

Connecting to the GEDI Community:

One of the first tasks of an aspiring GEDI knight is to set up a blog.

You have some options here. Consider the following and then act accordingly.

- 1) Create a blog (website) on VT's WordPress installation. It is free and secure, but maybe not permanent. Follow the directions here: <http://blogs.lt.vt.edu/>. Consult this link to help you customize your blog and familiarize yourself with VT's wordpress site: <https://blogs.lt.vt.edu/support/documentation/>
- 2) Create a self-hosted blog (website) on WordPress.com: <https://signup.wordpress.com/signup/> . You have the option of a free account (there will be some advertisements and limits on the kinds of themes you can use) or, a premium account for \$99/ year (no ads, better support, option of using premium themes – which cost additional \$).
- 3) Get a student account through Reclaim Hosting (<https://reclaimhosting.com/>). Reclaim is a full-service web host geared specifically for academic communities. All of my websites are there, including the main course website. A student / individual plan costs \$25 / year (<https://reclaimhosting.com/shared-hosting/>) but if you use this discount code: **anelsons15** you will get a \$5 rebate. Reclaim offers much more than WordPress. If you are a web geek or aspiring web geek, you will be awed by all of the applications they support and how much fun you could have playing with them. If you just want WordPress you'll need to whizz through (ignore) lots of the bells and whistles of your control panel (C panel). From the C panel you want to "install Wordpress" and then choose a URL for your blog. Once you get your blog set up you should be able to work on it without using the C panel.

⇒ **As soon as you have a blog, please submit the URL here:**

<http://goo.gl/forms/0M4SLiyuEg>

The form is also on the main course website.

⇒ **We will add it to the mother blog for the course (Do this no later than 5pm Friday, August 28th)**

⇒ **Minor things that will make a major difference:**

1. Choose a user name on Wordpress that is close to your real name: Good = A. Sullivan Bad = happyhokie99
2. When you set up your blog check the box that allows search engines to index your site.

3. On the dashboard, choose “settings” and “discussion”. You may keep the boxes checked that ask for a user to provide an email (this will not display when the comment is published) but please, please, please uncheck the boxes that hold comments for moderation. (It is easy to change this back at the end of the semester.)
4. Check the main course website to confirm that your blog has been syndicated. Your post(s) will appear on the main page, and your blog’s title will appear on the “contributors” page. It may take up to 24 hours for this to happen, so please be patient. Also, the main blog updates every hour.
5. If you have trouble syndicating your blog, please double check the steps above. If you deleted the first “hello world” post, create a new one.
6. If you are still having trouble, please contact us at gedivt@gmail.com

Blogging Basics

You are required to post at least seven times over the course of the semester, and you are required to comment on another person’s blog at least three times per week (27 times over the course of the semester). There are nine opportunities to blog (so you may skip two), but you must still comment every week. You may, of course post and comment more frequently. Everyone will complete the first three blogposts on the schedule. After that, you may choose your remaining posts (at least three from the remaining six blogging weeks).

There is no assigned length or format for your blogging. You may engage or connect to the seminar topic and readings for the week in whatever way works best for you. You may use and include texts, images, video and audio files in your posts. Hyperlinking in the blog format simplifies the “citation” process, so take advantage of that to incorporate a range of materials and perspectives into your posts.

The main goal here is to engage the course material thoughtfully and substantively, to use them to develop your understanding of contemporary pedagogy, particularly as it relates to your experiences and goals as a teacher.

Commenting Basics

Reading and responding to your classmates’ blog posts gives you the opportunity to ask questions about a particular topic, elaborate on a point made in the blog post, relate the material in your own post (or another student’s) to the post you’re

commenting on, and generally reflect on how the post helps you understand the material.

Professionalism and the Principles of Community will guide our engagement with each other in the web-based components of the course as well as in our class meetings.

Hybrid Course Basics

Your individual blogs are syndicated to the main course blog, aka “The Mother Blog” <http://amynelson.net/grad5114F15/> This means that your weekly post will be “fed” to this site, which will serve as the gateway to our course. We will talk about our work on the blog during our F2F sessions. We will also foreground the posts the class finds most compelling as “featured posts” on the website. Twitter (especially the hashtag #gedivt) provides us with another medium through which we can build and sustain the course network.

One Week in the Life of the GEDI network

In order for this to work, we will need to stay on the following schedule:

Mondays before midnight — individual blog posts due.

Tuesday morning — Senior Knights will put the posts in a weekly category

Tuesday afternoon-Wednesday — read and comment on at least three blog posts

Wednesday 5 pm — comments on individual blog posts due.

Wednesdays — 6-9 F2F meeting with the whole community.

Thursday — Featured Posts tagged on main website. Start thinking about next GEDI topic.

Anytime 24/7: Check out the Twitter feed. Feed the hashtag #gedivt. Feel the force.

Your Audience

Is the class (and me and the senior knights). But it also includes EVERYONE. All the time (because it’s on the World Wide Web). So put your best, most accomplished, mature and professional foot forward. Don’t put anything on line that you wouldn’t want your grandmother or Stephen Colbert to read. And if you do make a mistake, or realize something is not quite right with what you posted, please fix it. One of the many beauties of the blog is that it’s easy to touch-up and re-edit a post.

Evaluation

Individual blog posts and comments are not graded, but will be considered holistically as evidence of your general commitment to the course and its content.