

R/C Visiting Speaker Series

Michael Neal

Tuesday, September 17, 2015 from 3:30-5:00pm
in the Common Room (WMS 013)

Transformative Writing: Beyond the Four Factor Test for Fair Use in Multimodal Composing

Many of us who teach multimodal composition are often ill equipped to navigate the rapidly evolving legal and ethical terrain of intellectual property. Unlike print texts, composers of multimodal texts—even students composing for academic purposes—cannot assume that, as long as they cite sources, they can use media produced by others as part of their own composition. The disciplinary solution has been to know and teach about copyright, especially focusing on fair use exceptions. However, I believe that these principles, while necessary, are insufficient to understanding the legal and ethical dimensions of multimodal authorship. This is coupled with the current challenge to knowing how copyright and fair use applies to academic settings, where most laws and policies continue to position us as consumers rather than producers of texts. Therefore, I argue that helping multimodal composers negotiate copyright and fair use is a complex continuum of confidence that practices within certain contexts are more or less fair and ethical. This presentation will provide a brief overview of intellectual property and fair use principles as they apply to writing produced in academic settings before considering a more comprehensive model for deliberating fair use beyond the now ubiquitous four factor test of fair use.



Michael Neal is an associate professor of English at Florida State University, where he explores intersections among composition, writing assessment, and digital technologies. He is the author of *Writing Assessment and the Revolution in Digital Texts and Technologies* as well as articles and chapters on writing assessment, digital archiving, undergraduate research, and digital composing. Professor Neal teaches undergraduate courses in the Editing, Writing, and Media major and graduate courses in Rhetoric and Composition. His current research includes assessment technologies, digital archiving, undergraduate research initiatives, intellectual property and multimodal composition, and writing assessment frameworks and practices.