Images now flood our writing lives, whether on the pages of newspapers, magazines and academic journals, or on the screens through which we access Facebook, Flickr, and YouTube. It now appears clear that visual literacy—the ability to "read" and "write" with images—will soon become as important as literacy proper. In this course, we learn how analyze the stories images tell and to decode the arguments they make--and, most crucially, we will learn to "speak" with images ourselves, combining technical and narrative skills to create persuasive arguments and interesting stories with multimedia. Students complete two major and several minor projects, ranging from a Powerpoint presentation that analyzes the rhetoric of a visual text to a multimedia essay or video that advances an argument or tells a story. The course is helpful to anyone interested in becoming a writer in the age of multimedia (and any of us with a blog or a Facebook profile is now such a writer) as well as those interested in related fields such as web design, film and video-making, and business communication.

In February we will meet for an intensive weekend of training and reflecting, and this intensive weekend comprises such a large percentage of the course that full attendance this weekend is absolutely mandatory.

Our goal here is to give you the technical and rhetorical skills required to communicate in multimedia compositions. You will perform a number of short ungraded assignments intended to develop your skills (you will receive feedback from the rest of the class on these ungraded assignments). And you will perform two larger assignments that will comprise the bulk of your grade. Assignments
may include:

- 20 photos of one thing
- Photomontage
- Self-portraits in video
- Academic or “How-to” video
- The art of the Tweet
- Three-slide Powerpoint Presentation
- Group Video Project with Individual Commentary
- Final Project
- Final Reflection Paper

As for grading breakdowns, 40% of your grade comes from the group project and reflection, 40% from the final project (including reflection). The remaining 20% of the grade comes from participation, including participation in the ungraded projects.

—Course Materials and Technical Requirements—

This term you will have access to all of the technology you’ll require for the course, but for one exception: you will need to purchase an external hard drive that you can connect to the machines in the lab. This means that it will need to have a USB port or a Firewire port (at this point, the machines in the lab do not have Thunderbolt connections). The tools you’ll find in the lab are as follows:

1. a still camera: the lab has Canon 60D and 70D cameras.
2. a video camera: the 60Ds also shoot video, and the lab has HD Panasonic camcorders you can borrow as well.
3. an audio recorder: the lab has microphones and a Zoom H4n recorder you can borrow.
4. software: the lab’s machines have Photoshop, Final Cut Pro X, and Motion. All of which we will use to some degree or other.

That said, you are more than welcome to use your own equipment too. And anyone interested in buying gear is invited to discuss this with me if they’d like tips.

—Official DCE! Policies—
Attendance and Participation
Harvard expects credit students to be active and engaged participants. They must attend all classes or participate online as distance students, take all exams, and complete all coursework on time. Students enrolled in noncredit Institute for English Language courses are also expected to attend all classes and complete all coursework. Students are prohibited from using recording devices of any kind in their courses without the instructor's explicit approval. Late work may be submitted only with instructor approval and according to instructor policies. A student who is inadequately prepared, fails to attend classes, neglects coursework, or disrupts course progress with inappropriate behavior may be required to withdraw from the course by the Administrative Board for University Summer and excluded from future courses. Such students are not eligible for tuition refunds for those courses.

Academic Integrity
Harvard expects students to understand and maintain high standards of academic integrity. Breaches of academic integrity include the following examples.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is the theft of someone else’s ideas and work. It is the incorporation of facts, ideas, or specific language that are not common knowledge, are taken from another source, and are not properly cited.

Whether a student copies verbatim or simply rephrases the ideas of another without properly acknowledging the source, the theft is the same. A computer program written as part of the student's academic work is, like a paper, expected to be the student’s original work and subject to the same standards of representation. In the preparation of work submitted to meet course, program, or school requirements, whether a draft or a final version of a paper, project, take-home exam, computer program, application essay, oral presentation, or other work, students must take great care to distinguish their own ideas and language from information derived from sources. Sources include published and unpublished primary and secondary materials, the Internet, and information and opinions of other people.

Students are responsible for following the standards of proper citation and to avoid plagiarism. Two useful sources are Writing with Sources: A Guide for Harvard Students and Writing with Internet Sources (available online), prepared by Harvard’s Expository Writing Program. Writing with Sources: A Guide for Harvard Students is available in the Research Help section of the Grossman Library website. (Log in with your Harvard ID number, and select “Research Help” from the menu on the left.) Hard copies of both of these
publications are available at 51 Brattle Street and are on reserve at Grossman Library. For more information, see the Harvard Writing Program’s Writing Resources.