AL285: Introduction to Digital Humanities
Fall 2016 | T/TH 10:20-11:40am | Berkey 211A
Syllabus available on Trello: https://trello.com/b/P6OgNthS

Instructor Information
Kristen Mapes
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Office hours: MW 10:00-11:30am

Contacting the Instructor
The best way to get in touch with me is via the Intro DH MSU 2016 Slack network. I am also available via email and Twitter, but I will be checking Slack regularly. You are welcome to set up an appointment to meet with me during the week or to drop in during office hours.

Course Goals and Learning Objectives
The goals of this course are to:

- explore a broad spectrum of perspectives on the digital humanities engage with a variety of digital humanities tools in order to choose the most appropriate technology to facilitate different work in different situations
- develop familiarity with a range of digital humanities projects, as well as the ability to evaluate the tools and methods involved in creating those projects
- become more thoughtful, critical, and reflective users of digital tools, technologies, and spaces by understanding that all technologies are complex, socially situated, and political tools through which humans make meaning

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- identify resources for digital humanities community and assistance at MSU and beyond
- critically discuss digital humanities projects in light of current methods and theoretical approaches to the field
- explain how digital humanities methods and practices are applied in different disciplines
- plan, develop, and evaluate a digital humanities research project

Required Materials
Assignments

Harlem Renaissance Presentation 5%
‘How did they make that?’ project review 5%
Project critique 5%
Voyant exercise 5%
Google Fusion assignments 10%
Exam 20%
Final Project 35%
Attendance and Participation 15%

Grading Scale

This course uses MSU’s 4.0 grading scale. Credit will not be awarded for a score below 1.0 (59% or below).

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Extra Credit

Opportunities to earn extra credit will be offered throughout the semester. These may include additional tutorials, workshop attendance, attending a digital humanities related lecture, etc. Opportunities will be listed and updated in the "Extra Credit Opportunities" list in Trello.

Embedded Librarian

Throughout the course, Megan Kudzia, Digital Scholarship Technology Librarian at MSU, will be available for assistance. She will attend a number of course sessions and be a fantastic resource as you work on your final projects. Feel free to ask her questions on Slack, via email (kudzia@mail.lib.msu.edu), and in person at the Main Library (by appointment).
Course Policies

Course Technologies

You will need to have access to certain digital technologies in order to complete your work. In some instances, these technologies may be new to you. You are responsible for making time to ramp up, troubleshoot, and learn. This activity will require your patience, can-do attitude, and sense of adventure.

- Access to https://googleapps.msu.edu for access course materials and complete your course work. You will also need access to a non-MSU google account at a couple of points. You may use your own Google account or create one specifically for the class.
- Your @msu.edu e-mail account. Check this email often (several times every day).
- A Trello account. Sign up using your @msu.edu email account at trello.com/kristen204/recommend. Only your classmates, our embedded librarian, and I will be able to see the project boards you create (unless you choose to make yours public). See trello.com/guide for an introduction to using this project management tool.
- A Slack account. Sign up using your @msu.edu email account at https://introdhmsu2016.slack.com/x-75082933717-75027305811/signup. Only your fellow classmates, our embedded librarian, and I will be able to see this channel, so it is relatively private. See slack.com/getting-started for tips and tutorials about how to use Slack effectively for team communication.

If you are going to use a laptop or any other technology during class, make sure that it is not a distraction to yourself or others. Do not take phone calls, update your status, or text during class unless you have made arrangements with me ahead of time (due to some sort of emergency or care issue). Avoid using technology as a barrier to actively engaging during class. Instead, let it either augment our discussions or turn it off. You will need to have access to certain digital technologies in order to complete your work. In some instances, these technologies may be new to you. You are responsible for making time to ramp up, troubleshoot, and learn. This activity will require your patience, can-do attitude, and sense of adventure.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for this class. You are allowed two unexcused absences; further absences will result in the deduction of a third of a point from your final grade. If you miss a class, I do not need to know the reason why unless it is because of a death in the family or a religious holiday.

Lateness disrupts the entire class, especially in a small discussion course like ours. If you are more than 10 minutes late, I will mark it as half an absence.
Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the day they are due. Any assignment turned in on the same day as the deadline but after the beginning of class will lose points. Assignments turned in later than the due date will not be accepted.

Ethics and Academic Integrity

The work you submit must be produced originally for this class. An additional expectation is that you will follow this basic ethical obligation: You should credit others’ contributions to your work. You should not claim, as your own, work (or writing) that is not your own. To do so is considered plagiarism. It is perfectly appropriate for you to borrow graphics, to quote passages, and to use ideas from others. However, whenever you do that, follow appropriate conventions for citing and using your sources. Procedures for responding to cases of academic honesty and possible repercussions are outlined in Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide. They can also be found on the web at: http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html

Special Needs and Accommodations

To receive accommodation for any disability, students must first register with the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities. The RCPD will request appropriate documentation and make a determination regarding the nature of the accommodation to which a student is entitled. The RCPD will then give the student a “visa” that specifies the kind of accommodation that may be provided. It is then the responsibility of the student seeking accommodation to present the visa to his/her instructor.

That said, we all learn in different ways and process information differently. Please talk to me as soon as possible about your individual learning needs and the ways in which we can accommodate you. Even if you do not have a documented disability, remember that there are support services available to you at MSU such as the Writing Center (http://writing.msu.edu) and the Learning Resources Center (http://lrc.msu.edu).
Assignments

Harlem Renaissance Presentation (5%)

Research a topic relating to the Harlem Renaissance and prepare a short (3-5 minute) presentation. The topic can be anything that interests you, from a writer, musician, or artist, to popular location to a larger social topic.

Be sure to include citations in your presentation (minimally links) to sources that informed it. (For example, using Wikipedia is okay, but you must link to it, and you must find at least one source beyond it to support your information.)

‘How Did They Make That’ Project Review (5%)

Digital Humanities projects come in many forms, rely on a wide array of data types, and involve any manner of technologies. Becoming accustomed to navigating a project site and exploring how each project approached its data, process, and presentation is a crucial skill for this class.

Read the following blog post and watch the 40 minute video


Select two of the projects that Posner presented and explore the project goals, what type of data it used, how that data was found and/or transformed, what technologies were used, and why. Include your own analysis of how successful you think the project was in achieving its aims, and why or why not.

You have two choices for approaching the short report:

1) Write 1/2 page about each project
2) Write 1 page comparing the two projects

This is a short report, so be concise and clear.

Projects:

- The Negro Travelers' Green Book (http://library.sc.edu/digital/collections/greenbookmap.html)
- Memories/Motifs: Holocaust Survivor Narratives in Post-War America (http://memoriesmotifs.com)
Digital Humanities Project Critique (5%)

Digital Humanities projects come in many forms, rely on a wide array of data types, and involve any manner of technologies. Becoming accustomed to navigating a project site and exploring how each project approached its data, process, and presentation is a crucial skill for this class.

Select any DH project you wish (except those that we have already analyzed in class). Explore the project goals, what type of data it used, how that data was found and/or transformed, what technologies were used, and why. Include your own analysis of how successful you think the project was in achieving its aims, and why or why not.

This is a short, 1 page, report, so be concise and clear. At the top of your paper, be sure to include the project title, primary authors/contributors, and the URL.

Voyant Exercise (5%)

Find a text from the Harlem Renaissance or about the Harlem Renaissance and use Voyant to explore it. Explore the different features of Voyant and include screenshots from your exploration of the tool to illustrate a 2 page written analysis. What can Voyant do for humanists in exploring texts? Did you learn anything that you didn’t expect? What functions did you find most useful? Or most useless?

Google Fusion Assignments (10%)

We will use Google Fusion Tables as a tool for learning about visualization generally, and maps and networks specifically.

For the first assignment, you will need to construct a dataset of information that includes location data (this can include street addresses or latitude and longitude coordinates). There should be at least 20 points in the dataset that successfully map in Google Fusion tables.

For the second assignment, you will need to construct a dataset of information that includes information about some items that are in common such that certain items are linked to each other
but not to all other items to form a network. There should be at least 20 points in the dataset that successfully create a network graph in Google Fusion tables.

Final Project (35%)

Students may work in groups (size determined by topics and interests) or individually to examine a research question using digital humanities methods. Each group will be tasked with dividing duties according to each group member's strengths, selecting appropriate data and tools to conduct the research, and determining the deliverable type (e.g. multimedia website, map, network, etc).

During the semester, the following assignments will be due before the submission of the project on the final day of class.

- Project Proposal - Single page description of the research question being posed, ideas for where data to analyze will come from, proposed methods for analysis, and proposed final deliverable
- Draft Project and Update Presentation - Each project should turn in a 1 page update explaining the status of the project and a bulleted list of what remains to be done. You will also give a 5 minute presentation to the class. At this presentation, the project should be as complete as possible so as to allow for feedback and advice from the rest of the class and the professor. The presentation should share the final deliverable, what it is meant to accomplish, and discuss challenge or problem areas where the group or individual could benefit from the collective assistance of the class.
- Project Presentation - 10-12 minute presentation of the final project, including methodology, during the final class day

A full description of the final project requirements and grading criteria may be found here (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JAZSW1t5fq4q6OYQo8--iWCEY1ZCw10YcizZHwAtU/edit)

Attendance and Participation (15%)

Active participation in the course is required. See the attendance policy for information about absences and how they affect your grade. Come to class prepared to discuss the readings due that day and/or having explored the tools we will be learning. Plan on expressing your ideas, frustrations, questions, and confusions. This is a small, discussion based class, so we have the opportunity to delve deeply into issues. Participation also extends to the online portal to the course, the Intro DH MSU 2016 Slack network. You periodically will be required to post something in Slack before class about the readings and assignments. Doing so on time will count toward your overall participation grade. Slack is a fantastic resource for airing questions and comments and sharing ideas and resources that don’t come up in class. Contributing to the conversation in Slack will help improve your participation grade.
Schedule

See Trello as reading assignments for the following classes are finalized.

September 1 (Thurs) - Introduction

Introductions and syllabus review. Brief tutorial on using the class technologies of Trello and Slack.

September 6 (Tues) - History of Digital Humanities

Discussion of the histories of digital humanities as well as critiques of it.

Readings due [everyone reads]:


Readings due [divided up so you only read one]:

- What is Digital Humanities and what's it doing in English departments?, Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, Defining Digital Humanities: A Reader, Ashgate, 2015, p. 195-204 [find the pdf on Slack #readings]

September 8 (Thurs) - History of the Harlem Renaissance

Assignment due: Harlem Renaissance Presentation

Readings:

- "When the Negro was in vogue", The Harlem Renaissance: A Very Short Introduction, Cheryl A. Wall, Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 1-21

September 13 (Tues) - Digitization and Databases

**Assignment due:** How did they make that? Project critique

Readings due:

September 15 (Thurs) - User Experience and Crowdsourcing

Readings due:
• UX Apprentice, [http://www.uxapprentice.com](http://www.uxapprentice.com)

Projects to explore in class:
• [http://menus.nypl.org](http://menus.nypl.org)
• [https://www.operationwardiary.org](https://www.operationwardiary.org)
• [https://www.zooniverse.org](https://www.zooniverse.org)

September 20 (Tues) - Text Data and Newspapers (Library - Meet at the Reference Desk)

**Assignment due:** Digital Humanities project critique

We will meet by the main Reference Desk on the first floor of the MSU Main Library. Then, we will go up to the Digital Media Center (DMC) on the 4th floor to hear from John Shaw and Grace Morris about their process of digitization. After hearing from them, we will head to the basement to hear from Patrick Olson in Special Collections about what they do and to see some original collections that MSU owns.

Readings due:

**September 22 (Thurs) - Information Architecture and Design Ethics [Guest Speaker: Megan Kudzia]**

Guest speaker: Megan Kudzia

- Klyn, Dan, Make Things Be Good: Five Patterns [video], *Wildly Appropriate*, 14 October 2013, [http://wildlyappropriate.com/2013/10/14/uxweek](http://wildlyappropriate.com/2013/10/14/uxweek)
- Gardiner, Eileen and Musto, Ronald G. The Elements of Digital Humanities: Text and Documents, *The Digital Humanities: A Primer for Students and Scholars*, 2015, p. 31-42 [see Slack for pdf]

**September 27 (Tues) - Text Analysis**

Readings due:
- Seven ways humanists are using computers to understand texts, Ted Underwood, 4 June 2015, [http://tedunderwood.com/2015/06/04/seven-ways-humanists-are-using-computers-to-understand-text](http://tedunderwood.com/2015/06/04/seven-ways-humanists-are-using-computers-to-understand-text)

Projects to review:
- Lincoln Logarithms, [http://disc.library.emory.edu/lincoln](http://disc.library.emory.edu/lincoln)

Tools to use:
- Voyant, [http://voyant-tools.org](http://voyant-tools.org)

Materials to use for text analysis:
- Dropbox links to text files of some Harlem Renaissance writers, [https://www.dropbox.com/sh/54pfhk4l9btffcc2/AAAHeJ5-zX0sDds12nn0oepxa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/54pfhk4l9btffcc2/AAAHeJ5-zX0sDds12nn0oepxa?dl=0)
- Transcript of Sept 2016 Presidential Debate text in Trello card, [https://trello.com/c/Gx3zpVbO/15-text-analysis](https://trello.com/c/Gx3zpVbO/15-text-analysis)

**September 29 (Thurs) - Text Analysis Lab**

**Assignment Due:** Voyant Exercise

Readings due:

Tools to explore:
- InPhO Topic Explorer, [http://inphodata.cogs.indiana.edu](http://inphodata.cogs.indiana.edu)
- Google Books N-Grams Viewer - [https://books.google.com/ngrams](https://books.google.com/ngrams)
- Chronciling America N-Gram Viewer, [http://bookworm.culturomics.org/ChronAm](http://bookworm.culturomics.org/ChronAm)
- Bookworm N-Gram Viewer options - [http://bookworm.culturomics.org](http://bookworm.culturomics.org)

**October 4 (Tues) - Mapping Introduction**

Readings due:
- Todd Presner and David Shepard, Mapping the Geospatial Turn, *A new companion to digital humanities*, Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens and John Unsworth, eds. 2015, p. 199-212 [accessible as ebook via MSU Library Catalog]

Projects to review:
- Africamap, [https://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap](https://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap)
- Slave Revolt in Jamaica, 1760-1761, Vincent Brown, [http://revolt.axismaps.com](http://revolt.axismaps.com)

Tools to learn:

**October 6 (Thurs) - Mapping Lab**

**Assignment due**: Google Fusion part 1

Video lecture to watch:


Project to Review:
Tool tutorial due:
- Google Fusion Tables
  (http://miriamposner.com/blog/google-fusion-table-basics-with-ius-cushman-collection)

October 11 (Tues) - Imageplot Lab [Guest Speaker: Scott Schopieray]

**Assignment due:** Google Fusion part 1

Scott Schopieray, Assistant Dean for Technology and Innovation in the College of Arts and Letters, will lead this class in a hands on exercise for using large scale image analysis.

Readings due:

Projects to review:
- http://selfiecity.net/
- http://www.on-broadway.nyc
- Robots Reading Vogue, http://dh.library.yale.edu/projects/vogue

Videos to be analyzed in class (watch or skim if you get a chance):
- Bessie Smith in St Louis Blues, 1929 clip, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rn076CUZCc8

October 13 (Thurs) - Digital Archives and Images

October 18 (Tues) - Metadata and Linked Data [Class held at the Library, Meet at the Reference Desk]

The class will be held in the Main Library Make Central space, 2nd floor West. Digital Library Programmer, Devin Higgins, will discuss linked data and issues relating to metadata.

Reading due:
- Dominic Oldman, Martin Doerr, and Stefan Gradmann, Zen and the art of linked data: New strategies for a semantic web of humanist knowledge, *A new companion to digital*
humanities, Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth, eds. 2015, p. 251-273 [available online via MSU Libraries]

Project to review:
- Linked Jazz, https://linkedjazz.org

October 20 (Thurs) - Network Analysis

Readings:
- The universe of Miles Davis, Matt Daniels, http://polygraph.cool/miles

Projects to review:
- New York Public Library Archives - http://archives.nypl.org/terms
- Tate Explorer, http://shardcore.org/tatedata

October 25 (Tues) - Network Analysis Lab

Assignment due: Google Fusion part 2

Readings due:

October 27 (Thurs) - Project Management and Grants

Readings:
- Best practice principles of designing your first project, Jennifer Guiliano and Simon Appleford, devdh, 2013, http://devdh.org/lectures/design/bestpractice [listen the podcast as well as looking at the slides]
November 1 (Tues) - 3D Modeling and Photogrammetry [Class held at LEADR, 112 Old Horticulture]

The class will be held in LEADR, a DH lab in the History and Anthropology Departments. LEADR Assistant Director Alice Lynn McMichael will lead the class.

LEADR is in Old Horticulture 112.

Background information: Photogrammetry is a process that uses photographs to measure a subject. It can also be used to map points and measurements from those photos onto a three-dimensional image in order to produce a digital 3D model. In some cases, researchers will then make a physical copy of the digital model using a 3D printer or other material.

Some questions to keep in mind for the readings below:

- *How might we understand something better (or differently) by making a model of it?
- *How and when should we include context when documenting cultural heritage objects or spaces?

Websites to check out and readings due:

- Check out Sketchfab, especially the British Museum account: https://sketchfab.com/britishmuseum

November 3 (Thurs) - Debating the Digital Humanities + Project Pitches

Guest speaker: Matthew Handelman
At the beginning of class, each project (individual or group) will have 2 minutes to share/pitch their project idea to the rest of the class and to the guest speaker (and Megan). You will not be graded on this pitch other than as part of participation (which means you need to be there and do it). The goal of this exercise is to help you refine and articulate what you are interested in, share final project ideas, and get some initial feedback from someone with fresh ears.

In the second half of the class, there will be a discussion of a recent debate in the world of DH. Please read the following 2 articles and select 1 additional interview article to read. Before class, post a few sentences in the #harlemrenaissance channel of Slack summing up some of the key points from the article you read. Also, read the summaries of your classmates. This way, the discussion can be enriched by the breadth of voices in this conversation about what DH is.

Readings due (everyone):

Reading due (read one):

The LA Review of Books did a series of interviews this year with researchers in DH. Select one to read. For background, see the landing page for this series, which includes a brief introduction (https://lareviewofbooks.org/feature/the-digital-in-the-humanities). The interviewees are:

- Franco Moretti
- Alexander Galloway
- Laura Mandell
- Richard Jean So
- Bethany Nowviskie
- Marisa Parham
- Pamela Fletcher
- David Golumbia
- Sharon M. Leon
- Jessica Marie Johnson
- Ted Underwood

November 8 (Tues) Virtual Reality and Reconstruction

Readings due:
● Christopher Johanson, Making virtual worlds, *A new companion to digital humanities*, Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, and John Unsworth, eds. 2015, p. 110-126 [available online via MSU Libraries]


November 10 (Thurs) -

We will video conference with Dr Bryan Carter, professor at University of Arizona, who worked on the Virtual Harlem project.

November 15 (Tues) - Exam Review

November 17 (Thurs) - Exam

November 22 (Tues) - Work on Projects

**Assignment due:** Project Proposal

November 29 (Tues) - Work on Projects

December 1 (Thurs) - Work on Projects

December 6 (Tues) - Work on Projects

**Assignment due:** Draft Project and Update Presentation

December 8 (Thurs) - Work on Projects

Final Exam Week - Project Presentations and Class Wrap Up

**Assignment due:** Final Project [due on Friday, December 16, 10:00am]
Credit and Acknowledgements

The creation of any course syllabus comes from a process of conversation, sharing, and openness among educators. Thanks given to those who inspired and influenced the first iteration of this course (in Fall 2015) may be found here (https://trello.com/c/s581TOD2/45-credits). Below are those who influenced the 2016 version of the class: