WORKING DRAFT 6/25/26 This syllabus is a living document – do not print.
You can find this doc at: https://tinyurl.com/medialitsyllabus26

Rhode Island College • Department of Educational Studies

CURR 501: Digital Media Literacy

Summer Session II — 2026 (two week intensive: HYBRID)

Mon, June 29 (9:00am - 3:00pm)
Tue, June 30 (9:00am - 3:00pm)
Wed, July 1 (9:00am - 3:00pm)
Thur, July 2 (9:00am - 1:00pm)

****Tue, July 7 (9:00am - 12:30pm)**
****Wed, July 8 (9:00am - 12:30pm)**
****Thur, July 9 (9:00am - 12:30pm)**
** classes are on zoom

Name	**Dr. Lesley Bogad, Professor**
Email	Lbogad@ric.edu and scholarina@gmail.com (for sharing docs)
Phone	(c) 401-523-5718
GROUP ME	Fill in your info here. And take this survey, if you haven't already. NOTE: I will add you to our Group Chat. (This hooks you up for text messages that I will send - and you can send! - throughout the course.)
CLASS BLOG	https://medialitsummer26.blogspot.com
ZOOM LINK	**https://ri-college.zoom.us/j/82260717308**
SLIDE DECK	All of the slides for the course will be in this one deck

Course Description:

This course begins with the premise that educators need time, support and inspiration to become the innovative practitioners they want to be. I believe that when educators have that time, support, and inspiration they can figure out the 'WHY' of their work -- the values and beliefs that guide them in every decision they make. In that knowledge, both face to face and digital learning becomes richer, more grounded, and pedagogically sound. Over the next two weeks, we will spend dozens of hours together thinking, writing, making, collaborating, consuming, producing, and playing with new media and technology tools that align with our beliefs about how people learn and engage the world.

Through the lens of social justice and critical education reform, this course will take media and popular culture seriously as a site of education, and will seek to expand the experiences that educators have with digital technologies in their classrooms. We will engage a cultural studies perspective as we explore conceptual and practical tools to help teachers, principals, youth workers, counselors, and/or parents integrate digital technologies and media literacy into kids' lives (and into their own).

Course Objectives:

- Create a community of practitioners committed to reflective pedagogy
- Construct a vision of what you believe about how students learn (your 'Why')
- Rethink and reframe traditional educational models
- Become aware of digital tools to enhance teaching, learning, and life tasks in new ways
- Produce new media and digital texts that can be applied to educational environments
- View, analyze and interpret media as an ideological text from a social justice stance

The Genre of the Two Week Intensive Course:

As a two-week intensive workshop, this course makes some particular demands of all of us. *This is particularly true in an HYBRID environment*. From the instructor perspective, the course will have to maintain a rapid pace to keep up with the concepts and themes, and I will work hard to keep each of you engaged in the course materials even when we only get to see each other on ZOOM. From the student perspective, you are going to have to find ways to balance 4 credits worth of course content in 7 short days. Part of that means you must be active in advocating for yourself as learners in this class. Advocating for yourself means participating actively during the day in synchronous and asynchronous content, as well as reading thoroughly and blogging each night. Advocating for yourself also means talking with me about classroom practices that do or don't work for you as learners. If you have any special needs or learning disabilities, talk to me on the first day so that the time will be productive for you as a student. I will help you in any way I can.

Texts and other course materials:

Most of the readings for this course are linked digitally in the syllabus. We will also be using a text from Rethinking Schools called *Rethinking Popular Culture and Media (second edition)*. I have provided you with the digital copy for free. I have also ordered copies that you can purchase from me for $25.00 (discounted from the website where you can buy it for $35.39 plus shipping.) While we are only reading a few selections from the book in the course, I think this will be an excellent resource for you to keep in your professional library to use with students.

Grading Criteria:

Given the nature of a two-week intensive summer course, you will not be asked to produce a final paper or written exam for this course. Rather, your grade will be based on four criteria:

1) Attendance: You are expected to attend the four in person days (MTW 9:00-3:00, and Th 7/2 9-1) and three synchronous zoom sessions (TWTh 9:00-12:30.)

2) Participation: Active participation in this class is an essential requirement. I encourage you to take risks here — ask questions and reflect on the answers. Share your insights and your confusions. Don't forget to listen to others. Active participation can take on many forms.

- Engage in our class time by using your voice every day
- Update your WORK TRACKER to keep you organized with homework and asynchronous assignments
- Engage in the GROUP ME CHAT by posting and responding to peers
- Find me if you have questions!

3) Media Blog: On the first day of class (or before), you will spend some time setting up a blog for this class on the site www.blogger.com. Some of you already have blogs, so you can focus your energy on starting a new one and/or improving the gadgets and gizmos on your existing blog. This will be the space on which you keep all your wonderings, questions, reflections and course assignments. I expect each assignment to be completed thoughtfully, with attention given to class concepts and themes. While this is a shared intellectual space, your posts can be written in a casual, reflective voice. You will also read and comment on one another's blogs each night as a way of preparing for our conversations in class.

My blog: https://medialitsummer26.blogspot.com

- ❏ 300-500 words per post
- ❏ Include hyperlink(s)
- ❏ Include picture(s) or video(s)
- ❏ Engage the written assignment in a thoughtful way
- ❏ Connect to other texts/course concepts
- ❏ Read and comment of at least 3 other blogs each night

4) Final Project: The culminating project for this course will be a Digital Literacy Project where you will create something meaningful for your personal or professional life that is aligned with your beliefs about youth, technology, and education. A detailed description of the project and its requirements will be discussed further this week. Here are some samples from summer 2025 and samples from summer 2024 if you are feeling curious.

Course Anchors and Guiding Assumptions

This course is grounded in three basic assumptions that serve as anchors for everything we will do together this week:

1) YOUTH as digital natives:

Youth today are shaped by the media/digital world around them. This course begins with the assumption that youth today are part of Gen Z, children of a global pandemic, and sometimes called "Digital Natives" to borrow from the work of Marc Prensky. Current research suggests that those who have grown up fully immersed in digital technologies not only experience the world in new ways — their **brains** are actually changing to adapt to the changing world around them. While growing up digitally does not guarantee the development of digital *literacy* skills, this reality does reframe our basic knowledge about who young people are and how they engage the world. *What do YOU believe about who youth are and what they are capable of?*

2) EDUCATION as empowering:

The educational landscape of 2026 is a conflicted place where the realm of standardized testing, regulation and routine bumps up against the needs of creativity, innovation and learning. This is becoming even more complex with the increasing use of AI in teaching and learning in schools across the country. This course rests on the assumption that K-16 schools and youth spaces should be driven by a commitment to social justice, equity, and inclusion that values all learners, an assumption that challenges the current educational status quo. *What do YOU believe about the goals of education and the roles schools/youth spaces should play in society?*

3) MEDIA as ideology:

Popular culture is not just a form of entertainment. The media play a critical role in teaching us about the world. Film, television, music, the internet, advertising, fashion and other forms of popular/digital culture shape the daily lives of all Americans whether we celebrate or resist their influence. We must learn to see the things we take most for granted, to analyze and interpret the media around us in order to understand how these things contribute to how we think about what is "normal," "natural," and "good." In this class, we will take the media seriously as an educating force. *What do YOU believe about the role of media and technology in young people's lives (and in your own?)*

Calendar and Assignments:

BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS…	
Goals:	Organization is key to success. Spend some time gearing up for this 7-day intensive course.
Work to do to get ready: *complete by 9:00am on Monday, 6/29*	• OPTIONAL READ: Introduction in the Rethinking Media textbook which will set the tone for considering pop culture in this course • FILL OUT: Take the Course Survey so that I can get to know you a little before the course begins • FILL OUT: Put your information on the Class List • REVIEW: Read through this syllabus so you know what to expect for the next two weeks. • CREATE: Make an About Me Slide and choose 2 things from it to share in class on Monday • OPTIONAL: Create your class blog and leave me a comment on my blog with your URL (it is due by Tuesday morning, but you can start it now!)

Monday, June 29: *Introduction to the Course*	
Goals for the Day:	Introduce the course and each other Develop working definitions of key concepts and anchors Set up blogs
In Person Activities: *9:00-3:00* *LUNCH: 11:45-12:30* *SLIDE DECK*	➔ Introductions: Present About Me Slides ➔ Introduction to Course Anchors ➔ Who are Digital Natives? (Prensky) ➔ CREATE: Your Personal Class Blog (with intro posts) **L U N C H** ➔ What are your Best Memories of Learning? ➔ WATCH: Every Kid Needs a Champion (Pierson, 8 mins) ➔ Where do our beliefs come from? S.C.W.A.A.M.P. (adapted from Leslie Grinner – handout) ➔ Introduction to the Tools of this course (BLOG, WORK TRACKER, GROUP ME) ➔ Exit Slip: **Complete this Google Form before you leave!**
Homework: *complete by 9:00am on Tuesday*	❑ WATCH: *Education's Death Valley* (Sir Ken Robinson, TEDTalk, 19 minutes) Here is my outline for notetaking. ❑ READ: Spiegel, Prensky Revisited ❑ *OPTIONAL*: Danah Boyd, Chapter 7 from *It's Complicated* ❑ BLOG (write): What do you make of the positions of Prensky and Spiegel? Where do you stand on the "digital native" terminology? ❑ Choose a Poem for class tomorrow (list here & survey here) ❑ UPDATE: Your Work Tracker

Tuesday, July 1: *Course Anchors and Beliefs*	
Goals for the Day:	Start to see the beliefs of our authors in relation to one another Start to form your own beliefs around youth, education, and media Read a media text together to explore dominant ideologies
In Person Activities: *9:00-3:00* *LUNCH: 11:45-12:30* *SLIDE DECK*	➔ Ice Breaker: Moo In ➔ What Do THEY Believe?: Prensky, Spiegel, Pearson, and Robinson ➔ WATCH: Mike Wesch, Learning from Baby George ➔ What do YOU Believe: Finding your Why **L U N C H** ➔ Digital Poetry Group Project ➔ Share out digital poetry ➔ Introduce Final Project ➔ **Exit Slip: Complete this Google Form before you leave!**
Homework: *complete by 9:00am on Wednesday*	❑ READ: Ferlazzo, "AI Can Save Teachers Time and Stress" (*Education Week*, June 18, 2025) ❑ READ: Gallant and Rettinger, Introduction & Chapter 1 from *The Opposite of Cheating* (2025) ❑ READ: Christensen, "Unlearning the Myths that Bind Us" (in RPCM p. 175) ❑ *Optional*: 2026 Pew Study of Teens and AI Use ❑ BLOG (write): What is your personal relationship to AI? How do the arguments of Ferlazzo or Galland & Rettinger feel to you? Do they resonate with you? Alienate you? Scare you? Excite you? OR ❑ BLOG (write): What is your relationship to Barbie or any kind of children's culture (like Disney?) How does Christiansen validate or challenge your views? ❑ UPDATE: Your Work Tracker

Wednesday, July 2: *Media as Education*	
Goals for the Day:	See theory in practice from real educator in the field Discuss and practice using AI Practice "reading" visual texts Explore *a film* as a site of education
In Person Activities: *9:00-3:00* *LUNCH* *11:30-12:00*	➔ Ice breaker: ➔ Guest Presenter: Molly Bogad, educational therapist and technology advocate **L U N C H** ➔ Pleasure and Critique: Textual Analysis ➔ WATCH: a children's culture film together *Barbie* (2023) (handout for viewing) *Encanto* (2021) (handout for viewing) *Moana* (2016) (handout for viewing) *Frozen* (2013) (handout for viewing) ➔ Discuss Final Project if time ➔ Exit Slip: Complete this Google Form before you leave!
Homework: *complete by 9:00am on Thursday*	❑ REVIEW: Watch these Middle School Student Podcasts (look for the MEDICAL EPIDEMICS and SOCIAL EPIDEMICS tabs in the top right corner) in preparation for our guest speaker on Thursday ❑ REVIEW: Final Project Handout and Slide Deck (Wanna know more about what a Pecha Kucha final project looks like? Choose 2-3 of the projects on slide 8 to view) ❑ BLOG: What ideas do you have about your final project? Did any of the Media Literacy projects you reviewed in this deck on slide 8 inspire you? ❑ UPDATE: Your Work Tracker

Thursday, July 3: *Tools for turning beliefs into actions*	
Goals for the Day:	See theory in practice from real educator in the field Prepare for the Media Literacy Projects
Synchronous Activities: *9:00-1:00* *SLIDE DECK*	➔ Ice breaker: ➔ Guest Presenter: Brittany Richer Ahnrud, Jamestown Teacher of the Year 2021 (middle school ELA) ➔ Brainstorm Final Project before the weekend ➔ Exit Slip: Complete this Google Form before you leave!

Asynchronous Activities: *complete by 9:00am on Friday*	❏ REVIEW: Need more inspiration? Go back to the models (on slide 8) we have been looking at from years past to inspire you about your own project ideas! ❏ CREATE: Spend at least 30 minutes thinking about and mapping out your project goals. Get your head around the big picture of change+beliefs+tool. ❏ OPTIONAL: post a To Do List about your Final Project. ❏ UPDATE: Your Work Tracker

WEEKEND ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES	
Goals for the Weekend: *complete all by 9:00am on Tuesday 7/8*	Layer on more content to help your hone your beliefs Explore and then teach others about some digital tools Work on Final Media Literacy Projects and Pecha Kucha
WEEKEND OFFICE HOURS in ZOOM: Monday, July 6 (9:00-10:00am) **I will plan an hour on zoom and text me if you need me (401) 523-5718**	
Asynchronous Activities: (everything due by Tuesday 7/7 at 9:00am. Dates below are merely a guide to keep you organized!)	
FRIDAY: *Independence-ish Day*	Maybe you can actually take the day off!
SATURDAY: *Digital Tool Day*	❏ EXPLORE: Play around with ANY digital tool that you know well or want to learn more about. See these lists of tutorials from 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, or from 2020! ❏ CREATE/BLOG: Make a tutorial about the digital tool and post it on your blog. Then add a link to your blog post HERE. ❏ Work on Final Project
SUNDAY: *Book Chapter Day*	❏ READ: Any chapter from the *Rethinking Schools* book ❏ BLOG: Teach the rest of us about the chapter you chose by writing a blog post about it. ❏ Work on final project design and narrative
MONDAY: *Project Day*	❏ Keep working on project design and narrative and make a draft of your Pecha Kucha 20-slide deck or podcast. ❏ Check out the Random Resources we have listed in class. Just check it out. No work to do.

Tuesday, July 7:	
Goals for the Day:	Share tools and texts from weekend work Prepare for the Media Literacy Projects
Synchronous Activities: *9:00-12:30 on zoom* *SLIDE DECK*	➔ Ice breaker ➔ Discuss digital tools you explored ➔ Discuss RS textbook chapter ➔ Final Projects ➔ Exit Slip for today
Asynchronous Activities:	❑ CREATE: Work on your final project

Wednesday, July 9: Final Project presentations	
Goals for the Day:	Media Literacy Projects
Synchronous Activities: *9:00-12:30 on zoom* *SLIDE DECK*	➔ Ice breaker ➔ Presentations!!
Asynchronous Activities:	❑ CREATE: Work on your final project ❑ COURSE EVALUATION

Thursday, July 10: Final Project presentations	
Goals for the Day:	Media Literacy Projects
Synchronous Activities: *9:00-12:30 on zoom* *SLIDE DECK*	➔ Presentations!!
Asynchronous Activities:	❑ TURN IN PECHA KUCHA HERE by Monday 7/13 ❑ Course Evaluation if you didn't complete in class

FINAL WORK FOR THE CLASS IS DUE ON MONDAY 7/13 by 5:00pm.

FINAL NARRATIVE DUE ON YOUR BLOG

PECHA KUCHA POSTED HERE