**Digital Environments**

The digital revolution has transformed foundational interactions of everyday life, from work to family to politics. This revolution has enabled a host of new practices in the realms of research and communication, and it has forged new communities across great, even transnational distances. Already the transformation poses unheralded problems of access, accountability, authority, and intelligibility. We venture to say it generates problems, perhaps even a crisis, for epistemology itself. The goals of this cluster hire are to produce the knowledge requisite to addressing the problems and realizing the potential of digital environments, to help students and colleagues to discriminate authoritative research, to generate new forms of interpretation, and to cultivate innovative forms of literacy appropriate to the shifting technological foundations of the humanities.

The Department of English will search for a candidate who can explore these transformations in the domains of language, text and literacy and their broader cultural ramifications. The Program in American Culture’s hire will investigate the developing popular cultures of social networking and online gaming, the emerging digital divides between haves and have-nots, or the implications of digital communications for ethnic, religious and other social and cultural communities that are increasingly forged and maintained in virtual environments. The Department of Communication Studies will recruit a scholar of virtual literacy to advance our analyses of the bombardment of information and images from various platforms and environments. The School of Information will seek a candidate who can research such areas as the creation, display, reuse, and preservation of digital objects, promote new research and training methodologies that address both digital literacies—particularly credibility—and the formation of online communities. All recruits will be asked to attend to the crucial questions of accountability, authorship, readership, and copyright as we seek to school our students and colleagues not only in the digital revolution’s attendant epistemological, cultural, ethical and legal dimensions but also in its opportunities.