

---

**Senior Project Proposal – 40% – Due Wed, 29 Nov 2008**  
**UTSC- NMED20H3 Theory and Practice of New Media, Fall 2008**  
**Course Lecturer: Gita Hashemi**

---

The goal of this assignment is to set you on the road for your senior project that will be the focus of your work next term. This stage, therefore, is of utmost importance, and it is necessary that you do it thoughtfully and thoroughly. This assignment has 3 components. All must be finished and handed in by the due date. The assignment will be evaluated and graded based on the quality of your conceptualization, research and writing. **You must have an original title for your project.**

---

**A. PROPOSAL TEXT – 15% (= 37.5% of assignment total)**

This text and the bibliography have to be posted on the course wiki. This text is 1000-1400-word description of your senior project's themes and concepts, objectives and rationale, methodologies and technologies, treatment, production requirements and timeline. Written in full sentences (no point forms except where indicated), this text should include the following sections:

**1. Project Concepts, Themes and Subject**

In **100-150 words**, describe the main theme(s), concept(s) and subject that your project focuses on. Please note that this section will be effective to the extent that it gives the reader an immediate, clear and concise idea of what it is you want to do, in other words, an overall picture. You need to give a description not just a shorthand phrase.

**NOTES AND EXAMPLES**

- Review Mod 3 Report Guideline for notes about concept and theme.

- **A subject is a specific instance of or approach to concept(s) and/or theme(s).** Example: *an exploration in the impacts of digital remediation on representational strategies in illustrated sports websites*. Here's another example of a subject: *A hypermedia (concept) narrative (concept) about online (concept) teen-age loves (concept) and follies (concept)*. Another example: *A blog about identity formation on Facebook*. Another subject: *Online video as socialization space at UTSC*.

- **Description example 1:** *This project explores the potentials of online video as a socialization space for students. More specifically, in this project I am interested in developing an online video interface that can be used to extend the ways in which UTSC students can meet and socialize with other students. The project is a website that allows participants to upload their own video footage of social events, personal interests or activities, and opinions on campus issues or other topics. Other participants can comment in text and/or reply in video. Participants may form interest or activity groups that may meet online or offline. (Word count: 99)*

- **Description example 2:** *Inspired by my cultural heritage and personal beliefs, this project will be an artistic invitation to reflect on the notions of life and afterlife. The project will include a series of photographed self-portraits installed as part of temporary shrines created at selected locations on the campus grounds, and a participatory and performative walking tour of these shrines. The self-portraits will be carefully staged with symbolic props and costumes, and the shrines will be demarcated with found objects that have personal significance. During the walking tour the participants will be invited to place their own objects at the shrines or take existing ones that they find meaningful. The tour will be documented in video that will be included in an interactive website. (121 words)*

**2. Project Rationale and Objectives**

In **200-250 words**, explain why this project is important to you and significant in general, and what short-term goals it meets. A *rationale* is the articulation of the reasons – personal, social and disciplinary – for doing this project, in other words, its long-term goals and their significance. To help you write the rationale, think about the following:

- Why is this important to you? What does it help you to accomplish?
- Why is this suitable for a senior project in “new media”?
- What makes you a suitable person to do this project?

- Who is this intended for and why should it be important to this group?
- What makes it important in the context of “new media” project?
- Why is it a socially worthwhile project to work on?
- What long-term goals can this project address? (Again, it’s important to think about yourself as well as the disciplinary and social contexts.)

An *objective* identifies a specific and measurable step in the move toward achieving the long-term goal. To identify the objectives of the project think about:

- How specifically will it help you achieve the long-term goals you stated in the rationale?
- What concrete accomplishments will this project facilitate?

### **3. Project Theories, Methodologies and Technologies**

In about **500-600 words**, map the theoretical, methodological and technological frameworks you plan to use in this project.

A *theoretical framework* maps established theoretical notions that inform your exploration of the concepts, themes and subject used in your project. Obviously, you have to be informed about the theories that are relevant to concept(s), theme(s) and subject(s) you intend to explore in your project, and you have to decide what theory(ies) seem most acceptable, relevant and/or interesting to you. This part grounds your project in relation to your discipline(s).

The *methodological framework* refers to methods of research and conceptualization that you will use in your project; for example, a survey of video blogs by college students to help you develop relevant concepts and interface. Think about why this methodology is necessary, what you gain by it, and how its gains can be used to ground your project.

The *technological framework* refers to the specific technological approach to the project; for example, a blogging software or dynamic HTML, etc. Try to be as specific as you can be here and think about all aspects of the project; so, for example, if you’re making a photo essay in hard-copy, think about what technologies you will use to capture and produce the photos and the book.

### **4. Project Treatment**

This section describes the look, the feel and/or the language of your project. Think about what style(s) are interesting to you and suitable to the project and why; what impression(s) do you want to make on the people who see/hear/use the project. **100-200 words.**

### **5. Production Requirements and Timeline**

In this section briefly – point form ok, 200 words max – lay out what steps you need to take to produce this project and give an estimated timeline for these. Try to be as thorough, specific and realistic as possible. Think about preliminary research, production and testing. Think about all aspects of the production; e.g. if you’re doing an installation, you have to think about the location, the production and the installing. This is a preliminary plan and may change later as needed.

---

## **B. BIBLIOGRAPHY – 10% (= 25% of assignment total)**

This section is designed to assist you in finding suitable and useful theoretical frameworks and methodological and practical examples for your senior project. This bibliography must be posted on the wiki in a section at the end of your project proposal text.

There are strict requirements about what constitutes acceptable material, what kinds of material you can use, and how it must be arranged, so follow the instructions carefully. You must have minimum 4, maximum 6 sources, in accordance with the following list:

- 1 source must be demonstrably an academic source (from an academic publisher or a reputable, peer reviewed academic journal; yes, this can be the one you used for your Mod 3 report);

- 2 must be directly related to your theoretical framework;
- 1 (at most 2) must be a relevant example (i.e. this can be a new media piece);
- only 2 can be available exclusively online (i.e. the rest must be available also in printed form);
- only 1 may be a government sources;
- only 1 may be an industry source.

Each item must be annotated, and each annotation should be between 75 and 100 words in length. An annotation is a brief description of the work, and a few sentences about why you think the work will be useful in your research. Your description should summarize the work's main arguments and/or ideas, with a particular emphasis on information and/or aspects that are useful to your project. Use the first person ('I') when you write in order to avoid awkwardness.

An annotated bibliography is a very specific kind of document, and style is as important as content. Items should appear in alphabetical order, based on the last name of the first author. Each item must be presented in a recognized citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago/Turabian; you must mention which style you are using and include an online reference for the style guide). Items should be single spaced, with a double space in between items.

### C. SCRAPBOOK – 15% (= 37.5% of assignment total)

A scrapbook is a space in which to hold relevant, inspirational, informative material and/or brainstorm or experiment with different ideas and approaches to your project. This scrapbook can be in the form of a wiki page linked to your main proposal page or a hard-copy journal or a combination of both. The scrapbook may include texts, images, videos, sounds, concept maps, sketches, links, reflective writing, quotations, etc. Your scrapbook must have at least 12 items in it. For each item, write a brief (50-100 words) note about how it relates to your project.

**Examples:** *This picture uses a color scheme that I think will be suitable to my project because the colors evoke a sense of playfulness and a feeling of warmth. Both of these are aspects of the kind of social relations that college students like and I would like to encourage in my project. Or, this quotation by Brecht is an inspiration for the kind of active, instructive and meaningful interaction that I would like to facilitate in my project. Or, this is my first concept map for the theoretical framework of the project. It's rough but it lays down the main directions. Or, this music combines acoustic instruments and digital sampling and is a good example of the kind of audio treatment I would like to use in my project.*

Get creative and have fun with this scrapbook. As you collect the material for your scrapbook, you give yourself the chance to live with your ideas and let them simmer and cook, so a good scrapbook is made over a period of time. Adding material to it gives you a chance not only to identify what is interesting and important to you but also a length of time during which you think openly and creatively about your project.

### D. GENERAL NOTES

- At the start of next term, you will have a chance to revise and modify your project based on your own further research and the feedback provided on your proposal.
- BUT, if you decide to change your senior project idea entirely, you will have to submit another proposal that gets a passing grade. So, it is important that you take this proposal very seriously and take the adequate time to think through and develop it.
- You are welcome to consult with your other professors regarding your senior project, particularly if the project is related to your other major. You are also welcome to think about ways of connecting this project to your other senior course work. HOWEVER, this project cannot be what you produce and are graded for in another course.
- If you decide to do a group project, you must provide: a) a rationale for doing this as a group project; b) a breakdown of the roles and responsibilities of all group members; c) a sense of the scale of the project that merits being a group project (in other words, the scale of the project cannot be the same as a project that could be reasonably produced by one person).