments missing a name. I cannot discuss grades via email; please plan to come to office hours with these questions.

Attendance

The Writing and Communication Program has a Program-wide attendance policy, which allows a specified number of absences without penalty, regardless of reason. After that, penalties accrue. Exceptions are allowed for Institute-approved absences (for example, those documented by the Registrar) and situations such as hospitalization or family emergencies (documented by the Office of the Dean of Students).

- **Attendance requirement**. Students may miss a total of three (3) classes for T/Th or M/W classes or four (4) for M/W/F classes over the course of the semester without penalty.
- **Reasons for absences**. The attendance policy does not make any distinction about the reasons for your absences. Only absences officially exempted by the Institute (e.g., due to participation in official Georgia Tech athletics, to religious observance, to personal or family crisis confirmed by documentation from the Dean of Students) will not be counted among your allotted absences. These exemptions are difficult to get.

- **Responsibility for missed work**. Students are responsible for finding out what they may have missed while absent from class and what policy the instructor has for making up missed work.
- **Absence penalties**. Each additional absence after the allotted number deducts one-third of a letter grade from a student's final grade. Missing six (6) classes in a T/Th or M/W course or eight (8) classes for a M/W/F course may result in failure of the class, as determined by the instructor of the course in consultation with the Director and Associate Director of the Writing and Communication Program.

  Students are expected to keep up with their own attendance record; see the instructor if you have a question about how many classes you have missed. The instructor's record is the official record of your attendance in the class.

Late Assignments

All assignments are due at 11:59 pm on the day they are due. For each day that an assignment is late, 5% will be deducted from the grade. If you will not be able to turn in an assignment on time, please let me know so that we can reach a fair accommodation.

Course Completion

In all sections of ENGL 1101, not completing any component of the course, including projects, assignments, or workshops, may result in failure of the course, as determined by the instructor in consultation with the Director and Associate Director of the Writing and Communication Program.

Writing Workshops and Peer Review

We will devote several class sessions to reading each other's work. These workshops are critical to fulfilling our course goals, so missing them may result in a lower participation grade. You are expected to come to class having read and made comments on your fellow students' work so that we can devote class time to discussing each other's drafts in small groups. These workshop sessions will be essential to helping you revise your work for your final portfolio.

Electronics

Please only use laptops and tablets for class purposes. Failure to do so may result in a lower participation grade. I have a strict *no-phone* policy in class.

Academic Integrity

Cheating and plagiarism are serious violations of the Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code. Plagiarism is intentionally passing off sentences, paragraphs, or entire papers written by someone else as your own original work or submitting whole or partial projects produced for other classes. When you intentionally use language, ideas, images, or other material without fully acknowledging its source/authorship in citation, you will receive and F for engaging in academic dishonesty and be referred to the Office of Student Integrity, as required by Georgia Tech policy.

Copyright and Attribution

When incorporating images or video into your work be sure to properly cite the source, even if it's in the public domain. You should not use material for which the copyright holder reserves all rights. You can adjust your search settings to account for attribution in your search engine. It may be useful to search for media through Creative Commons.

Accessibility

Any student who may require accommodation for a documented disability should inform me during the first week of class or when you become aware of your disability. Students who anticipate difficulties with the content or format of the course due to a documented disability should arrange a meeting with me at the beginning of the semester, so we can create a workable plan for your success in the course. The Office of Disability Services serves any Georgia Tech student who has a documented, qualified disability. Official documentation of the disability is required to determine the eligibility for accommodation or adaptations that may be helpful for this course.

Communication Center

Bring your projects, at any stage of the writing process, to the Naugle CommLab. The CommLab is an excellent resource for all students working on white papers, oral presentations, storyboards, videos, poster designs, podcasts, or professional materials. Make your appointment online to meet with a tutor in Clough Commons, Suite 447.

Student Success

Attending college can be stressful. Don't hesitate to ask for help if you're feeling overly anxious, overwhelmed, or depressed. You can reach out to the Division of Student Life or make an appointment at the Counseling Center.

Non-Discrimination

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society. For more information and specific details about all other policies, please see Office of the Dean of Students.

Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings	Writing
M 8/23	Course Introduction		
W 8/25	Communication Competence	*WOVENText* Chapter 2, 13-25	Homework: Review syllabus. Read WOVENtext pgs 13-25
F 8/27	Rhetoric	*WOVENText* Chapter 4, 57-62	Diagnostic video discussion

M 8/30	Genre	*WOVENText* Chapter 5, 76-80	**Diagnostic Video due**
W 9/1	The Multimodal Project	*WOVENText* Chapter 6, 92-96	
F 9/3	Social Media Activism	"The Second Act of Social Media Activism: Has the internet become better at mediating change?" By Jane Hu	**FWF** activity Homework: Note 3 important takeaways
M 9/6	Labor Day	No class	
W 9/8	Clicktivism/Slacktivism	"The subtle ways that 'clicktivism' shapes the world" by Richard Fisher	Homework: Note 3 important takeaways
F 9/10	#Hashtag Activism	"Introduction: Making Race and Gender Politics on Twitter" from *#HastagActivism: Networks of Race and Gender Justice*	**FWF** activity For the weekend: Homework: start planning the proposal for Document the # artifact Diagnostic Video reflection due
M 9/13	#Hashtag Activism	"Women Tweet on Violence: From #YesAllWomen to #MeToo"	Homework: write the proposal
W 9/15	Brainstorm ideas	Document the #hashtag artifact prompt	**Proposal** due on Friday 9/17
F 9/17	Revision of key concepts/ Multimodal Composing	*WOVENText* 62-71	**FWF** activity Homework: Work on Artifact 1
M 9/20	Workshop	Peer review	Homework: Make the necessary changes
W 9/22	Close Reading	"Yasmin," in *How Does it Feel to be a Problem?* By Moustafa Bayoumi	Sat, Sep 25, Artifact 1 due by 11:59 p.m.
F 9/24	Close Reading	"Yasmin"	**FWF** activity
M 9/27	Critical analysis	"Yasmin"	Homework: Finish reading "Yasmin"
W 9/29		"Yasmin"	
F 10/1	The Blog writing genre	Genre analysis, *WOVENText* 84-87	**FWF** activity
M 10/4	Artifact 2	What is life writing?, discuss prompt of Artifact 2	**PROGRESS REPORTS DUE**
W 10/6	Brainstorm key concepts	Group discussion World marches to support women's rights, PBS NewsHour, Jan 21, 2017.	Homework: Work on Artifact 2 proposal Oct, 8, Friday Artifact 2 proposal due
F 10/8	Workshop	Peer review 10 bullet points	Homework: draft of Artifact 2
M 10/11	Fall break	No class	Homework: draft of Artifact 2

W 10/13	Technology and Racial bias	Introduction from *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* by Safia Noble	Fri, Oct 22, Artifact 2 due by 11:59 p.m.
F 10/15	Continued	Continued	**FWF** activity
M 10/18	Close Reading	"Walking while Black" by Garnette Cadogan	Homework: Read the section assigned
W 10/20	Continued		Homework: Read the section assigned
F 10/22		Sign up for Poster Presentations, dates TBA "Online Fever: The Subversive Social Media Activism Movement" by Sanika Mahajan	Homework: Read the section assigned
M 10/25	Hashtags against racial profiling	"Racial Violence and Racial Profiling: From #OscarGrant and #TrayvonMartin" from #Hashtag Activism	**FWF** activity
W 10/27	Digital poster making workshop @Data Visualization lab		Make your notes
F 10/29	Working with collaborators	*WOVENText* 100-108, discuss Artifact 3 prompt	Homework: draft your abstract
M 11/1	Workshop	*The Art of Public Speaking,* Chapter 1, "Acquiring Confidence Before an Audience," 2005, pp. 7-10, *WOVENText* 210-212	Mon 11/1, Abstracts due, max 150 words
W 11/3	Artifact 3	Presentation week	Presentation week
F 11/5	Poster Presentations		
M 11/8	Poster Presentations		
W 11/10	Poster Presentations		
F 11/12	Websites of activism	Black Lives Matter blacklivesmatter.com Women's March https://womensmarch.com/	**FWF** activity
M 11/15	Websites of activism	March For Our Lives https://marchforourlives.com/ Sophie Yeo, "How the largest environmental movement in history was born," (April 21, 2020), BBC	List your main takeaways, minimum 5
W 11/17	The politics of surveillance	Ch 4 from *Algorithms,* "Searching for Protections from Search Engines"	
F 11/19	Brainstorm key findings		**FWF** activity
M 11/22	Googlization	"Google's Ways and Means: Faith in Aptitude and Technology," by Siva Vaidyanathan	

W 11/24	Brainstorm key findings		Homework: List your main takeaways, minimum 5
F 11/26	Student recess	No class	
M 11/29	Thanksgiving Break	No class	
W 12/1	Back to #activism	"HashtagActivism: Here to Stay" by Sarah Jackson et al.	
F 12/3	Brainstorm key findings		**FWF** activity
M 12/6	Building your final portfolio	*WOVENText* 32-35	
W 12/8	Workshop project ideas		Create Contents page
F 12/10	Compiling data	Discuss evidence-based research and your plan moving forward	Portfolio Contents page due
M 12/13	Final Portfolio prep		Homework: Revise portfolio
W 12/15	Final Portfolio prep		Homework: Revise portfolio