

The TicToc Manifesto

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This document was drafted in order to cultivate some fertile ground upon which the emerging field of electronic pedagogy may thrive. The intentions named here are not meant to restrict the creativity and energy of educators who seek to use currently untraditional methods and media (e.g. computer technologies) in their classes; rather, they are intended to promote equity for all participants in electronic educational environments.

The TicToc Manifesto contains seven major intentions for The e-works Project; each intention is further defined by a number of minor intentions and requirements. The major intentions for The e-works Project are as follows:

1. WE SHALL seize the initiative in the development of Electronic Educational Environments (EEEs) at the University of Illinois at Chicago.
2. WE SHALL thoroughly and continually investigate the nature of our labor in the context of the labor of our colleagues within our department and institution, in the context of our cultures, and in the context of our society.
3. WE SHALL thoroughly, energetically, and creatively assess the activities of those people who are engaged in electronic education projects within The e-works Project.
4. WE SHALL establish as the foundation of all our electronic educational initiatives a set of humane, rather than technological or institutional, ideals.
5. WE CONCEIVE of our purpose as being community and culture development within an educational context; our scope is greater than the dissemination of information.
6. WE SHALL be self-reflective at all levels of our activity.
7. WE SHALL establish a formal leadership role for The e-works Project so that the ideals of the TicToc Manifesto may be accomplished and upheld amidst the changes in our academic fields and despite the endless fluctuations in what is deemed technologically necessary.

**WE SHALL SEIZE THE INITIATIVE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ELECTRONIC
EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS (EEEs) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT
CHICAGO**

It is only by engaging in a proactive, open, and dynamic process of investigation, evaluation, and collaboration, that we, as university scholars, teachers, undergraduate and graduate students, academic and support staff, and departmental and university administrators, will be able to attain an authoritative voice in the formation of policies and the making of decisions that affect how electronic education will be conducted in the University of Illinois school system. This proactive effort can best be accomplished by working collaboratively with *all* interested members of the university to define the primary goals of teaching. These goals will guide us in our decisions about how to implement technology in educational settings.

**WE SHALL THOROUGHLY AND CONTINUALLY INVESTIGATE THE NATURE OF OUR
LABOR IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LABOR OF OUR COLLEAGUES WITHIN OUR
DEPARTMENT AND INSTITUTION, IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR CULTURES, AND IN
THE CONTEXT OF OUR SOCIETY.**

As it encourages new ways of teaching and learning, e-works will simultaneously encourage thoughtful consideration of whether and how, in specific cases, the conditions of our labor will be changed by our use of electronic tools and environments. e-works commits to working creatively and energetically within departmental and institutional rule systems so long as those rule systems do not inhibit the exploration and development of new and potentially superior pedagogical techniques, and so long as the evaluation and reward procedures of the teachers and scholars who investigate these new techniques are equitably determined and attended to by well-informed peers. In cases where departmental or institutional policies and decisions are found to be discriminatory against such activities, e-works will actively seek to change those policies and decisions in favor of more just labor practices. Unfair policies and decisions that e-works will address include, but are not limited to, salary, promotion, tenure, workload, resource, and staffing grievances. In all these matters, we will be especially conscientious of the work of graduate employees (TAs/RAs/GAs) and undergraduate student workers who are currently among the pioneers of non-traditional forms of education, yet who are often exploited by institutional policies and politics.

**WE SHALL THOROUGHLY, ENERGETICALLY, AND CREATIVELY ASSESS THE ACTIVITIES
OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE ENGAGED IN ELECTRONIC EDUCATION PROJECTS
WITHIN THE E-WORKS CONSORTIUM.**

In the development and maintenance of its role as assessor of electronic course initiatives and educators, e-works will collaboratively establish an equitable and accessible set of pedagogical and scholarly goals that will found its assessment procedures. Among our concerns in this process will be: ensuring adequate theoretical and pedagogical preparation of the teacher; ensuring adequate resources for the teacher (e.g. equipment, administrative and technical support); and articulating our goals for teaching and scholarship in general. At this time, we name the following as among the prerequisite skills of educators working in electronic educational environments: informed as to the amount of time it takes to prepare an effective electronically-based course; a sophisticated understanding of how their electronic courses may help to redefine students' understandings of the relationships among reading and writing, audience and author, composing and assimilation culture, and the traditional protocols of work in academic studies; an ability to articulate their goals for the students in their course, and for the course itself in the context of its sponsoring department and institution; an appreciation for the multivalent nature of the educational community; a working knowledge of the positive and negative socio-political and technological complexities of their specific course; an effective plan by which students' accountability and activity will be determined; an ability to identify and manage in humane ways the tendential forces that are created by the alignment of social formations such as multinational capitalism, technology, education, classism, racism, sexism, and identity repression, along a single and complex axis.

**WE SHALL ESTABLISH AS THE FOUNDATION OF ALL OUR ELECTRONIC EDUCATIONAL
INITIATIVES A SET OF HUMANE, RATHER THAN TECHNOLOGICAL
OR INSTITUTIONAL, IDEALS.**

Because we recognize that computing is an inherently unstable field, the foundation of all of our electronic educational initiatives will consist of humane, rather than technological or institutional ideals. We acknowledge that electronic technology is capable of serving education in ways that may make it similarly effective, more effective, and less

effective than traditional forms of pedagogy and scholarship. At the same time, we affirm together that *currently*, electronic technology has particularly strong potential to help students to learn and gain an understanding about their world, their cultures, their history, their abilities, and their relationships. Among our particular concerns in our discernment of e-works' humane ideals is that we ratify our conviction that the University of Illinois seek to fully accept and encourage, with thoughtful and caring efforts, multi-cultural and cross cultural perspectives, post-disciplinary forms of knowledge, collaboration and shared intellectual projects, and interactive learning.

WE CONCEIVE OF OUR PURPOSE AS BEING COMMUNITY AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN AN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT; OUR SCOPE IS GREATER THAN THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.

As an exploration of, and experiment with new kinds of educational experiences, new kinds of university life, new kinds of knowledge production, and new kinds of pedagogy linking technology and research, e-works will provide an opportunity for all department members, both on and off-campus, to work with and support a variety of literacies and communication patterns. Part of e-works efforts to develop communities will be visible in the links it forges with artistic communities, particularly those at the University of Illinois. We recognize that arts communities have long worked to investigate alternative structures for creative endeavors, an investigation that e-works, which intends to help reestablish the bonds between academic studies and the contemporary arts, is actively pursuing as well. Our scope in these and other endeavors will extend far beyond information dissemination and weak attempts to convert traditional courses into electronic ones. Our scope will include working to obtain positions in departmental curricula for an emerging range of electronic courses that reflect the multivalence of the interests and abilities of their staff, students, and faculty; helping teachers and students to develop their ability to identify computing problematics, and then to invent and test possible explanations and solutions for them; establishing e-works as a dynamic repository for the accumulated and articulable knowledge of UIC faculty, staff, administration, and student body; and fostering projects similar to itself in other institutions.

WE SHALL BE SELF-REFLECTIVE AT ALL LEVELS OF OUR ACTIVITY.

In order to establish and maintain e-works as a site of engaged critical inquiry in the area of education and electronic environments, and because we believe that self-reflection is a necessary part of any attempt to implement substantial change in a system, e-works will maintain a commitment to actively, honestly, and openly discussing and evaluating, both electronically and face-to-face, the projects we are sponsoring. In addition, e-works will subject its own activities and their consequences to similarly intensive electronic and face-to-face discussions and evaluations. These discussions and evaluations will be based upon the peer review model, and will be ongoing among all faculty, staff, students, and administrators. In its project to be self-reflective, e-works will simultaneously work to remain aware of its own history and context within the institution that contains it, and within the society that contains the institution. To this end, we recognize from our inception the following dangers, about which we will strive to always remain wary: the over-institutionalization of e-works; a sense that we have retreated into the freedom of our subculture, having abandoned our attempts to confront the oppressive policies and institutions around us; the colonization and eventual disempowerment of new alternatives to traditional pedagogies and scholarship; the erroneousness of the claim that human activity, particularly learning and teaching, can be separated from the influences of technology; the delusion that an occasional award to a teacher or scholar working with electronic environments signifies general departmental and institutional support for such work. In an effort to discern in an ongoing manner the nature of the problems and problematics with which we are dealing, e-works recognizes that such knowledge may only grow out of experiences of failure and rejection. Such failures and rejections, within both the projects sponsored by e-works and within e-works itself, will form an important and public part of The e-works Project.

WE SHALL ESTABLISH A FORMAL LEADERSHIP ROLE FOR THE E-WORKS PROJECT SO THAT THE IDEALS OF THE TICTOC MANIFESTO MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED AND UPHELD AMIDST THE CHANGES IN OUR ACADEMIC FIELDS AND DESPITE THE ENDLESS FLUCTUATIONS IN WHAT IS DEEMED BY SOCIETY TO BE TECHNOLOGICALLY NECESSARY.

In order to establish e-works as a permanent resource for faculty, staff, administrators, and students, it must have stable leadership. To this end,

e-works must strive to establish a formal and permanent Director, to be elected from among the faculty. The Director must demonstrate knowledge of and attention to e-works and departmental ideals, goals, and policies, and must be willing to creatively and energetically work toward their achievement. In addition, the Director's position must be established with the same considerations appended as similar positions in the University, such as release time, budget allowances, and other resources necessary for the fulfillment of e-works' mission.