



**SPRING 2013
ENGLISH 7872:
Studies in the English Language
Graduate Seminar**

Digital English

**Instructor: Dr. Lauren Squires
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This course will explore the English language in digital media contexts, focusing on sociolinguistic approaches to communication technologies. We'll survey the past two decades of empirical research on issues like:

- *Adaptations of English orthography and structure for digital media
- *Language variation, affiliation, and acts of identity in online spaces and virtual communities
- *Digital communication as influencing spoken English or the norms of Standard English
- *Technological determinism
- *The avoidance or appropriation of "new media" language practices by "old media"
- *The status of English on the multilingual internet

We'll investigate a range of communicative formats and genres, from the private (email, instant messaging, text messaging) to the public (blogs, listservs, message boards, Twitter) and in between (chat rooms, MySpace/ Facebook/Academia/etc.). We'll also discuss a range of research methods, including linguistic variation analysis, linguistic ethnography, corpus linguistics, conversation analysis, semiotics, and discourse analysis. Depending on students' backgrounds and interests, we may incorporate other approaches, such as new literacy studies.

Student responsibilities will include discussion facilitations, a digital genre presentation, reading responses, and an original research component (either an individual project or a contribution to a class project--decided by the class in the first few weeks).