

**COMM 323 Remixing Culture
TR 1130a-1245p
SOC bldg 015**

Loyola University Chicago
School of Communication
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Office hours: TR 100-200p
SOC 223D

Course Description

Remix is a cross between critical thinking and creativity. In this class you'll learn about the role of remix in contemporary society made up of legal constraints, moral challenges, political and economic interests, and the rise of participatory culture embedded in social media. You'll explore these issues through hands-on play with the language of remix, and through critical engagement with theory about remix.

Remix is about finding inspiration in what has already been created and then deconstructing, transforming, contrasting, re-using, reconstituting and combining to produce novel creative media that add cultural value. It happens both in physical and virtual environments. The practice is endemic in contemporary culture. We see it now in many forms of art from assemblages to video art, in data construction, in film and video, animation, games, genetic engineering, food, and many other aspects of our culture. Remix is not a new behaviour, it has a long history — for many its ever-presence in music production began in the 1980s, and we have long seen its presence in architecture, art, film, literature, etc. It has become a cornerstone of our participatory culture and a core information practice.

New Media Modes have made the processes of production and distribution more accessible to a broader audience. At the same time content which appears to many as source material to inspire collective creativity is subject to vigorous efforts to lock it down as intellectual property. Remix raises questions about intellectual property rights, authorship, the collective, what creativity is and where its boundaries lie, what is novel, innovative and original, and the very nature of the producer-consumer. We will view remix through multiple lenses: practical, historical, social, legal, political, and economic.

Assignments

Pop Quizzes (25%)

There will be five pop quizzes throughout the semester - each worth 5% of your final grade. Quizzes will be based on readings.

Project Proposal (25%)

Write a proposal for your final project in which you will describe your project, justify it, outline all steps required to execute it, and plan a schedule for completion.

Remix Project (50%)

Create a remix using media of your choice. Write an artist's statement explaining your work to your audience. Create a simple website, Youtube channel, Vimeo channel, or other space online to distribute your work to an audience. Present your work to class.

Schedule

Part 1.

INTRODUCTION

class mechanics, slack, syllabus, examples, big ideas

WEEK ONE

Lessig, Remix (pgs 1-105)

WEEK TWO

no ftf class meetings – work on your proposal

Use Slack for proposal feedback, questions, batting ideas around...

WEEK THREE

no ftf class meetings – work on your proposal

Use Slack for proposal feedback, questions, batting ideas around...

Proposals Due Thursday 13 September - post in Slack

Part 2.

PROJECTS

feedback, critiques, revision, draft

WEEK FOUR

Proposal revision workshop Tuesday and Thursday

Bring your proposal to class Tuesday for feedback from classmates.

Come to class Thursday to revise your proposal and meet with the prof.

Part 3.

LAW

fair use, copyright, intellectual property, piracy, stealing, creative commons, appropriation, social regulation, dmca, history, platforms

WEEK FIVE

Thomas W. Joo, 2011, "Remix without Romance," Connecticut Law Review, 44(2).

Griffin, My First Day At (Youtube Copyright) School

Optional Gillespie, The Politics of Platforms

WEEK SIX

Lessig, Free Culture (Afterword, pgs. 273-306, with particular attention to pgs. 294 and 295)

Rostama, Remix Culture and Amateur Creativity: A Copyright Dilemma

LaFrance, When a Remix is Plain Ole Plagiarism

WEEK SEVEN

Readings due on Thursday this week. No class Monday for Mid-Semester Break.

James Boyle, Fencing off ideas: enclosure and the disappearance of the public domain

Dolcerocca & Coriat, Commons and the Public Domain: A Review Article and Tentative Research Agenda

Part 4.

CRITICISM

remix as criticism, how to critique, form and function

WEEK EIGHT

McIntosh, A History of Subversive Remix Video before YouTube: Thirty Political Video Mashups Made between World War II and 2005

Edwards & Tryon, Political video mashups as allegories of citizenship empowerment

Gregory & Losh, Remixing human rights: Rethinking civic expression, representation and personal security in online video

WEEK NINE

Christen, [Gone Digital: Aboriginal Remix and the Cultural Commons](#)

Milne, Materialities of Law: Celebrity Production and the Public Domain

Pham, Fashion's Cultural Appropriation Debate: Pointless

Optional Harley, Cultural Modulation and The Zero Originality Clause of Remix Culture in Australian Contemporary Art

WEEK TEN

Terranova, Free Labor: Producing Culture for the Digital Economy

Fleming, Poisoning the Affective Economy of RW Culture: Re-Mapping the Agents

Part 5.

THEORY

semiotics, feminism, language of remix, authorship, participatory culture, postmodernism, post postmodernism, poststructuralism

WEEK ELEVEN

Owens, Understanding the Participatory Culture of the web: An Interview With Henry Jenkins

Popova, Networked Knowledge and Combinatorial Creativity
Optional Young, A Technique for Producing Ideas

WEEK TWELVE

Logie, Peeling the Layers of the Onion: Authorship in Mashup and Remix Cultures
Coppa, Women, Star Trek, and the early development of fannish vidding

WEEK THIRTEEN

Thanksgiving Week. No class meetings Tuesday or Thursday.

Optional Foucault, What is an Author?

Optional Barthes, Death of the Author

Optional Benjamin, The Author As Producer

WEEK FOURTEEN

Kuhn, The Rhetoric of Remix

Hill & Monroy-Hernández, The Remixing Dilemma: The Trade-off Between
Generativity and Originality

WEEK FIFTEEN

Presentations

Two poster sessions: one Tuesday and one Thursday. Attendance and participation on both days is required, and will be counted as part of your final grade.

Policies

ATTENDANCE/LATENESS

Attendance counts. If you miss more than 25% of the class meetings (4 classes) without an authorized excuse you will automatically fail this class. At two unexcused absences, your participation grade will begin to drop by 1/2 a letter grade for each absence. Missed work cannot be made up or excused except in the case of severe illness, death in the family, or religious holiday - these absences must be documented if you'd like to make up missed work. Documentation for a university-authorized absence must be cleared with the professor in advance. Come to class on time. Coming in late disrupts the class, and you'll likely miss important information. It is your responsibility to ask classmates for announcements you may have missed by arriving late. Arriving late repeatedly will bring down your participation grade.

ILLNESS

If you have, or think you have a cold or the flu (swine, bird or whatever) do not come to class. Do not come to class to tell me you are sick. Message me on Slack before class and contact the Wellness Center for advice - and get documentation! Ask a classmate for what you missed before you ask me.
DO NOT come back to class until you are fever-free for 24 hours!

PARTICIPATION

Attendance and lateness policies described above factor into your participation grade, and so does your contribution the community of learning in our classroom.

Your participation in class depends on quantity and quality of participation. In this class, you'll attend lectures, discuss, work in groups, and provide peer review feedback to classmates. Your positive and substantive contribution to each of these class elements is expected for a passing grade - doing the bare minimum will earn you a bare minimum grade. Your physical presence in the room is less than bare minimum participation; participation includes attendance, attention, and attitude as well as substantive contributions. Leaving early, texting, checking facebook, chatting, sleeping, eating meals, and doing other non-class related work are distractions to you, me, and your classmates and will bring down your participation grade. If you need to leave class early, please tell me before class starts and sit near the door.

CLASSROOM CITIZENSHIP

Students are expected to respect each other. When you enter a classroom, you are a member of a cohort - a community of learning. Your success depends on your neighbors' success. Learning is a collaborative effort - in discussion, group work, and even lecture, understanding is co-produced. Your questions and perspectives matter, and so do your classmates'. Treat each other with tolerance and understanding. The people you'll interact with in class are your peers and future colleagues. Strive to do better on your own, but also strive to help your classmates to elevate the level of conversation in the classroom. You are responsible for your own work, but you are also responsible to your teacher and your peers - your positive substantive participation in discussion and group work is a valuable aspect of the class.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Use of technology in the classroom is encouraged! Bring laptops, smartphones, etc. Use note-taking software; use bibliographic software; use the Internet. Class topics are not bound to lecture, discussion, and the room we are sitting in. Take your discussion, questions, exploration online - look up definitions and more information as we discuss and share that with the class. With laptops, smartphones and other communication devices, you have a world of resources to help you learn - use them!

A Warning: Be respectful with your use of technology. Using technology is a skilled literacy and is a privilege - do not take advantage of this privilege. If you have a laptop or smartphone in front of you, expect to be called on to look up additional information. The presence of technology in the classroom does not give you an excuse to be physically present in the room but intellectually absent. If you are not using your technology as a learning tool relevant to this classroom, put it away. Technology can be a distraction to you, me and your classmates. You are here to substantively add to a community of learning. Texting under the table, using headphones to listen to music, messages or videos, giggling at facebook status updates, chatting, etc. during lecture, discussion, workshops, or any other in-class activity is rude! If I suspect that you are not using your laptop, smartphone, or whatever as a learning tool, I will call you out in class. Each time I have to call you out for using technology inappropriately in class, your participation grade will drop

by a whole letter grade. If I have to call you out a second time you will be asked to leave the class. If I call you out a third time your technology privileges will be revoked entirely, which will make it very difficult for you to complete the course well.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of the course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g., failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours).

This is an academic community; being uninformed or naïve is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing your sources.

It is dishonest to:

turn in the same work for two classes without speaking to your profs first;
turn in a paper you have not written yourself; or copy from another student or use a "cheat sheet" during an exam, unless otherwise allowed by the course professor.

LATE WORK/ LOST WORK

Late work will not be accepted. Extensions will not be granted. Incompletes will not be assigned. Make-up work will not be assigned unless pre-arranged, or due to an authorized documented absence. If you anticipate you will miss an assignment, please discuss it with the professor early in the semester to arrange an alternative. You must give at least one week notice to arrange alternative exam/quiz locations and times. Save early, save often, and archive your emails. If an assignment is lost or you discover a discrepancy later in the semester, email documentation will be required (e.g., if you are sure you handed in an assignment that I do not have a grade listed for, be prepared to show me your dated original files or dated emailed work). Always double-check your emails when you send in assignments - all files should be PDFs; all links should be functioning. It is your responsibility to make sure I get your work - it is not my responsibility to tell you your file was corrupted, or your email bounced, or to remind you to hand in work.

GRADING

The grade given to average work on all assignments is a C. So, if you just complete the bare minimum for each assignment, expect to earn a C for your work. Grades of B or A indicate impressive achievement above the average. Grades of A in particular

indicate especially exceptional work. Grades below C indicate inadequacies or errors in any or all of the grading criteria.

The grading scale is as follows:

94% A

90% A-

87% B+

84% B

80% B-

77% C+

74% C

70% C-

67% D+

65% D

Percentage grades are not rounded up. An 87.45 % is a B+, not an A-.

Students will receive comments and grades for each assignment. It is your responsibility to keep track of the grades you earn. I will not send you updates on cumulative grades. I will not send you warnings when you drop below some point value. I will not send you prompts to participate more or to work harder. Again, it is your responsibility to keep track of the grades you earn. The total points for the class and for the assignment are listed in the syllabus so at any point in the semester, you should be able to calculate an approximation of your grade easily. Students may meet with me during office hours throughout the semester to discuss their grades and comments.

If you would like a grade on an assignment reevaluated you must make an appointment to visit me during office hours. Bring the assignment, my comments, and a written explanation of how your work met the requirements of the assignment, and showed impressive achievement above the average. You have two weeks from the day I return the assignment to dispute my assessment of that work. After two weeks, I will assume you are satisfied with my assessment, and I will not reconsider the assessment for any reason. If you'd like to discuss a grade to clarify comments or get advice on improving in the next assignment, make an appointment for office hours and bring specific questions.