



When: MW 9:30, 11:00, 12:30

Where: Clough 123

Instructor: Dr. Fontenot, she/her

Office Hours: MW 2-3pm, or by appointment

Course Description

Mycological networks offer remarkable examples of communication within and across species. Through complex chemical exchanges, mycelia “talk” to each other and other organisms, creating vast networks of knowledge-sharing that exist in a variety of modes. These networks allow mycelia to ward off disease, negotiate with life-partners, attract pollinators, and much more. Alongside texts like *Entangled Life* (Sheldrake), we will explore what these entanglements can show us about our own communication practices, habits, and assumptions. Projects for the course include a research-based paper, a collaborative presentation with a visual aid (slides), and a project proposal. Together, we’ll explore how our communication practices are impacted by their context, especially growing our awareness of the demands of audience and genre.

Goals & Outcomes

Core IMPACTS Statement

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Writing area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students’ broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

How do I write effectively in different contexts?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

- Students will communicate effectively in writing, demonstrating clear organization and structure, using appropriate grammar and writing conventions.
- Students will appropriately acknowledge the use of materials from original sources.
- Students will adapt their written communications to purpose and audience.
- Students will analyze and draw informed inferences from written texts.

Common Policies

Follow [this link](#) to policies that are common across all ENGL 1102 sections. It includes information on topics such as specific learning outcomes for the course, feedback charts, and a variety of interpersonal policies.

Required Texts

- *Writer/Designer*, available through *The Bedford Bookshelf*
- *Entangled Life*, illustrated edition, by Merlin Sheldrake. ISBN: 9780593729984
- The WOVENText Open Educational Resources, available for free at woventext.lmc.gatech.edu

Accommodations & Mental Health

Official Language: Georgia Tech is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please discuss your concerns with your instructor.

Students with disabilities, whether physical, learning, or psychological, who believe that they need accommodations, are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible to ensure accommodations are implemented promptly. Students must provide documentation of their disability to ODS by uploading the forms into the AIM portal.

- Visit: Smithgall Student Services Building (Flag Building), Suite 221 on 353 Ferst Drive
- Email: dsinfo@gatech.edu
- Phone: 404-894-2563 (V); 404-894-1664 (TDD); 404-894-5429 (fax)
- Website: www.disabilityservices.gatech.edu

From Dr. Fontenot: Please note that often, official accommodations do not make much of an impact in certain courses. While I do encourage you to seek whatever official accommodations you feel are necessary, don't hesitate to discuss your needs with me (regardless of official

accommodation status) in office hours or via email and I will do my best to make the course accessible for you. While I am not a mental health professional and I am required to report serious concerns, I also take mental health very seriously and I will happily do whatever I can to make my class more accessible to you.

Other Resources:

- If you're overwhelmed by work or just need a moment to catch your breath, consider asking me for an assignment extension. Sometimes, having a little extra time to sleep or get food makes all the difference!
- At any time, you may request assistance from [the office of the Dean of Students](#). While this can sound very serious, or seem scary, the DOS office handles all sorts of student concerns, at many levels of severity. They can help with everything from getting class absences officially excused, to scheduling overwhelm, to hardship withdrawals. Do not hesitate to reach out--at the very least, they could point you to resources on campus that could help you. The entire staff is wonderful, and their sole purpose is to promote student wellness. (Please note that professors can submit anonymous referrals for students who seem to be struggling, so if at some point the DOS reaches out to you personally, it might be the case that you were referred by a concerned professor. At that point, the ball is in your court, and the referring professor is **not** made aware of what happens after their referral.)
- If you're anything like me, high stress levels can impact your awareness of self-care. [Here's a fun website](#) that helps you walk through a self-care inventory when things get tough and you need a little motivation. (Excuse the language.)

Nondiscrimination & Inclusion

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts, the School of Literature, Media, and Communication, and the Writing and Communication Program support 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.

Alternative viewpoints are welcome in this class; however, statements that are deemed racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, classist, or otherwise discriminatory toward others in the class or outside the class will not be tolerated.

Course Overview & Policies

Projects

This semester, we will complete three major projects and a final portfolio (which is the equivalent of a final exam in this course). In accordance with departmental policies, all major projects and the portfolio must be submitted to pass the course.

Project 0: Introductory Video	10%
Project 1: Research-based Paper	15%
Project 2: Collaborative Presentation (individually graded)	20%
Project 3: Creative Proposal	20%
Final Portfolio	15%
[Attendance, Participation, Reading Quizzes	20%]

Grading

Assignments in this course are graded using a modified labor-based grading system. Here's what that means:

1. All process work, in-class writing, and minor assignments are graded on a complete/incomplete scale. Final drafts of projects receive a **letter grade** that represents your grade for the whole unit. For example, if you received a B on Project 1, it means that you got a B for Unit 1 because you **completed** the mandatory requirements for that unit (see #3 and #4).
2. To earn a "complete," an assignment must:
 - a. Be submitted by the deadline or within your requested extension period;
 - b. Fulfill the requirements of the prompt/instructions;
 - c. Show evidence of engagement with course learning outcomes.
3. **Completing** a predetermined amount of labor in each unit guarantees you a B for that unit. Work that is essential to earning a B is listed in the prompt and marked by an asterisk (*) in assignment titles on Canvas.
4. To earn an A, you must **complete** all B-level assignments and then complete more work (labor). In each unit, you will choose from a selection of A-level assignments listed at the end of the project prompt and included in the relevant Canvas module. **Completing** a set number of A-level assignments qualifies you for an A in that unit, assuming that your B-level requirements are fulfilled.
5. Attendance, participation, and engagement will be evaluated by the instructor. You will complete a short reflection from time to time that helps me understand how you see your participation habits. Some A-level assignments also contribute towards my understanding of your participation.

6. Final grades are calculated based on **weighted unit grades** using GT's GPA scheme. Therefore, an A = 4, B = 3, etc. Totals will extend to two decimal points and then be rounded up (.50 and above) or down (.49 and below). There are no other percentage, numeric, or +/- grades in this course.

Attendance, Participation, & Engagement

Attendance:

Attendance and participation are essential to success in courses in the Writing and Communication Program. Because of this, you are expected to attend class. Not attending a scheduled class session in-person results in an absence. Please let me know in advance (if possible) if you must miss so that I can plan group activities accordingly.

There may be times when you cannot or should not attend class, such as if you are not feeling well, have an interview, or have family responsibilities. Exceptions are allowed for Institute-approved absences (for example, those documented by the Registrar) and situations such as illness, hospitalization, or family emergencies (documentation by the Office of the Dean of Students required).

You have three "free" absences that you can use at any time for any reason. Beginning with the fourth absence, your final grade will be impacted by -3% per absence. Up to two absences can be made up and their points regained by completing make-up work assigned by the instructor.

Tardies: Showing up more than 8 minutes late qualifies as tardy. Four tardies equal one absence. Tardies (and any absences resulting from them) cannot be made up. The instructor may forgive a tardy in specific cases. *Please note: arriving late on peer review days means you might provide a review for someone without receiving one in return, especially if peer review has already begun when you arrive.

If you do miss class, it's your responsibility to 1) check Canvas and 2) contact your peers for notes. After taking those steps, you are welcome to email me or come by my office to chat about what you missed. Absences and tardies may be forgiven at the discretion of the instructor, usually in the case of emergencies.

Participation & Engagement:

Note: Recent developments in educational habits and practices have led me to step back on technology use in the classroom. Thus, you will be expected to keep all electronic devices (laptops, smartphones, etc.) put away unless you're asked to have them out. (If you have an accommodation that allows you to use a laptop for notetaking, and you want to use that accommodation, please [email me](#) and we'll work out a solution.)

What counts as engagement in the course? A lot of things! We all learn and pay attention differently. Here's an incomplete list of things that count as participating in this course: showing

up to class on time; bringing the assigned reading to class; annotating the readings; respectfully contributing to class discussions (large and/or small group); taking an active responsibility in group projects and completing your work on time and with respect for your peers' time and effort; taking notes in class; submitting note cards with discussion questions at the end of class; engaged listening (in other words, not splitting your attention between multiple activities); completing extra reflection journals; answering/asking questions; reflecting on class topics in your head; discussing course topics with classmates, the instructor, family, or friends outside of regular class time; reading extra materials about our topics outside of class; and much more.

"Participation" as a graded category is evaluated through a variety of methods. "Visible" participation methods, such as coming to class on time or contributing to discussions, have the most weight, but only out of necessity--I can't see "invisible" participation methods (such as thinking about the class), which means they're harder or even impossible to evaluate. However, as a former "silent student" who was nonetheless **very** engaged, I do my best to include ways of acknowledging and rewarding those invisible methods. As we move through the semester, you'll notice that many A-level assignments reflect engagement with the course: this is one way that your silent engagement is rewarded. I'm always happy to discuss other methods of participation/engagement, too.

Late Work, Extensions, & Revision

The First Rule:

Don't panic. I made the rules, but I'm also a reasonable person who genuinely wants to help you succeed. If at any point this semester you have an emergency and cannot follow the policies laid out below, please simply let me know what's going on as soon as you can.

- My responsibility: be understanding, supportive, and flexible when the unexpected happens.
- Your responsibility: do your best, keep me in the loop, and do not take advantage of my flexibility.

Late Work:

Work submitted on Canvas more than one hour after the deadline will receive an "Incomplete." If you attempt to submit in time but encounter technical problems, you should immediately [email me](#) with your assignment attached. I encourage you to save your assignments in different places or in the cloud so that you always have access to your work even if your primary device fails. (Click here and scroll down for [some information about available computer workstations across campus!](#))

If you are supposed to submit an assignment in class but must be absent, please [email me](#) with a picture or scan of your work or send the homework with a trusted friend/classmate.

Extensions:

Yes, the late work policy is strict, but extensions are plentiful! In each of the primary units (1, 2, and 3), you may claim up to three extensions (per unit). To claim an extension, fill out the extension form on Canvas before the assignment's deadline. If you need an extension in Units 0 or 4, [email me](#) (I don't use a form for those units because they are very short).

Assuming you have extension requests remaining, all extension requests extend the deadline by 48 hours, regardless of whether I respond by the assignment deadline. If you need more time than that, [email me](#).

In extreme circumstances, you may need more than three extensions per unit. If that is the case, we will work together to keep you on track with allowances for the extra time needed, but you should [email me](#) as soon as the issue arises, as it's easier to make a contingency plan than it is to try to recover lost time.

Revisions & Make-up Work:

Any on-time submitted assignment that receives an "Incomplete" can be revised and resubmitted for a regrade. Simply email me within a week of receiving the grade and we'll agree on a deadline for your resubmission.

Assignments that were not submitted at all, or that were submitted after the 1-hour grace period with no extension request, cannot be revised. They can be made up at the discretion of the instructor, but with a grade penalty.

Summary:

Submit everything on time as often as you can and **always** ask for an extension if you can't (even if you're technically out of extensions). If you can't do that, [tell me](#). Open communication is genuinely the most important responsibility we have to each other.

Contacting the Professor

The best way to get in touch with me is via email (Outlook or Canvas is fine): mfontenot7@gatech.edu. Please give me at least 48 hours to respond. If the email is urgent, please set the email importance to "High Importance," which will add a red exclamation point to the email so that I don't miss it (this only works in Outlook).

My particular brand of neurodivergence finds emails overwhelming at times, and I get way too many of them, so if you don't hear back within 48 hours, feel free to reach out again and let me know you're waiting. In fact, please let me know. I genuinely appreciate it!

You can refer to and address me as "Dr. Fontenot," and please include your own preferred name as you sign off in all emails. It also helps if the subject line includes "ENGL 1102: [topic of email]," because it's less likely to fade into the background that way.

AI Policy

You may **not** use generative AI (ChatGPT, Claude, etc.) in this course. Any use of gen AI that is not preapproved by me will be treated as plagiarism. If you have a question about your use of gen AI and its acceptability, please reach out to me and I'll be happy to chat.

Use of spelling and grammar AI (like Word's built-in spell checker) is fine, as long as you aren't using it to generate, substantially revise/edit, evaluate, or complete your assignments.

[Here's a great article on the environmental impact of gen AI.](#) This is just one reason I resist using AI in my classes. I'm happy to chat about others if you're curious.