

Digital Humanities 101: Introduction to Digital Humanities  
Fall 2019

Tuesday/Thursday 10:20-11:40AM  
South Kedzie Hall Room 538

Professor: Taylor Mills (she/her/hers)

Email: [millsta1@msu.edu](mailto:millsta1@msu.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 12:00-1:00PM

### **Course Description:**

This course follows to arcs, one to trace the history and development of research in the humanities/digital humanities, the other to follow the progression of a research project from start to finish. Students will engage with technologies, methodologies, tools, and techniques that are unique to each unit, and by doing so, gain a big picture perspective on the evolution of humanities-based research. To be clear, this is one interpretation among many. The narrative is presented in this manner as one perspective designed mostly to help students develop a framework for understanding how Digital Humanities came to be, its relationship to the humanities in general, and how the progression of research lends itself to new opportunities for technologies to enhance the process. A large portion of Digital Humanities is creating interdisciplinary research projects, so the second arc is intended to help students go through the process of formulating good research questions, sorting through data and information, organizing this information, and presenting results in effective manners. Another key component to this class is an ethics of engagement with digital technologies and other communities. Students will critique projects and tools from a critical, interdisciplinary, intersectional lens.

### **Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course students can expect to have the following:

1. A basic understanding of what the Digital Humanities are.
2. A toolbox of skills and technologies they have curated to help them preserve their own knowledge and resources.
3. The skills necessary to completing independent research projects.
4. The ability to be critical of tools, methods, and projects already existing and in their own work through a feminist, decolonial, intersectional, interdisciplinary lens.
5. Develop a robust understanding of ethics with community engagement and digital presentation.

### **Required Texts:**

Most texts will be available online in pdf or website link format. The following are books that will be required for this class. If purchasing these is a concern I recommend checking the library for a copy. If there are no available copies please come and talk with me.

- *Algorithms of Oppression* by Safiya Umoja Noble
- *Weapons of Math Destruction* by Cathy O'Neil
- *The Craft of Research* by Booth, Colomb, and Williams

## Course Requirements:

In addition to completing the assigned readings for each week, students will have the following assignments throughout the semester:

- **Weekly Logs**-at the beginning of each week students are to complete a brief summary of the assigned readings for that week or of the tools dealt with, and list the names of the readings and/or links and/or tools. Then throughout the week students may add to and edit their summaries. By the end of the week, students are asked to reflect on the week's readings and/or tools and methods, considering how they are relevant to their own research interests and their opinions of the materials. Logs are due on Friday at 5:00PM of each week. Students will earn a total of 15 points each week for this assignment. 5 points are awarded at the beginning of the week for the completion of the summary; the remaining 10 are awarded at the end of the week for completing the remainder of the log and for the quality of summary and reflection.

Week	Summary	Readings/Tools	Relevant Links	How is this relevant to you as a scholar? What do you think of this tool, method, or ideas in the text?
	300-500 words		Ask a critical question	Who benefits from this argument if it is true? What are the ramifications of this argument?

- **Prospecti**-Throughout the semester students will write two prospective project papers of 2-4 pages double-spaced. These prospective papers will involve a clear research question, discussion of the aims and outcomes of the project, and a list of 5-7 relevant sources. Additionally the prospectus should include any relevant technologies or methodologies and how students plan to incorporate these. Lastly, students should include who the intended audience is and their statement of ethics, how they intend to ethically, critically, and charitably engage with the materials and their audience. These prospecti are worth 50 points each and 10 points for the rough drafts.
- **Project Critiques**-Students will write two project critiques of 2-3 pages double-spaced, selecting projects from curated lists that will be presented in class on Thursday of Week 2 and again on Tuesday of Week 5. These critiques will follow the guidelines developed and presented on Thursday of Week 2. Students should carefully consider these criteria including who the audience is, user experience, clarity, argumentation when applicable, relevance to its field, and success in its intended aims. Students should present positive aspects of the project in addition to commentary on how the project could improve. These critiques are worth 30 points each with 5 points for the rough drafts.
- **Small Assignments**-throughout the semester students will have small assignments including: a mini podcast, a Snapchat story, an elevator pitch, and a writing workshop series. The descriptions of these assignments will be handed out in class. All of these are completion grades, but evidence of strong effort is required in order to receive full credit. The podcast is worth 15 points, the Snapchat story is worth 10 points, and the writing workshop series is worth 30 points.

- **Final Project**-The final project is a group project involving several components:
  - Data Set-students will curate a dataset from a source of their choosing [twitter, book set, existing datasets but combined]. into a Google sheet. The data set must be accompanied by a 1-2 page report describing the choices students made about what to include, what headings to consider, and what relationships they hope to study with the set. The data set is worth 25 points.
  - Data Visualizations-during the third unit students will be exposed to various data analysis and visualization tools. Students must present three data visualizations using these tools on their data sets, accompanied by a paragraph description of what the visualization depicts. Each visualization is worth 10 points for a total of 30 points.
  - Website-each project will need to craft their own website to host their projects, using either Omeka or WordPress. Sites will need an About the Project page, a Visualizations Page, and any relevant pages to the projects' results. Sites will be graded based on clarity, presentation, user experience, and cohesiveness. The site is worth 100 points.
  - In-Class Presentation-groups will present their projects in class for 15 minutes, addressing the focus of their project, their methodology, results, and challenges they faced. Presentations are worth 45 points.

### **Grading:**

Total Points: 665

- **Weekly Logs**-195 points total [15 points per week x 13 weeks]
- **Prospecti**-120 points total [50 points per paper x 2 papers + 10 points per rough draft x 2]
- **Project Critiques**-70 total [30 points per paper x 2 + 5 points per rough draft x 2]
- **Final Project**-200 points
- **Small Assignments**-55 points
- **Attendance and Participation**-25 points

Grading Scale: The final number of points will then be converted to a percentage in which a 92%-100% equates to an A (4.0), 88%-91.5% is an A- (3.5), 83%-87.5% is a B (3.0), 78%-82.5% is a B- (2.5), 74-77.5% is a C (2.0), 70%-73.5% is a C- (1.75), 67%-69.5% is a D (1.5), 65%-66.5% is a D- (1.25) and below a 65% is a failing grade (<1.0).

### **Attendance and Late Work Policy:**

Attendance is required and will affect students grades after three unexcused absences. Please come talk with me or contact me if there are extenuating circumstances regarding excused absences. Late work will be accepted up to 24 hours after the due date, but will automatically drop the assignment down by the equivalent of one letter grade (A to B, C to D etc.). After three late assignments from a student, late work will not be accepted. If there are extenuating circumstances, talk with me and we can discuss.

## Academic Honesty:

*The [Spartan Code of Honor](#) states, "As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the **highest ethical standard**. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that **honor is worth more than grades**. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do." In addition, Article 2.III.B.2 of the [Student Rights and Responsibilities \(SRR\)](#) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." The (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See [Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide](#) and/or the MSU Web site: [www.msu.edu](http://www.msu.edu).)*

*Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the [www.allmsu.com](http://www.allmsu.com) Web site to complete any course work in this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the [Academic Integrity](#) webpage.)*

## Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

*(from the [Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities \(RCPD\)](#)): Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at [rcpd.msu.edu](http://rcpd.msu.edu). Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.*

## Limits to confidentiality

*Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the [MSU Police Department](#)) if you share it with me:*

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,*
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and*
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.*

*These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the [MSU Counseling Center](#).*

## CLASS SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL HUMANITIES SYLLABUS			
Week	Day 1	Day 2	
1	<b>Topics</b>	Syllabus and class introduction day	What is Digital Humanities? Perspectives
	<b>Readings</b>	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Sample-The digital humanities is not about building, it's about sharing</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mullen-Digital humanities is a spectrum; or, we're all digital humanists now</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Ramsay-On Building</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Activities</b>	“speed-networking”, definitions word cloud activity	Class discussion, reference back word cloud, majors and DH relevance to said majors discussion
	<b>Homework Due</b>	One sentence personal definition of Digital Humanities	
UNIT 1 CRITICALITY: HISTORIES, TOOLS, METHODOLOGIES, COLONIALISM			
2	<b>Topics</b>	The History (alt-history) of DH	Critiquing Tools and Methodologies in DH
	<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Terras &amp; Nyhan-Father Busa's Female Punch Card Operatives</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Kirschenbaum-What Is Digital Humanities and What's It Doing in English Departments?</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Fiormonte-Toward a Cultural Critique of Digital Humanities</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Posner-What's Next: The Radical, Unrealized Potential of Digital Humanities;</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Gallon-Making a Case for the Black Digital Humanities</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Lothian &amp; Phillips-Can Digital Humanities Mean Transformative Critique?</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Activities</b>	Reading discussion, timeline activity	Reading discussion, investigating projects by Marisa Parham, QueerScalar project
3	<b>Topics</b>	Algorithms	Techno-Colonialism
	<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excerpts from Eubanks-<i>Automating Inequality</i></li> <li>• Introduction from Noble-<i>Algorithms of Oppression</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excerpts from Noble-<i>Algorithms of Oppression</i> (Chapters 1 &amp; 2)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Bush-On Techno-Colonialism</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Liboiron-Waste Colonialism</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Activities</b>	Reading discussion, exploring PredPol (video)	Reading discussion, small lecture, exploring projects from Habib University
UNIT 2 EARLY STAGES: ARCHIVAL WORK PROJECT DEVELOPMENT			
4	<b>Topics</b>	Project Critiques/Project Assessment	Formulating Research Questions
	<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excerpts from Noble-<i>Algorithms of Oppression</i> (Chapters 3-6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Craft of Research</i> p. 29-63</li> </ul>

	<b>Activities</b>	Explore and make research questions, project assessment discussion	In-class project critiques, developing DH assessment criteria, short reading discussion
	<b>Homework Due</b>		Project Critique 1
5	<b>Topics</b>	Archives	Archive Ethics
	<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Moravec-Feminist Research Practices and Digital Archives</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Theimer-Archives in Context As Context</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Kerk @ NCSU-Ethics in Archives: Diversity, Inclusion, and the Archival Record</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Christen-Tribal Archives, Traditional Knowledge, and Local Contexts: Why the “s” Matters</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Activities</b>	Reading discussion and exploring Digital Archives	Reading discussion, exploring the Mukurtu Wumpurrarni-kari Archive
	<b>Homework Due</b>	Prospectus Draft	
6	<b>Topics</b>	Organizing Research: Zotero & Annotated Bibliographies	Archive Field Trip Day or Guest Lecturer
	<b>Readings</b>	<i>The Craft of Research</i> p. 85-103	NA
	<b>Activities</b>	Zotero tutorial, practice formulating research questions → research projects from archives, “Rembrandt documents” example	Visit archives or have an archivist speak about the archives, play with boxes, leave with two research questions → research project
	<b>Homework Due</b>		Project Critique 2
7	<b>Topics</b>	Omeka	Team Formation/Project Work Day
	<b>Readings</b>	NA	NA
	<b>Activities</b>	Omeka Tutorial	Introduction to collaboration tools (Slack, Basecamp, Teams), Team Charter (due at end of class)
	<b>Homework Due</b>		Prospectus 1
<b>UNIT 3 MIDWAY THROUGH: LIBRARIES, INTERVIEWS, BIG DATA</b>			
8	<b>Topics</b>	Libraries	Big Data
	<b>Readings</b>	• <i>The Craft of Research</i> p. 64-84	Project Examples
	<b>Activities</b>	Guest lecture librarian on how to use the library and resources available	Curating datasets (using spreadsheets, twitter mining, making decisions)
9	<b>Topics</b>	Text and Data Analysis and Visualization Tools	StoryTelling: Oral History and Interviews
	<b>Readings</b>	• <i>Graphs, Maps, and Trees</i>	• OHLA website blogs
	<b>Activities</b>	Close reading vs distant reading discussion, Voyant and Palladio tutorials	Oral History and Interviews tutorial, in-class interview practice, mini-lecture

	<b>Homework Due</b>		Curated Dataset
10	<b>Topics</b>	Podcasts	Project Work Day
	<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose podcasts to listen to</li> </ul>	NA
	<b>Activities</b>		Work on projects and troubleshoot
	<b>Homework Due</b>	Snapchat Stories	Mini-podcast
<b>UNIT 4 WRAPPING UP: COLLABORATION, COMMUNICATION, PRESENTATION</b>			
11	<b>Topics</b>	Collaboration & Project Work Day	Collaboration: Social Media and Social Justice
	<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excerpt about Diderot's Encyclopedia notion</li> <li>Wiki-edit-a-thon's article</li> <li>Reading about MOOCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excerpts from Tufekci-<i>Twitter and Tear Gas</i></li> </ul>
	<b>Activities</b>	Play with Wikipedia, play with crowdsourcing, discussion about interdisciplinarity, work on projects	Lecture, discussion, play with Politico
	<b>Homework Due</b>	Project Status Report (due by end of class)	Visualizations
12	<b>Topics</b>	Communication: Audience, User Experience, and Writing Workshop Part 1	Communication: Abstracts, Tweets, and Writing Workshop Part 2
	<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Brennan-Public, First</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The Craft of Research</i> p. 197-213</li> </ul>
	<b>Activities</b>	Discussion about who one's audience is, in-class project critiques, part 1 of writing workshop	writing workshop part 2
	<b>Homework Due</b>		Half-length paper
13	<b>Topics</b>	Presentation: Web	Presentation: Web-WordPress
	<b>Readings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readings about copyright, publication, and open access</li> <li>Excerpts from Adichie-<i>Americanah</i></li> </ul>	NA
	<b>Activities</b>	Reading discussion, user experience discussion, in-class project critiques	WordPress Tutorial
	<b>Homework Due</b>	Abstract and tweet	Blog version
14	<b>Topics</b>	In-Person Presentation	In Person Presentation Tools/Platforms Survey
	<b>Readings</b>	NA	NA
	<b>Activities</b>	Guest lecture from Communications/Public Speaking do's and don'ts, elevator pitches	Mapping tools (Google Maps, StoryMap) TimelineJS, Prezi, Canva, 3D modeling, Virtual Reality

	<b><i>Homework Due</i></b>	Develop an elevator pitch for project-no notes (2 minutes max)	
	<b><i>Topics</i></b>	Presentations	Presentations and Wrap-Up
	<b><i>Readings</i></b>	NA	NA
15	<b><i>Activities</i></b>	Students present their projects	Finish presentations, revisit definitions to generate new word cloud and compare