



03 *welcome*

04 *basics*

05 *details*

07 *policies*

08 *assignments*

09 *schedule*

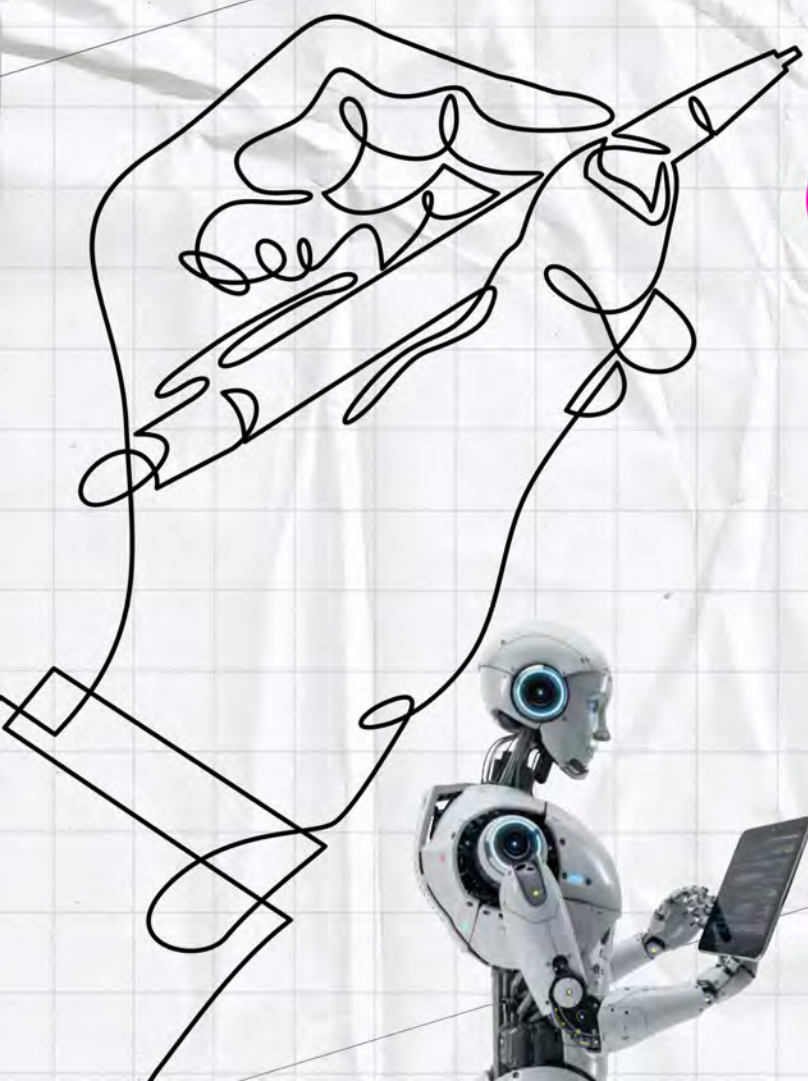
10 *more policies*

12 *resources*

14 *reflect*

15 *x-word*

02 / 16



welcome letter

Welcome to AI to Zines! My name is Dr. Ryan Cheek and I'll be your instructor this semester. This class is made possible by a grant from the Public Interest Technology - University Network and is part of a larger Zine Lab project. What's a zine, you ask? There are a lot of ways to answer that question, and we will explore them. For now, let's think of zines as an expressive, small circulation, self-published artifact. Now why would such a Z be combined with a class on AI (these models are certainly artificial, but capitalizing the i feels like succumbing to the proposition they are intelligent)?

Combining high tech and low tech methods to communicate a message is a valuable skill that will be increasingly in demand as AI agents enter the workforce to mingle with human employees. Knowing how to communicate with technology (like chatting with an LLM) is a tech comm superpower. At the same time, so is knowing when to disconnect and use reliable analogs to craft messaging. It is in this synthesis of AI and Zines (and the many communication technologies between them), that enables technical communicators to translate between the digital and material worlds.

The course is scheduled for blended instruction, meaning it has in-person and online content for students to engage with. Aside from the first day, we will regularly meet in-person on Mondays at 10am. On Wednesdays, you will sometimes meet in small groups (at your own arranged time & place) to brainstorm or discuss assignments. Late in the semester, Wednesdays will also be for working on a small group project. Fridays are focused on social annotations of reading artifacts and finishing assignment productions.

In this course, you will get to play with

artificial intelligence tools and put together expressive artifacts ready for e-pub or print distribution. In fact, we will have a zine fair at the end of the semester where students and invited guests can come to check out and trade zines with one another. We will also be working with the Zine Lab physical collection for the first time while helping to build it.

It is my sincere hope that this class and the Zine Lab are institutionalized at Missouri S&T as part of its commitment to promoting Public Interest Technology as a field and profession. Many universities have zine archives, in fact Mizzou and UMKC both have zine archives in their special collections. The St. Louis Public Library has a zine collection that they've put into circulation, meaning you can check-out zines from them just like any other book. In part, the Zine Lab is about making that experience available here at S&T.

One last thing before we get into it: although there is a Gulf of Mexico sized range of zine topics and types, some zines can be immensely personal, incredibly graphic, and unexpectedly disturbing. This is a fundamental aspect of the genre, and part of what makes it so powerful. Zines are an outlet for someone(s) truth as much as they are for another(s) edification and enjoyment. I will do my best to provide warnings about content ahead of time. If you need an alternative to that content, I'm happy to figure that out with you. I just want you focused on having fun learning about AI, Zines, and tech comm. Please let me know if I can be of any help along your journey this semester.

take care,

Dr. Cheek

03/16

AI TO ZINES AND THE FUTURE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION (SPRING 2025)

RYAN CHEEK, PH.D.
OFFICE
HSS 210
OFFICE HOURS
M:12-3PM &
W:10-11AM

RYANCHEEK@MST.EDU

MWF:10-10:50AM
INNOVATION LAB 213



dr. cheek



04/16

Course
Instruction
Mode
Ai to Zines is
scheduled for

blended class instruction,
meaning "course content
is delivered as a mix of
in-person and online

instruction.
Online
instruction is
25-75% of the
total course."

Course Description



Scheduled in-person
meetings will take place
on Mondays 10-10:50am
in the Innovation Lab.



AT THE INTERSECTION OF WRITING, DESIGN, AND TECHNOLOGY, THIS COURSE OFFERS AN EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH TO TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE STUDY AND USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) ASSISTED COMMUNICATION DESIGN AND DO-IT-YOURSELF (DIY) ZINE-MAKING.

STUDENTS WILL EXAMINE HOW

AI, AS AN EMERGING TOOL IN CONTENT CREATION, AND ZINE-MAKING, AS A DIY GRASSROOTS METHOD OF COMMUNICATION DESIGN, REPRESENT TWO CONTRASTING YET COMPLEMENTARY FORCES SHAPING THE FUTURE OF TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION. BY ENGAGING CRITICALLY WITH BOTH HIGH-TECH (AI) AND LOW-TECH (ZINES) METHODS, STUDENTS WILL LEARN TO NAVIGATE THE COMPLEXITIES OF CREATING AND DISTRIBUTING MEANINGFUL CONTENT IN AN INCREASINGLY AUTOMATED WORLD. THE COURSE EMPHASIZES HOW WRITING, DESIGN, AND TECHNOLOGY CONVERGE TO EMPOWER MARGINALIZED VOICES AND INFLUENCE PUBLIC DISCOURSE. THROUGH PRACTICAL COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS, STUDENTS WILL USE GENERATIVE AI DESIGN TOOLS AND ZINE-MAKING TECHNIQUES TO PRODUCE INNOVATIVE FORMS OF ADVOCACY THAT CHALLENGE TRADITIONAL POWER DYNAMICS IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY. THIS ADVANCED COURSE MORE DEEPLY EXPLORES AI AND ZINE-MAKING WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PUBLIC INTEREST TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION.



Course Goals

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Make zines that communicate complex ideas in an accessible and socially impactful manner.
- Experiment with and assess AI design tools.
- Integrate high-tech and low-tech design tools into their project workflows.
- Analyze the impacts of AI on technical communication and related fields..
- Develop multimodal projects that use AI tools to advocate for social change.
- Evaluate the ethics of using AI in communication design projects.
- Practice independent publishing processes and techniques.

credentials. No purchase is required. You may want to purchase a ~\$20 subscription to an AI model such as OpenAI's ChatGPT, Anthropic's Claude, or Google's Gemini. However, free public access versions of these models are suitable for completing work in this course.

Course Materials

All reading materials are available for free online or through your campus library access



Late Work

Extensions for assignments can be negotiated with the instructor in advance of the deadline.

AI Writing

Live by the AI, die by the AI. Although I encourage experimentation with AI tools in this course, you are ultimately responsible for what you turn in for credit. AI models hallucinate and they've been known to falsify sources and plagiarize published work. Play with AI but don't let it get you in trouble or be a substitute for engaging with course materials, assignments, and activities.

Communicating with the Instructor

Before contacting me, please check our Canvas site, course syllabus, and assignment descriptions for answers and clarifications. Outside of office hours, I may be reached via Canvas message or email (ryancheek@mst.edu). Polite and brief messages/emails will be answered first. Impolite and/or lengthy emails will be deprioritized. I will do my best to reply to all messages and emails within two business days.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, generally defined, is representing work that has been completed by others as your own. Work that is found to be plagiarized in this course will result in an automatic failing grade for the course without the

Course Policies



possibility of revision or resubmission, and the case will be reported to university authorities.

Appropriate Interactions

All students are expected to engage appropriately with one another and with the instructor. Appropriate engagement entails the creation of respectful, supportive, and productive learning environments at all times. Examples of inappropriate engagement include, but are not limited to: harassment (sexual or otherwise), bullying, retaliation, false reporting, threatening or intimidating behaviors, or any other interaction that creates a hostile or difficult learning/working environment at an individual or group.

Course Assignments

Participation (30%)		
Attendance & Engagement	Attend in-person meetings & engage in class discussion	100
Social Annotations	Annotate readings in Hypothes.is as a class. Undergraduates should annotate one of the readings per week; graduate students should annotate all of the readings each week.	100
Zine Fair	Participate in the zine fair at the end of the semester	100
AProducts (30%)		
AI One-Pager	Create a well designed one-pager that explains how AI is impacting a specific industry in both positive and negative ways.	50

ASSIGNMENTS

	The front side of the one-pager should focus on the positive impacts and the backside should focus on the negative impacts.	
Zine-cyclopedia of Public Interest Technology	Design a 1-2 page entry for the ZPIT	50
AI Design Tool Review	Choose an AI design tool to play with and then write a review of the tool.	100
Rant about AI	Write-up a 2-3 page rant about AI that you've been holding onto	100

ZProducts (30%)		
DIY mini-zine	Design a mini-zine that explains how to use a specific technology.	50
Tech-perzine or tech-fanzine	Design a staple (or stitch) bound standard size zine that either examines your relationship to technology or is devoted to a technology specific fandom. Undergraduate students should design accordion-bound zines instead of standard ones.	100
Zine review and show-and-tell	Pick a zine from the Zinc Lab's physical collection, then write a 1 page review and deliver a 5-7 minute presentation on that zine.	50
Advocacy Zine	In small groups, design a multi-authored standard size zine devoted to advocating for a technology related issue your group is passionate about.	100
Graduate Students Only (10%)		
E-portfolio update and reflection	Update your e-portfolios with work from this course and write a reflection on what knowledges and skills this course contributed to your professional development	50

Grading

Letter Grade	% Distribution
A	90 and above
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	below 60

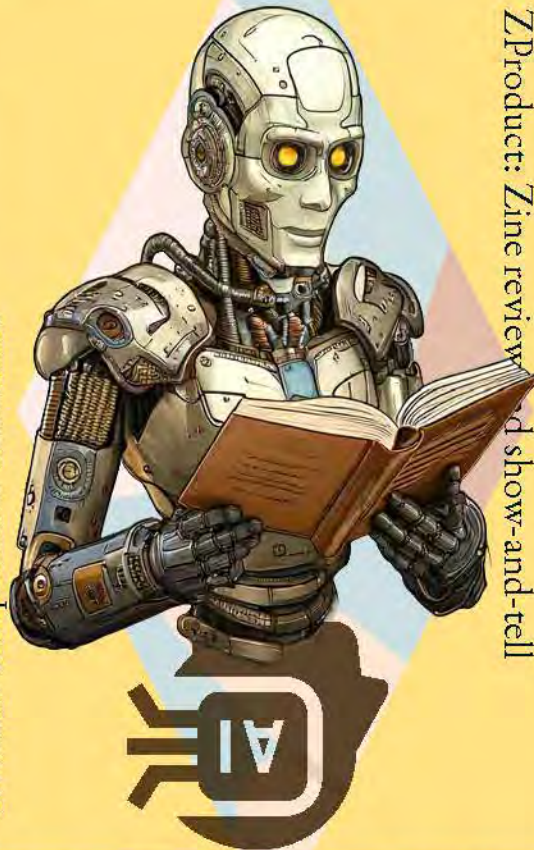
COURSE SCHEDULE

Mod1: AI to Zines

- 1st week: syllabus and introductions
- 2nd week: A People's Guide to AI and Zines as Empowerment
- 3rd week: Back to Pagan and The History of Tech Comm and the Future of Gen AI
- AProduct: AI One-pager
- ZProduct: DIY mini-zines

Mod2: Unintelligent Artificiality

- 1st week: The Intelligence Age; Pause Giant AI Experiments; and Gen AI in Tech Comm
- 2nd week: AI for Whose Good? and The Language Labyrinth
- 3rd week: Organizing Against Violent Algorithms and Politics by Automatic Means
- 4th week: Fairness in AI Systems and Stochastic Publics
- AProduct: Zin-e-cyclopedia of Public Interest Technology
- ZProduct: Tech-perzine or tech-fanzine



- 1st week: Surveillance Technology at the U.S.-Mexico Border and AI, Big Data, and Surveillance
- 2nd week: From Vice to Violence and Why Diverse Zines Matter
- 3rd week: Communication is a Fundamental Human Right #2 and gURL scenes and grrrl zines
- 4th week: How We Illustrate Tech (and AI) at the Markup and Trans(affective)mediation
- AProduct: AI Design Tool Review
- ZProduct: Zine review and show-and-tell

Mod3: The Politics of Zines

Mod4: GenAI Refusal & Zine Resistance

- 1st week: The Intelligence Age; Pause Giant AI Experiments; and Gen AI in Tech Comm
- 2nd week: AI for Whose Good? and The Language Labyrinth
- 3rd week: Organizing Against Violent Algorithms and Politics by Automatic Means
- 4th week: Fairness in AI Systems and Stochastic Publics
- AProduct: Zin-e-cyclopedia of Public Interest Technology
- ZProduct: Tech-perzine or tech-fanzine

Missouri S&T Campus & UM System Policies

Statement about Copyright, FERPA, and Use of Video

It is vitally important that our classroom environment promote the respectful exchange of ideas. This entails being sensitive to the views and beliefs expressed during discussions, whether in class or online. Please obtain instructor permission before recording any class activity. It is a violation of University of Missouri policy to distribute such recordings without authorization and the permission of all who are recorded. More information is provided online.

Accessibility and Accommodations

It is the university's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. Student Accessibility and Testing provides services and accommodations that facilitate full participation in Missouri S&T's learning experience for students with disabilities. If you anticipate or experience physical, academic, and/or digital barriers due to a disability, please contact Student Accessibility and Testing at (573) 341-6655, email dss@mst.edu, or visit <https://saat.mst.edu/> for information.

Student Honor Code and Academic Integrity

All students are expected to follow the Standard of Conduct and Honor Code.

The Standard of Conduct defines the behavioral expectations of all students and student organizations with clear descriptions designed to protect a specialized educational environment conducive to learning. This environment promotes learning while fostering integrity, academic success, personal and professional growth, and responsible citizenship. Additional resources regarding academic integrity are available online.

Student Mental Health and Well-Being

All students are expected to follow the Standard of Conduct and Honor Code.

Your well-being is important, and it contributes to your success in this course. At S&T, we provide resources to support your mental, physical, and social well-being. Any of us can experience challenges that make learning difficult. If you are struggling, take advantage of the following resources offered by the university:



Nondiscrimination, Equity, and Title IX

Missouri S&T is committed to the safety and well-being of our campus community, and to creating an environment free from discrimination and harassment.

The University prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, protected veteran status, and any other status protected by applicable state or federal law. As used in this policy, the word "sex" is also inclusive of the term "gender."

Additionally, US Federal Law Title IX states that no member of the university community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, or be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Sexual harassment violations of this law include quid pro quo, hostile environment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. The U.S. Department of Education has stated the prohibition on discrimination on the basis of sex includes sexual orientation and gender identity.

Students who are experiencing pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, including the birthing parent and non-birthing parent, have rights protected under Title IX. Students should contact Student Accessibility and Testing or the Office of Equity and Title IX to learn more about their rights and pregnancy-related assistance/accommodations provided by the University to ensure equitable access to University educational programs and activities.

In accordance with the University of Missouri's Collected Rules and Regulations, all faculty and staff are required to report any information concerning discrimination disclosed through communication including, but not limited to, direct conversation, email, social media, classroom papers and homework exercises to the Equity Officer/Title IX Coordinator.

For more information regarding support for those that have been impacted or to report an incident of discrimination or harassment as defined by Chapter 600 of the University's Collected Rules and Regulations, visit the Office of Equity and Title IX or visit their website at equity.mst.edu.



OFFICE OF EQUITY AND TITLE IX

Equity Officer and
Title IX Coordinator:
Dr. Paul Hirtz
Phone: (573) 341-7734
Location: 900
Innovation Drive,
Suite 500
E-mail:
equity@mst.edu

Student Resources

Student Mental Health and Well-Being

All students are expected to follow the Standard of Conduct and Honor Code.

Your well-being is important, and it contributes to your success in this course. At S&T, we provide resources to support your mental, physical, and social well-being. Any of us can experience challenges that make learning difficult. If you are struggling, take advantage of the following resources offered by the university:

Student Well-Being (<https://wellbeing.mst.edu/>)

1 Student Well-Being provides counseling services, health promotion initiatives, and prevention programs to empower the S&T community to thrive and enhance personal, academic, and professional success. Department office hours are Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. On the website, you can find information related to confidential individual and group counseling, wellness consultations and trainings, case management services, resources for many health and wellness topics, and help for mental health crisis situations. For the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, call or text 988, or visit missouri988.org.

Health and Well-Being Canvas Course

2 (<https://umsystem.instructure.com/enroll/G3LY3G>)

The Health and Well-Being Canvas Course features trainings, presentations, and other health and well-being resources for students. The course is free for all students, is non-credit, and students can enroll at any point in the semester.

Student Emergency Fund (SEF)

3 The SEF is administered by the Division of Student Success to help ensure Missouri S&T students have access to the support and resources they need to successfully recover from an unforeseeable financial emergency. The goal of this fund is to prevent one small emergency or unexpected expense from derailing a student's progress toward degree completion.

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University Libraries

5 The library provides students and faculty with physical and electronic books, journals, articles and databases as well as recreational reading and video materials. You can also check out laptops, calculators, tool kits and more and reserve study or meeting rooms. Talk to us one-on-one via chat, email, phone or in person for any assistance regarding library services or finding peer-reviewed, credible research materials for study and research needs. Find out more information about the library here: library.mst.edu.

Writing and Communication Center

6 (<https://umsystem.instructure.com/enroll/G3LY3G>)

The Writing and Communication Center's mission is to assist all students in their efforts to become better writers, communicators, and critical thinkers. The Center's peer consultants and coaches provide free individualized one-on-one and small-group conversations to offer meaningful feedback and guidance to students across all disciplines. More information can be found on our website, through email: writing@mst.edu or stop by Curtis Laws Wilson Library 314–315.

Student Resources cont.

7 *Student Success Center*

The Student Success Center (SSC) offers peer tutoring and success coaching to help students succeed in their academic goals. Additionally, we work as a resource hub and can connect you to the campus resources necessary to help you dig deeper and finish the semester strong. Visit the SSC in Room 117 Innovation Lab and contact us at ssc@mst.edu or 573-341-7590. To learn more about the SSC, visit <https://ssc.mst.edu/>

8 *S&T Tutoring Opportunities*

The Student Success Center (SSC) helps you with your studies in three ways:

- LEAD Drop-in: Our LEAD Drop-in service provides convenient access to experienced peer learning assistants for a multitude of courses across campus. No appointments necessary. Simply check our tutoring schedule to discover when support for your specific course is available: <https://ssc.mst.edu/leaddrop-in/>
- LEAD Group Sessions: Our LEAD Group sessions offer after-hours group tutoring, facilitated by our dedicated peer learning assistants in partnership with faculty members. Explore the LEAD Group schedule to see if your course is featured and join us at the next session: <https://ssc.mst.edu/leadgroup/>
- Knack Tutoring: If your schedule clashes with our LEAD offerings, or if your course isn't covered, Knack is your solution. Request a tutor for either a virtual meeting or an in-person session on campus, ensuring you get the help you need, when you need it. To sign up for your FREE Knack account, visit: <https://ssc.mst.edu/knacktutoring/>

9 *Military & Veterans Services Center (MVSC)*

The Military & Veteran Services Center at Missouri S&T is dedicated to supporting those who have served, are currently serving, and those who aspire to serve in our nation's armed forces, along with their families. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment that empowers military-connected students to achieve their educational and personal goals. Through tailored resources, academic and career support, and community connections, we aim to enhance the success and well-being of service members, veterans, and their loved ones as they transition into and thrive within higher education here on campus.



**how will you be successful in this
course this semester?**

Ai Crossword



ACROSS

4. A dataset too large to process using traditional methods
7. AI can learn by studying patterns, a process called
8. A type of AI model inspired by the human brain
10. AI can identify and organize things into groups, a process called
12. A type of AI learning with given exact instructions
14. Personal assistants like Alexa and Siri respond using
15. AI term for a machine improving through examples and experience
17. The "A" in AI
18. AI uses this to learn patterns from data
20. AI learns by studying large amounts of this

DOWN

1. The "I" in AI stands for this
2. The measure of how well an AI model predicts outcomes
3. Statistical tool often used in predictive analytics
5. AI system that generates text responses based on prompts
6. Technique of splitting data for training and evaluation
9. A type of machine that uses AI
11. AI is used to recognize these in photos
13. AI can convert spoken words into text using
16. Framework enabling machines to understand human language
19. The phase where AI models are evaluated on unseen data

<https://crosswordlabs.com/view/introduction-to-ai-4>

