

DIGITAL HISTORY

History 710 – Professional Development Seminar – Spring 2018 (ver. 1.4)

[The information in this syllabus is also available on our website.]

Goals

The term “digital history” has become ubiquitous, but what does it mean and what does it encompass? This seminar is designed to give graduate students (think “learning outcomes”) what you might call “digital literacy”:

- knowledge of the range of forms that “digital history” is taking these days,
- Engagement with debates among historians about the implications of digitization for the discipline of history, and
- Familiarity with some of the underlying technologies.

The seminar aims for **broad rather than deep learning**. The goal is not to make you a digital historian (though that might happen), but to expose you to methods and tools that might be useful for your own research and teaching and to give you the knowledge and confidence to speak intelligently on the subject, should you have occasion to do so (e.g., in a job interview).

Rhythm of the semester

We will begin by exploring **controversies among historians** that digitization in historical scholarship has generated in recent years. Is it changing the nature of historical scholarship—the questions that we ask, the kinds of research that we do, the ways in which we disseminate the fruits of our research to academic and public audiences?

Against this backdrop, the rest of the semester is divided into two parts. The middle weeks of the semester resemble a **hands-on “boot camp”** that introduces you primarily to tools for communicating the results of your research to academic audiences as well as to the broader public. During the last few weeks, you will develop **your own project**—either by putting to use the tools introduced during our boot camp or by exploring other tools of special relevance to your own work.



<http://chmm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/index.php>

Meeting time/place

Mondays, 3:30-5:55 pm
Design Lab classroom,
2257 Helen C. White

Professor Colleen Dunlavy

5109 Mosse Humanities
cdunlavy@wisc.edu
tel. 608.263.1854

Office hours

Tuesday, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

We will also maintain a **seminar blog** on our website. You will be required to post weekly. This offers an opportunity to share your reflections on the assignments, to bring items of interest that you have encountered on the web to the attention of your classmates, and to hone your skills at writing for a broader (if limited) public.



Q: What will we not cover?

A: Topics or tools on which workshops are regularly offered on campus—e.g., *citation or content managers* (check out [UW Library workshops](#)), *social media for academics* (about which there’s lots of [guidance online](#)), and *basic word processing, spreadsheets, PowerPoint, etc.* (DoIT’s [Software Training for Students](#)). We will also not delve into the “big data” tools characteristic of the “public humanities.” The UW offers occasional workshops on big-data tools for the humanities and in any case basic training generally requires more time than we could give it in this seminar.



Q: Do you need to have some prior knowledge in order to do well in this seminar?

A: No. You may be familiar with some of the tools—that’s fine; you can mentor your peers. But no prior knowledge is assumed.

Q. How can I learn more about the tools or issues that we cover in this seminar or about tools that we don’t cover? One of the goals of all graduate seminars is to give you the skills – valuable throughout your career – to search out and master a body of knowledge on your own initiative. For starting points, see the *Resources* page of our seminar website. You should also feel free to come and talk with me about your interests and strategies.

Requirements and assessment

This is a **3-credit seminar**. In accordance with [UW and federal policy](#), three credits translates into **135 hours** of “learning activities.” The seminar meets for 2.5 hours each week for 13 weeks (= 32.5 hours). So you may expect preparation for seminar (readings, blog posts, individual projects) and your final project to require (135 – 32.5 =) 102.5 hours of your time over the semester. Spread over 15 weeks (i.e., through exam period, at the end of which your individual projects are due), that averages out to 6.8 hours per week, in addition to the seminar meetings themselves.

You do not need to purchase any books, but, for some of the weekly projects, you may want to pay for access to **premium features** of online sites, e.g., for creating infographics or building a website. You should feel free to bring your laptop to seminar, although computers will be available in our classroom.

The most important elements of this course are engagement with the issues and hands-on experience with digital tools. Your **grade**, therefore, will be heavily weighted towards **participation**.

Grading Scale

Participation	80%
“Boot camp” projects	10%
Individual project	10%

Engaged participation in the seminar requires faithful **attendance** (of course!), solid **preparation** for each week’s seminar discussion (including a weekly blog post), good-faith efforts to complete the **assignments**, and an on-going **commitment** to producing the best possible work in the available time.

Blog posts: Beginning February 5, please post **weekly** (at least 10 of 13 weeks) on our seminar blog. Your post might reflect on the assigned readings (especially the first two weeks), report on your triumphs and tribulations and triumphs in completing the weekly project, or reflect on some of the broader issues with which we begin the semester. Please feel free to blog more often – e.g., to point your classmates to related materials of interest on the web. The blog, like the website, is “private” – viewable only by members of the seminar.

Deadlines and TIME MANAGEMENT ALERT: Your assignments, submitted via our blog, are due by **6 p.m. on the Sunday before seminar**. Blog posts may be submitted at the same time but are due in any case by 9 am on Monday mornings. Each week, be sure to **set aside some time** on Sunday evenings or on Mondays **to review** the other seminar members’ assignments and blog posts before our review and discussion of them in seminar.

Semester Schedule

The assigned readings are available either through links in the detailed schedule below, on our Canvas website (<http://canvas.wisc.edu>), or both.

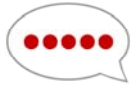
On the next page is an outline view of our semester. This is followed by the detailed weekly schedule.

Schedule in Outline

January 29	Introductions
February 5	Discussion: Digital history – issues and questions
February 12	Guest Speaker and Discussion: Digital collections as historical artifacts Skype conversation with Dr. Celeste Sharpe, author of born-digital diss. Training: Working with Word Assignment due Feb. 18: Syllabus redesigned for the 21 st century
February 19	Discussion: Review of peers' syllabi for the 21 st century Training: Prezi (presentation software) Assignment due Feb. 25: A Prezi presentation
February 26	Discussion: Review of peers' Prezi presentations Training: Infographics Assignment due March 4: An infographic on a question or topic of your choice
March 5	Discussion: Review of peers' infographics Training: Theory Comix Assignment due March 11: Theory Comix based on a topic or question drawn from your research interests
March 12	Discussion: Review of peers' theory comix Training: Data visualization Assignment due March 18: Visualization of data related to your research interests
March 19	Discussion: Review of peers' data visualizations Training: Story Map (a map-based, story-telling tool) Assignment due April 1: a Story Map built on your research interests
March 26	Spring break
April 2	Discussion: Review of peers' Story Maps Training: Podcasts Assignment due April 8: a podcast on a topic of your choice
April 9	Discussion: Review of peers' podcasts Training: Building a WordPress website Assignment due April 15: A WordPress website
April 16	Discussion: Review of peers' WordPress websites, discussion of property in a digital age Training: TimelineJS Assignment due April 22: A timeline, either stand-alone or embedded in your WordPress website
April 23	Discussion: Review of peers' timelines Reports on planning of individual projects
April 30	Discussion and review of individual projects
May 11	Individual projects due to by the end of exam period

January 29 – Introductions

February 5



Discussion – Digital history: issues and questions

- Grafton, Anthony. “The Footnote from De Thou to Ranke.” *History and Theory* 33, no. 4 (1994): 53. On [Canvas](#). (There’s also a book-length version—*The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).
 - Browse the [outline version](#) of Daniel J. Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig, *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). Given how quickly technology has evolved, this is rapidly becoming a classic.
 - Guldi, Jo, and David Armitage. *The History Manifesto*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Available for download through the UW Libraries catalog or [online](#).
 - Denbo, Seth, et al. “History as a Book Discipline (Forum).” *Perspectives on History* (April 2015): 19-27. On [Canvas](#).
 - American Historical Association’s [Guidelines for the Professional Evaluation of Digital Scholarship in History](#) (June 2015).
 - Delmont, Matthew. “‘Does It Count?’ [Scholarly Communication and African American Digital History](#).” *Perspectives on History*, November 2016.
 - “[Digital Dissertation Guidelines](#),” Department of History and Art History, George Mason University (accessed January 3, 2018).
 - Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, “[Digital History & Argument White Paper](#),” November 13, 2017.
-

February 12

digital

Discussion – Digital collections as historical artifacts (3:30 – 4:45 pm)

Guest speaker: [Michael Edmonds](#), Wisconsin Historical Society, who curated an online collection of documents on [Freedom Summer](#) and edited a [companion reader](#).

Reading in preparation for discussion:

- Fischer, Suzanne. “Nota Bene: If You 'Discover' Something in an Archive, It's Not a Discovery.” *The Atlantic*, June 19, 2012. Available [online](#) and on [Canvas](#).
- Papiroannou, Helena Iles. “Actually, Yes, It *Is* a Discovery If You Find Something in an Archive That No One Knew Was There.” *The Atlantic*, June 21, 2012. Available [online](#) and on [Canvas](#).
- Mbembe, Achille. “The Power of the Archive and Its Limits.” In *Refiguring the Archive*, edited by C. Hamilton et al., 19-26. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002. Available [online](#) and on [Canvas](#).

- Featherstone, Mike. "Archive." *Theory Culture Society* 23 (2006): 591-596. Available [online](#) and on [Canvas](#).
- Grafton, Anthony. "Apocalypse in the Stacks? The Research Library in the Age of Google." *Daedulus* 138 (Winter 2009): 87-98. Available on [Canvas](#).
- Agarwal, Kritika. "Doing Right Online: Archivists Shape an Ethics for the Digital Age," *Perspectives on History*, November 2016. Available on [Canvas](#).
- Putnam, Lara. "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast," *American Historical Review* (April 2016): 376-402. Available [online](#) (through the UW library catalog) and on [Canvas](#).

Skype conversation with Celeste Sharpe, author of the first born-digital History dissertation (5:00 – 5:30 pm)

- AHA Today (blog), "[A History Dissertation Goes Digital](#)," August 28, 2017.
- Celeste Sharpe, "They Need You! Disability, Visual Culture, and the Poster Child, 1945-1980," Ph.D. thesis, Department of History and Art History, George Mason University, 2017. To access the diss., see my emailed instructions (2/9/2018).

Training session – Working with Word (5:30 – 5:55 pm)

Assignment due by Feb. 18 – A syllabus for the 21st century

The typical syllabus today could have been produced on a 1970 [IBM Selectric](#); your task in this assignment is to update it for the twenty-first century.

- Troll the web for digitally-enhanced syllabi, highlight the most attractive ones in a blog post, and use your own imagination
- Take any exclusively printed-based syllabus that you have in digital form (or ask me for one) and transform it into a digitally-enhanced syllabus for the 21st century, something that could be printed out and distributed in pdf format.

USING IMAGES YOU FIND ONLINE

What usage rights do you have to images that you find online? For guidance, see Do's and Don'ts on our website.

February 19



Discussion – Review of syllabi for the 21c

Training session – Prezi

[Prezi](#) is an online presentation software that is more dynamic than PowerPoint or Keynote. You will need to create a username and password at <https://prezi.com/pricing/edu/> (educational pricing). Choose the 30-day free trial

of Edu Pro and enter your wisc.edu email address; you will receive a verification email.

Before seminar, review the following sites:

- The Design Lab's Prezi [page](#)
- Prezi's gallery of [most popular Prezis](#)
- Prezi's [YouTube channel](#)
- Prezi's page on [sharing a private Prezi](#). If you opt to keep your Prezis private, you will need to share your Prezi assignment – see below – so that the other members of the seminar can view it.
- BBC Active, "[Using Prezi in Education](#)"
- [Prezi tutorial](#) at GCFLearnFree.org (Goodwill Community Foundation International)

Assignment due by Feb. 25 – A Prezi presentation

Create a Prezi based on a topic of your choosing (e.g., reflecting your research or teaching interests). Share the Prezi with the seminar members by 6 p.m.

February 26

Piktochart

Discussion – Review of Prezi presentations

Training session – Infographics

Reading in preparation for the training:

- Check out the DesignLab's [Toolkit](#)
- Lankow, Jason, Ross Crooks, and Josh Ritchie. *Infographics: The Power of Visual Storytelling*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012. – Introduction and ch. 8, "What Makes a Good Infographic?" (on [Canvas](#); the book is available online through the library catalog – browse other chapters of interest).
- easel.ly's [Complete Guide to Infographics](#) (also available on [Canvas](#)).
- Search the web for examples of infographics and related websites, e.g., this [useful review](#) of websites/software for creating infographics
- Check out the following infographics-creation sites to see which appeals most to you:
 - [Piktochart](#) (my preferred site)
 - [Infogr.am](#)
 - [Easel.ly](#)

Assignment due by March 4 – An infographic

- Using the infographics creation site of your choice, create an infographic based on a question or topic of your choosing. Save/export it in whatever format gives the best image and post it on our blog.

MARCH 5



Discussion – Review of infographics

Training – Theory Comix

From the [Design Lab](#): “Theory comix are illustrated texts in the form of comix, with students often casting themselves and class authors as characters pursuing a question or quest. Theory comix may contain narratives but the quest itself is conceptual, with characters offering help or presenting obstacles. The key is exploring different approaches to the quest, which may or not be resolved.”

In preparation for the training, read:

- [DesignLab page](#) on Theory Comix – be sure to browse the Examples links.
- [Comic Life](#), the software we’ll be using – click the “Try It Free!” button and download the software; give it a preliminary try.
- Prof. Jon McKenzie, former UW-Madison Professor of English and Director of the DesignLab, [lecture](#) on the digital humanities and theory comix.
- Browse Google [images of theory comix](#).

Assignment due by March 11 – A theory comic

Using the [Comic Life app](#), create a theory comic based on a topic or question related to your research or teaching interests. Save it as a pdf and post it on our blog.

March 12



Discussion – Review of theory comix

Training – Data visualization

Reading in preparation for the training:

- Rosenberg, Daniel. “Data before the Fact.” In *“Raw Data” is an Oxymoron*, edited by Lisa Gitelman, 15-40. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2013. Available on [Canvas](#).
- The DesignLab’s [handout on data visualization](#) tips and sources.
- Few, Stephen. “35. Data Visualization for Human Perception.” In *The Encyclopedia of Human-Computer Interaction*, edited by Mads Soegaard and Rikke Friis Dam, 2d ed., Interaction Design Foundation, available [online](#).
- Familiarize yourself with Excel (part of Microsoft Office) or similar tools (e.g., Google Spreadsheet)

Assignment due March 18 – Data visualization

Think about what kind of data might be useful for your research or teaching interests, and search around the web to find some (keep it very basic—numbers of something over time). Using Excel, create one or more data visualizations that emphasize the points that you want the viewer to notice in the data. Print your visualization as a pdf and post it on our blog.

March 19

Discussion – Review of data visualizations



Training – StoryMap

In preparation for the training, read:

- Esri Story Maps: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/>
- Browse Esri’s Gallery, indexed by type of app (see below) and subject, at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/gallery/#s=0>
- Browse Northwestern University’s Knight Lab, “StoryMap” project, <https://storymap.knightlab.com/#examples>
- Explore the Esri Story Map apps at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/app-list/>
- “How to Make a Story Map,” <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/how-to/>

Assignment due April 1 – Story Map

Create a story map that illustrates an historical period or incident of particular interest to you. Post the URL to your project on our blog.

March 26 – Spring break

APRIL 2



Discussion – Review of StoryMaps

Training – Podcasts

Reading in preparation for the training:

- Review the links on the UW-Madison [KnowledgeBase page about Audacity](#) Audio Editing Software
- Using the link on the KB page, download Audacity and explore a bit

Assignment due April 8 – Make a podcast

Make a podcast on a topic of your choice – something that you could imagine using in teaching or to explain your research to a wider (non-academic) public. Minimum length: 2 minutes. Post your podcast on our blog.

April 9



Discussion – Review of podcasts

Training – Building a WordPress website

- Review Slate.com’s list of the most browsable websites of 2016 at:
 - [Part One](#)
 - [Part Two](#)
- Read the DesignLab’s [handout on portfolio and professional websites](#)
- Browse Software Training for Students’ classroom manual on Wordpress. Available on [Canvas](#).
- Create a WordPress account, if you don’t have one already.

Assignment due April 15 – Build a WordPress website

This could be a personal/professional website that showcases you and your research interests or it could be devoted to a topic relating to your research or teaching interests. Post your URL on our blog.

April 16



Discussion – Review of websites and discussion of “property in a digital age”

In addition to reviewing your peers’ websites, please read:

- UW Library’s Research Guide on copyright and fair use:
<http://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/c.php?g=177941&p=1169847>
- The DesignLab’s infographic on copyright:
<https://designlab.wisc.edu/images/Copyright-Flowchart.jpg>
- Anderson, Rick. “Open Access, Copyright, and Licensing for Humanists.” *Perspectives on History*, November 2016. Available on [Canvas](#).

Suggested reading: Stuart Banner, *American Property: A History of How, Why, and What We Own* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011).

Training – Timeline JS

- Northwestern University’s Knight Lab, “Timeline,”
<https://timeline.knightlab.com/> - read the overview and explore the examples

Assignment due April 22 – a Timeline

Draw on your research interests to create your timeline of events. Post a link to it on our blog. You’ll need to use Google Drive for this project – to access your UW Google Drive, go to www.wisc.edu, click MyUW, then Google Apps. After logging in with your NetID, you will be able to create a Google Spreadsheet here.

Individual projects

In this last segment of the seminar, you will have a few weeks to develop an individual project. Collaborative projects are also a possibility.

For your project, you may choose to use the digital tools introduced in the seminar to “remediate” a larger piece of your own work – e.g., by translating it into a series of infographics, Theory Comix, or podcasts or by building a website. Or you may explore other options that seem especially appealing for your interests and goals, e.g., making videos, using the web publishing platform [OMEKA](#), or using the authoring and publishing platform [Scalar](#). See the Resources page on our website for these and other possibilities.

April 23



Discussion – Review of timelines and progress reports on individual projects

If you have a preliminary version of your project on which you'd like feedback, post it (or a link to it) on our blog by 6 p.m. on April 22.

April 30



Discussion –Individual projects

Post a draft of your project (or a link to it) on our blog by 6 p.m. on April 29.

May 11



Final projects are due by the end of exam period

How you will submit your project depends on what it is – to be determined, in other words.