DIGITAL HISTORY
SPRING 2019

UNCG HIS 631
DR. TORREN L. GATSON
CLASSROOM: MHRA ROOM 1207/PH LAB

THURSDAY, 6:30-9:20
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OFFICE HOURS: BY APPOINTMENT, MHRA 2112

3 Credit Course
Prerequisites: Admission to a graduate program in History or Interior Architecture or written permission from the instructor of record.

Course Description *Welcome! This course Introduces the fields of digital history and humanities with a particular focus on how digital history can serve public historians. Explores the standards and methods of the field through the production of a collaborative digital history project.*

Course Objectives
There are two learning objectives for this course: the first is theoretical and the second is applied. First, you will debate and develop a working definition of Digital History and familiarize yourself with the standards and practices of digital humanists. Second, you will work together with your classmates to produce a public-facing digital history project.

The first third of the course will be devoted to exploring what digital history is and what tools serve its purpose. This means that we will be reading and discussing how other digital historians define the field, critiquing digital history projects, and determining the pitfalls of digital history.

The rest of the class will be devoted to hands-on learning through group research projects. These projects will take advantage of the many local history resources. Students will be aligned with community partners and together you will design, create, and display a digital public history product. Your objective is to ensure that your project emphasizes the importance for larger trends of history; research primary and secondary sources (as you would for a traditional history paper); discuss with your group and in class what kinds of questions and presentation you would like to make using digital technology.

TEACHING METHODS
In the digital history course, you as students have as much, if not more, influence over what you learn and the skills that you build as the professor does. As the instructor of the course, I facilitate the research and writing process by establishing the basic deadlines and goals,

facilitating class discussions and peer reviews. I will also offer comments on the drafts created throughout the semester and am available to offer any other edits you request. Beyond that, the majority of the work will occur outside of the classroom setting where you will control how you conduct your research, writing, collaboration with community partners, and project planning. The primary purpose of this course lies not just in an end product that serves the community. The other major purpose of this class is that you hone your skills as a public historian by taking steps outside of your comfort zone and trying new endeavors centered on the utilization on digital components. As a result, class sessions will include not just time for peer review on the content of the work but also time for reflection on your experiences as you do long-term research-driven public history projects.

EXPERIENCES, ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION

To build these skills, you will engage in the experiences and projects listed below. You must hand in each assignment on-time. I reserve the right to deduct a third of a grade for each 24 hours past the deadline. Unless you have a specific accommodation from the [Office of Accessibility Resources and Services](#), I will only grant extensions in advance of the due date. That said, contact me if you sense that you will not meet the deadline.

Grade Scale: A 93-100 / A- 90-92 / B+ 87-89 / B 83-86 / B- 80-82 / C+ 77-79 / C 73-76 / F 72 and below.

Semester structure

PART 1: DH initiation

This phase consists of discussing readings and DH project examples. Students are expected to attend all classes having read the assigned material. Class participation includes actively participating in daily discussions and responding to class presentations.

PART 2: Final project

In week 4, each group will present one combined project proposal in class. Each group will create a **group compact** that must include a 1-2 paragraph project description, the tools you are considering using, and a schedule of milestones. These contracts may be revised in consultation with me as the semester goes on. From this point, each group will be expected to make a weekly status update to the class.

Assessment and Grading:
5% Digital Portfolio
10% Participation: slack discussion comments /in class discussion/group work
10% Practica
20%Project proposal/presentation
50% Final project: (average of an individual and group project grade)

Assignments:

Participation:
Participation makes up a central part of this course, as the classroom is the primary place for grappling with the research process and the challenges that arise with developing a preliminary plan. I base the participation grade on your engagement with group discussions about both content and the capstone project process. Attendance is mandatory and if you have any conflicts because of religious holidays, family emergencies or health issues, please contact me as soon as possible and no later than the day of class to request an excused absence and arrange for making up that work.

Participation also relies on the quality of the peer review that you provide to your fellow students. Remember: "It takes a village to create a capstone project." As you embark upon this creative project, you do not work alone, you have the people in this class to support you and offer ideas along the way. Your participation grade will also rely on the quality of the constructive feedback that you give to other students.

Practica: These are hands-on activities (possibly in and out of class) for exploring various digital practices and tools. The goal is to help prepare you for the implementation (2nd) phase of the semester. An example would be using Google SketchUp to enhance a project

Slack comments: Every week, I'll post a question of small writing assignment to our Slack channel. In order to find our designated slack channel visit **slack.com** and then highlight and add the following tag into the box "**spring2019unc-xke4739**".

When you post your response, please take time to look and see what others have written as well. You are encouraged to respond to each other as well as to the root question.

Project review: This semester the class will be split into two groups. Each group will have a major digital project that may include a digital exhibition with possible digitally designed gallery. In order to produce this work students will conduct all necessary research whether historiographical, written, or through intense use of digital components. ** The two major projects will be provided in class.**

Project proposal: Groups will prepare a detailed and descriptive proposal based on your assigned project that outline your methodological approach, timeline, and resources.

Final project: The final project is a collaboratively-developed digital history project. Both the form and the content of your project are open. We will cover some of the possible formats for these projects in the first weeks of the course.

Semester Schedule:

Week 1 - January 17: Course introduction and setup

Week 2 - January 24: Introduction to DH

READINGS:

Cohen, Daniel J., and Roy Rosenzweig. "Introduction: Promises and Perils of Digital History." In *Digital History | Promises and Perils of Digital History.* 2005. http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/introduction/.

Robertson, Stephen. "The Differences between Digital Humanities and Digital History." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities*. University of Minnesota Press, 2016. http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/12.

Shapiro, Lisa. "'This Is Why We Fight': Defining the Values of the Digital Humanities." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities*. University of Minnesota Press, 2016. http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/13.

Week 3 - January 31: Online Exhibits

READINGS:

http://www.civilwarshades.org/

Brennan, Sheila. "Public, First." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, 2016. http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/83.

Cohen, Daniel J., and Roy Rosenzweig. "Designing for the History Web." In *Digital History | Promises and Perils of Digital History*. http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/designing/.

Hurley, A. "Chasing the Frontiers of Digital Technology: Public History Meets the Digital Divide." *The Public Historian* 38, no. 1 (February 1, 2016): 69–88.

Lester, Peter. "Is the Virtual Exhibition the Natural Successor to the Physical? 1." *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 27, no. 1 (April 2006): 85–101.

Week 4 - February 7: Spatial History GUEST: Joseph Ryan Roberts, Digital Geographer and current contractor for the City of Memphis.

Group proposals for final presentations are due

READINGS:

Bauch, Nicholas. *Enchanting the Desert.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016. http://www.enchantingthedesert.com/home/.

Robertson, Stephen. "Putting Harlem on the Map (Robertson)." *Writing History in the Digital Age*, March 19, 2012. http://writinghistory.trincoll.edu/evidence/robertson-2012-spring/.

White, Richard. "Spatial History Project." *Spatial History Lab*, 2010.
https://web.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/pub.php?id=29.

Week 5 - February 14: Network graphing

Readings:
Comsa, Maria Teodora, Melanie Conroy, Dan Edelstein, Chloe Summers Edmondson, and
Claude Willan. "The French Enlightenment Network." *The Journal of Modern History* 88, no. 3
(August 31, 2016): 495–534. doi:10.1086/687927.

Jenkins, Nicholas. *Kindred Britain*. http://kindred.stanford.edu/#/story/half/half/none///erasmus.

So, Richard Jean, and Hoyt Long. "Network Analysis and the Sociology of Modernism."
Boundary 2, no. 2 (2013): 147.

Winterer,Caroline. "If Ben Franklin Had Facebook." 2015.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N5CWsJ811V4.

Week 6 - February 21: Preserving and locating "data" Guest: Richard Cox, Jackson Library
UNCG

Readings:

http://usnewsmap.com/

Gibbs, Frederick W. "New Forms of History: Critiquing Data and Its Representations." *The
American Historian*, 2016.
http://tah.oah.org/february-2016/new-forms-of-history-critiquing-data-an d-its-representations/.

Rosenzweig, Roy. "Scarcity or Abundance? Preserving the Past in a Digital Era." *The American
Historical Review* 108, no. 3 (2003): 735–62. doi:10.1086/529596.

Week 7 - February 28: Data visualization

Readings:

http://www.fallen.io/ww2/

Drucker, Johanna. "Humanities Approaches to Graphical Display" 5, no. 1 (2011).
http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/5/1/000091/000091.html.

Theibault, John. "Visualizations and Historical Arguments." *Writing History in the Digital Age*,
2011. http://writinghistory.trincoll.edu/evidence/visualizations-and-historical-a
rguments-theibault/.

Week 8 - March 7: Spring break! No Class
Week 9- March 14: Project Break outs
Week 10 - March 21: Project Break outs
Week 11 - March 28: No Class (NCPH conference)
Week 13 - April 4:   Group Project breakouts
Week 14 - April 11: Group Project breakouts
Week 15 - April 18: preparation for visual display of final projects
Week 16 - April 25: Final Project presentations

Any information found within this syllabus (i.e. assignments, due dates or instructions) is subject to change at the discretion of the professor