

Spring 2024 | Dr. Fuller | samuel.fuller@selu.edu

ENGL 652: Studies in Publishing – Platforms



Book covers from the "Platform Studies" series published by MIT Press. <https://mitpress.mit.edu/series/platform-studies/>

In this course we'll study the digital underpinnings of literary and creative work from past to present, focusing on the groundbreaking "Platform Studies" collection of books published by MIT Press. These books emphasize the crucial role of underlying computing systems in shaping and supporting various forms of artistic, literary, and gaming endeavors. We'll read about and discuss the interplay between technology and publishing, revealing the profound influence of platforms on the creation, distribution, and reception of literary (and post-literary) work.

Throughout the semester, students will critically engage with the concept of platform studies and will center their analyses on a single platform or closely related family of platforms. This approach will provide an in-depth understanding of how the characteristics of these platforms influence the creative processes.

Students will improve their knowledge about the workings of computing systems, exploring both hardware and software components, to comprehend the intricate mechanisms behind digital publishing platforms. This technical insight will empower students to make informed decisions as content creators, editors, and publishers.

We will also consider the profound impact of platforms on society; how they are developed based on cultural concepts and, in turn, contribute to culture in various ways. From shifts in how people perceive computing to the alteration of the publishing landscape, students will engage in thoughtful discussions about the broader implications of their findings.