The Blog

This semester you'll be using Expressions, an SU supported blogging software to post your assignments. Your blog will serve a few purposes; not only will it resemble a portfolio of your work throughout the semester, but it will also give you a central platform to manage your research, connect with classmates (and me), and think about how to present yourself rhetorically.

Get Started

Visit Expressions.syr.edu and sign up for a blog.

- Name your blog something simple that easily identifies you (ex. EmilyLutherWrt205), and can fit nicely into a web address. (You can change this later if you want to think of a more clever name.)

Use the dashboard feature to manage your blog.

- Choose a theme that you like—but please keep it simple and easy to navigate. (Some themes have more flexibility and options—you may have to try a few until you find your favorite.)
- Set up widgets that will allow easy linking and readability. (Link to your twitter feed, for example, or your RSS feed, or a cool Hurricane Katrina blog/site you found.)
- Learn how to create a post. Your first post will be the Film Response Assignment.

Plan to spend time tinkering and playing with your blog. Explore the features and try to teach yourself how to use them better.

Here are the Blog Design REQUIREMENTS (graded!):

Posts

Your blog must have a main page, where you can write your posts (homework assignments, plus additional things you want to add on your own). When posting, be sure that if you are completing a homework assignment, you title the homework assignment with the corresponding assignment title so I can very easily find it (for example, "Film Response" or "Discussion Response").

As we work in Unit 2, your posts will expand to include a more typical "blog-style" story of your research process. You will be assigned to post weekly about your research and what you are learning. You have freedom to try out a thematic way of posting, or to use any kind of media in your updates—basically, to make the story of your research your own, and to tell it your way. What I will be looking for in grading you is whether your posts are fitting for a blog; that is, you are not just posting Word Docs or papers that look like a student's random assignments for a teacher, but you are a blogger, telling the world about this learning project.
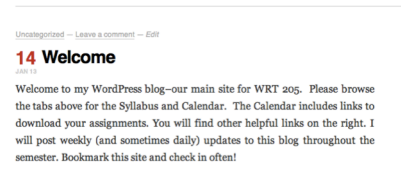
Pages (optional, not required)

Your blog can have pages, where you can publish your formal essays and other work for the class in static, unchanging formats. During Unit 2, you can set up your blog in a way that will best work for your way of telling the story of your research. If you feel that pages allow you some creative freedom or a better way of organizing your work, feel free to use them. You can use them to host any of your required assignments, but always be sure to announce a creation of a page via a blog post, since this is the primary way I will find your work. Within posts, you can link to pages.

Links (or widgets)

You will need to have a search box on your site and an archive. These are standard widgets that usually come with the blog template. Other things you have more freedom with. You will be encouraged to link resources such as RSS feeds, link organizing accounts (del.icio.us, refworks), blogs you are following (mine, for example), twitter, and more. (I might require other widgets as the semester goes on.) The goal, for you, is to provide a "homepage" that helps to highlight what you are doing as you work throughout the class, but also, helps you to easily link to resources that you need for the class. Additionally, you should remove widgets that you are not using so as to simplify your design.