Making and Critiquing Digital History
Department of History
University of Maryland
419E

Instructor:
Dr. Jennifer Guiliano
301.405.9528
guiliano@umd.edu
@jenguiliano

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10-11 am or by appointment
Office Location:
Maryland Institute for Technology In the Humanities, 0301 Hornbake Library
Directions: Enter Non-Print Media (basement level) and hang left past the DVDs.

Communication: I work a regular 9 am to 5 pm job, Monday through Friday. As such, the easiest way to reach me is via email. I do my best to answer email within twenty-four hours. When emailing me, you should write a subject line that includes the course number and topic, and include your full name at the end of your message. You can also DM me via twitter.

Class Times: Mondays 3:30-6:00 pm
Class Location:
Maryland Institute for Technology In the Humanities, 0301 Hornbake Library

Course Website: elms.umd.edu

Computing Policy:
This course relies heavily on the use of computing technologies. I ask students to bring an iPad or laptop to class each day as we will use digital destinations throughout the class. Technical mishaps may occur so I encourage you to back up all files regularly so that you do not lose your work. Technical failure is not an excuse for not completing any assignment so you will need to make sure to leave ample time each week in case of technical problems.

Abstract: Making and Critiquing Digital History examines the practice of being a historian in the twenty first century via a discussion and workshop-style advanced seminar. The course will begin by introducing the history of computing within historical practice then proceed by critiquing existing digital humanities projects, exploring cutting edge tools that can aid you in doing historical analysis and producing new knowledge, and familiarize you with best practice projects and standards that use computing tools. The course will examine digital archives and websites, historically-based gaming, geographic and mapping tools, text and image analysis,

social networking and network analysis, and 3D visualization. Students will be asked to complete a semester-long project to create and/or contribute to an existing digital history project.

Learning Outcomes:
- Students will receive focused exposure to the special topic of digital history within the broad purview of digital culture and historical practice.
- They will explore the methodologies and tools useful to conducting historical research through readings, critical thought, and practical, hands-on exploration of digital resources and projects.
- Students will be able to discuss major issues and debates in the areas of digital history including digitization, copyright and permissions, preservation and sustainability, and audience.
- Students will synthesize insights from one another as well as the instructor and their readings in order to produce a final project that either creates a new digital history resource or contributes to an existing digital history project in a unique way.
- Students will conclude the seminar with a focused base of knowledge that they can use as a foundation for other historical courses within the university, as well as working relationships with the instructional faculty and other students with kindred interests.

Goals:

Students will
- Demonstrate understanding of methods, skills, tools and systems that can be used in completing a digital history project.
- Demonstrate the ability to critique and analysis digital tools for use with historical questions.
- Demonstrate critical analysis of arguments and evaluation of projects' major assertions, its background assumptions, the evidence used to support its assertions, and its explanatory utility as a digital resource
- Communicate effectively, through written and oral communication and through other forms as appropriate.
- Demonstrate understanding of the interconnections of knowledge production within and across disciplines and digital forms.

Expectations and Attendance: HIST419E is a seminar-style class that relies on engaged student participation. This is not a lecture course; it is a class where you, as a student, will be expected to be actively engaged in class discussions and assignments. We will meet only once a week. As a result, your presence is instrumental to the success of the course for all students. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. If you are aware that you will be absent, it is your responsibility to notify me via email and to work with your classmates to make sure that you are aware of any assignments made during the class. I will be available during office hours to

discuss any missed assignments; however, I will not recap class discussion for you. Students are expected to be familiar with the University policy on attendance: one absence is allowed for a medically-necessitated reason per course per semester provided the student supplies a written note attesting to the date of the illness, that the information is true and correct, and that they understand that providing false information to me is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Students with repeated absences or with a major prolonged absence due to illness or other major emergencies will need to provide me with written documentation from a licensed non-familial health care provider. Repeated tardiness or leaving early will constitute an absence. Students will be provided with at least one short break during the class to stretch their legs and use the restroom.

Expectations for participation include having read all of the day's pertinent required readings prior to their assigned due date, active and thoughtful engagement during discussion, and quality engagement with instructors and other students in class and on the course website. Attendance alone does not guarantee an A in class participation.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to be familiar with the university code of academic integrity as outlined by the University of Maryland in its Code of Academic Integrity. It is important to understand that any instances of plagiarism, cheating, or other violations of the code can result in the failure of the course and possible expulsion from the university. Cheating includes: reusing portions of coursework for credit, allowing others to prepare work, and utilizing external aids including commercial term paper and internet companies. If you have a question regarding any of the above or the code in general, consult immediately with one of the instructors.

Plagiarism and Citations:The definition of plagiarism is broader than commonly assumed. Plagiarism includes: direct quotation, paraphrasing, summarization, and fabrication of materials. All quotations taken from other authors, including paraphrasing and all sources from the Internet (including Wikipedia, blogs, and forums) and other digital media, must be indicated by quotation marks and properly referenced. When writing a blog or blog comment, cite at least the author's name and enough information for a reader to find the work on their own (e.g. a hyperlink if available); for short papers and the final project, please use Chicago style when citing your sources. Some of the works we'll be reading may not be covered by the style guide (e.g. digital games); if this is the case, please give at least the work's title, author/developer studio, date of publication, and the web address for the work (if any). If you are ever uncertain about your need to cite something or how to do so, please contact the instructors before turning in your work.

Late Assignments: All weekly readings should be completed before the class for which they're assigned, and all assignments are due by midnight on the due date. Late assignments will be docked one full letter grade per 24 hours up to three days late (A to D). Assignments will not be accepted more than 72 hours late unless there is a legitimate excuse as noted under the

absence policy. If you know you will be late in turning an assignment in or absent on the day the assignment will take place, you are expected to turn that assignment in prior to your absence to receive full credit. Lack of access to, or technical difficulties with, computers (including failure to publish or include email attachments) are unacceptable excuses for late or missed assignments.

Grade Protest Policy:
To ask the instructor to consider a grade change, the procedure is as follows: Within one week of the hand-back date the student must provide in writing to me a detailed description of the complaint including why the grade is considered insufficient. The student will then schedule a specific individual meeting with the instructor to discuss the grade. Grades will not be discussed prior to or following any class, nor will they be discussed during office hours without prior notice to the instructors. If there is a question about improving one's grade or the grading metrics used, then the student is encouraged to make an appointment during office hours.

Special Needs:
If you have a registered disability and wish to discuss accommodations, please email the instructors by the end of the second week of class. Disabilities can be registered through Disability Support Services (4-7682 or 5-7683 TTY/TDD).

Religious Observance:
It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor by email of any religious observances that will conflict with your attendance, assignment deadlines, or final exam. The student should provide emailed notification to the professor by the end of the second week of the term; the notification must identify the religious holiday(s) and the date(s). If this notification is not given to the instructor by this date, all missed assignments, quizzes, and exams are subject to grade penalties.

Campus Closings:
Information regarding official University closings is available at http://www.umd.edu/emergencypreparedness/weather_emer or via 301-405-7669. If a campus closing or emergency occurs, the instructor will contact you via your university email address to tell you how to proceed. Always assume that deadlines have not been cancelled unless the weather emergency is so catastrophic that both the University and local businesses are closed.

Grading Policy:
Grading for this class will encompass the following assignments:

Responses (10): 50 (5 points maximum each)
In-Class Activities (8): 80 (10 points maximum each)
Participation: 80 points
Group Proposal: 20 points

Final Project: 70 points

Total points available: 300

Schedule of Assignments:
Monday, January 27
        Technology Survey
        Course Project Discussion
        Establishment of Grading Rubric
        Melih Bilgil, History of the Internet, Video (2009)
                http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hIQjrMHTv4

Monday, February 3
Definitions, Disciplinarity, and the Stakes of Digital History
William G. Thomas, "Computing and the Historical Imagination." In A
Companion to Digital Humanities. Blackwell Publications, 2994, 56-68. Part 1, No. 5.
http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion

Doug Seefeldt and William G. Thomas, "What is Digital History? A Look at Some
Exemplary Projects." In Perspectives on History 47 (5), May 2009. Available from:
http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/historyfacpub/98/

Beth McMurtrie, "Secrets from Belfast," Chronicle of Higher Education, January 26,
2014.
http://chronicle.com/article/Secrets-from-Belfast/144059/

Class activity: Mapping How to Critique a (Digital) History Project?
Response: How would you write your own digital history? what types of information
would you include/exclude?

Monday, February 10:
Visit to the Digitization Suite, 4th Floor Hornbake
Meet outside the Prange Collection, 4th Floor

History and the Web
Edward Owens, the Last American Pirate: Class blog: http://lastamericanpirate.net/
Class YouTube channel: http://www.youtube.com/user/janebrowning/videos
"Pirates":v http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RT9ZwlNLeY

Yoni Applebaum, "How the Professor Who Fooled Wikipedia Got Caught by Reddit,"
The Atlantic, May 15, 2012. Available from: http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/
2012/05/how-the-professor-who-fooled-wikipedia-got-caught-by-reddit/257134/

Class Activity: (Pick One)

Web Fundamental with codeacademy.org

> http://www.codecademy.com/tracks/web

Wordpress 101 (Wordpress.com)

> http://wordpress.com/

Response: What are the ethics of digital history? How might historical analysis come into conflict with issues of transiency and impermanence?

Monday, February 17:
Stanford's Tooling Up for Digital Humanities series on "Digitization"

Timothy B. Lee, "15 years ago, Congress Kept Mickey Mouse out of the public domain. Will they do it again?", The Washington Post, October 25, 2013.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-switch/wp/2013/10/25/15-years-ago-congress-kept-mickey-mouse-out-of-the-public-domain-will-they-do-it-again/

Anthony Grafton, "Future Reading," The New Yorker, May 11, 2007.
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/11/05/071105fa_fact_grafton

Response: As historians, how do we draw a line between attempting to preserve the past and the economics of digitization and commercialism? Should we digitize everything and let it free or should we apply some sort of evaluative criteria to our efforts?

Monday, February 24:
Archives and Collections
Kate Theimer, "Archives in Context and as Context," Journal of Digital Humanities, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Spring 2012).

Class Activity:
Up and Running with Omeka.net + Creating an Omeka Exhibit

> http://programminghistorian.org/lessons/up-and-running-with-omeka
> http://programminghistorian.org/lessons/creating-an-omeka-exhibit

Response: Using the principles that Theimer outlines in her article, construct a narrative overview of an "archive" of contemporary college life? what would it include? why? what shouldn't it include?

Monday, March 3:
Algorithms and Search Engines

Matt Cutts, How Search Works, Video, 2010.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNHR6IQJGZs

Christopher Steiner, "A Brief History of Man and Algorithms", in Automate This: How Algorithms Came to Rule Our World (New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2012), 53-74.

Alexis C. Madrigal, "How Netflix Reverse Engineered Hollywood," The Atlantic, January 1, 2014. http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/01/how-netflix-reverse-engineered-hollywood/282679/

In Class Activity Only:
http://programminghistorian.org/lessons/downloading-multiple-records-using-query-strings

Response: using a historical event, person, or topic, use at least three different search engines to compare and contrast their results. what do the search results tell you about the algorithms and/or construction of the search engines? how does the design of the search engine suggest different types of things to a user?

Monday, March 10:
Class Field Trip to the Smithsonian Museum of American History
        Class meets at 3:45 pm in the lobby of the American History Museum.

Matthew MacArthur, "Get Real! The Role of Objects in the Digital Age," In Letting Go? Sharing Historical Authority in a User-Generated World, ed. Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski. Philadelphia: Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, 2011.

Response: Selecting one of the online exhibits from the Smithsonian Museum of American History (http://americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/online), critique the exhibit using the criteria we set up at the beginning of the semester.

Monday, March 17: Spring Break (no class)

Monday, March 24:
Spreadsheets, Databases, and the ethics of Research Methods

        Ansley T. Erickson, History Research and the Problem of Categories: Reflections on 10,000 Digital Notecards, Writing History in the Digital Age, Spring 2011.

        Ellen Gruber Garvey and Lisa Gitelman, "facts and FACTS": Abolitionists' Database Innovations," in"Raw" Data is an oxymoron, 89-102. Cambridge, MIT Press, 2013.

Robert Fogelman and Stanley L. Engerman, Time on the Cross: the economics of
American Negro Slavery. Norton: New York, 1989. pp 192-209-233-258

Class Activity:
    Cleaning Data with Open Refine
    http://programminghistorian.org/lessons/cleaning-data-with-openrefine

Response: Given what you now know about databases and spreadsheets, what are the positives
and negatives of organizing information as "facts" in columnar and relational databases? How
might the use of databases limit our abilities to "tell stories"?

Monday, March 31:
GeoSpatial History

Jo Guldi, "What is the Spatial Turn?" and the Spatial Turn in History

David Rumsey and Meredith Williams, "Historical Maps in GIS", in Past Time, Past
Place: GIS for History (Redlands, CA: ESRI, 2002), 1-18.

Class Activity: HistoryPin
    http://www.historypin.com/

Monday, April 7:
Race and Mapping

Jason Farman, "Mapping the Digital Empire: Google Earth and the Process of Postmodern
Cartography"

Andrew A. Beveridge, "Immigration, Ethnicity, and Race in Metropolitan New York,
1900-2000", Past Time, Past Place: GIS for History (Redlands, CA: ESRI,
2002), 65-78.

Visit Google Lit Trips

Class Activity:
Introduction to Google Maps and Google Earth
http://programminghistorian.org/lessons/googlemaps-googleearth

Response: First, explore LondonLives.org and LocatingLondon.org. Then, reflect on the
following questions: How is GIS explicitly and implicitly about race, class, gender, etc? In what
ways does locating information on a map or landscape lead us towards or away from certain

conclusions about the historical stories we are trying to tell?

Monday, April 14:
Text Mining
>Ted Underwood, "[Where to start with text mining](#)," The Stone and the Shell, August 14, 2012.
>
>Text Mining Martha Ballard's Diary (all four parts)
>http://historying.org/martha-ballards-diary/

Class Activity:
Exploring Text Analysis with Voyeur
>http://hermeneuti.ca/voyeur

Response: As historians, we use texts within a sphere of context (e.g. we unite primary and secondary sources to tell a story). What are the benefits and limitations of text mining for historians? Why types of stories can you tell? What types of stories are difficult to tell using this method?

Monday, April 21:
Historically-Based Gaming

Jeremiah McCall, "[Historical Simulations as Problem Spaces: Criticism and Classroom Use](#)," Journal of Digital Humanities, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Spring 2012).

Trevor Owens, [Sid Meier's Colonization: Is it Offensive Enough?](#) and [if (!isNative()){return false;}](#), playthepast.org

Response: Using what you've learned about historical simulations and gaming, how would you construct a game about American empire, conquest, or war that would not reinforce the limitations of gaming and visual representation?

Monday, April 28: Project Planning Day

Monday, May 5: In class project session

Monday, May 12: In class project session

Final Project Due May 20th at noon