HIST 4085
Digital History

digitalhist.com
#YorkHIST4085
F/W 2016-17

Thursdays 2:30pm-5:20pm
TEL 2114

Department of History
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This course introduces students to both the theoretical and practical impacts of digital technologies on historical scholarship and public history. Digital technologies and the development of the Internet have transformed the ways that historians conduct their research, access sources, analyze documents, and communicate research findings. Students will gain practical knowledge of how to take advantage of digital tools for historical scholarship and public history and explore the theoretical implications of such digital knowledge mobilization.

Organization of the Course

Students meet once a week for 3 hours. Weekly meetings are divided into two sessions: discussion and lab.

Discussion
In the discussion session, students discuss and debate a common set of readings/video/audio based on a single topic. All readings are available online with links in the syllabus.

Lab

In the lab session, students will work with partners to complete particular lab exercises related to the week's topic. These exercises may also involve writing blog responses. Students are required to submit completed lab reports the following week.

Assessment

The final grade for this course will be based on the following assignments:

- Participation (25%)
- Lab and blog assignments (25%)
- Digital history project proposal (20%)
- Digital history project (30%)

Part of the final grade will also be determined by student self-assessments. This course is based largely on group work and working with partners throughout the year.

Assignments

Digital History Project (30%)
Due March 30, 2017

Working in groups of 5-6, students will develop and complete a major digital history project based on the following theme:

Getting to York

These projects will explore a number of different aspects of the history of transportation to and from York University. Students must develop projects that meet the following requirements:
- Focus on any aspect of the history of transportation to and from York University
- Make creative use of any digital technology appropriate to the objectives of the project

- Include a Web component
- Be publicly accessible
- Provide a synthesis of historical scholarship and/or original historical research
- Demonstrate high-quality historical research
- Demonstrate high-quality style and presentation

Projects will be based on proposals developed in the Fall semester.

Assessment of the Digital History Project is broken down into the following elements:
- Final digital history output (15%)
- Group presentation (10%)
- Self assessment (5%)

Possible digital history project ideas include:
- Wikipedia page
- Augmented reality smartphone app
- Public history website
- Digitization and Web presentation of a primary source collection
- Digital audio walking tour
- Audio or video podcast
- Digital oral history
- Interactive map
- Research database
- Teaching resource
- Interactive game
- Digital rephotography

Digital History Project Proposal (20%)
Due November 10, 2016

With their lab partners, students are responsible for completing a thorough proposal for a major digital history project. The proposal must include the following:
- Detailed written proposal website (5000 words)
- Outline of the topic
- Description of project

- Objectives
- Research/Work Plan with timeline and milestones
- Description of necessary resources
- Description of necessary skills
- Description of roles for 5-6 team members
- Prototype or proof-of-concept demonstration

Assessment of the Digital History Project Proposal is broken down into the following elements:
- Proposal website (10%)
- Presentation (5%)
- Self assessment (5%)

Students will present their proposals as a pitch to their classmates in the final weeks of the Fall semester. Students will evaluate each other using the following criteria:
- Creativity of design and use of digital technology
- Feasibility
- Overall quality

The six highest-scored projects will be developed in the Winter semester for the major digital history projects.

Lab Assignments and Blogging

Throughout the course, students will complete a series of lab assignments relating to different digital technologies used in historical scholarship and public history. Lab assignments will be assessed out of a possible five marks using the following rubric:
- Completion (3 marks)
- Quality (2 marks)

Lab assignments will occasionally involve blog writing on the course blog, *Reflections on the Digital Past*. All blog posts will be kept private (ie. just for the instructor). From time to time, the instructor may ask students to make high-quality posts public on the site.

Participation

Your active participation in class is essential, and we will measure it in a variety of ways. Attendance is mandatory and will be taken every class. You must show that you are engaging with course readings and themes by orally contributing thoughtfully to in-class discussions.

Each week participation will be graded out of three marks with the following rubric:
- Attendance (1 mark)
- Relevant contribution to discussion (1 mark)
- Substantive contribution to discussion (1 mark)

Students will also be able to participate online for partial credit each week. This can include comments to weekly discussion questions on the course forum or Twitter discussions on the #yorkhist4085 hashtag. If students wish to participate on Twitter, they must register their Twitter handles with the course instructor.

Because this course aims to teach students about digital history, including online research and communication, students are encouraged to bring internet-connected computing devices to seminar (laptops, tablet computers, smartphones). These devices should be used exclusively for course-relevant purposes. Students are not required to bring their own computer equipment to class.

All course participation, including in-class discussion and online discussion, must be in compliance with the [York University Student Code of Conduct](). In order to ensure this, students should try at all times to be respectful toward one another and toward all faculty and staff. Active and respectful student participation is essential to establishing a productive and engaging learning environment for everyone.

General Rules, Policies, and Expectations

Please make sure that all work that you hand in and present for this class is your own. The university takes this issue very seriously. We expect you to be familiar with all of the university policies relating to academic integrity

found here: http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/students/index.htm. Violations of the York Senate Policy on Academic Honesty – including submitting work written by someone else or submitted in another course, failing to use quotation marks and citations when using or paraphrasing the printed or electronically-transmitted work of others, collaborating on written assignments, cheating during examinations, and aiding or abetting academic misconduct – will be treated severely. Penalties may include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension from the University, and withholding or rescinding a York degree. For further information, see: http://www.yorku.ca/univsec/policies/document.php?document=69.

Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized one letter grade per day (i.e., if one day late, an A paper receives a B+) up to a maximum of five days. After five days, assignments will not be accepted. We will consider exceptions to the lateness penalty only when they are supported by authoritative written documentation (i.e., a doctor's note) or they can be legitimately substantiated. Students may not request deadline extensions within three days of a due date. All deadline extension requests must be made in writing via email to the instructor.

If you have any questions about a mark you received, either during a course or after a course is over, first approach your instructor. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, the Director of Undergraduate Studies for mediation. The Director of Undergraduate Studies does not change grades.

If, at the end of a course, you feel that your grade was not justified, you may submit to the Department a formal written appeal for reappraisal. Requests for grade reappraisals must be filed with the Department within 21 calendar days of the release of the final grade in the course. Students may question the marking of specific pieces of work or the overall course grade. Normally, only written work can be reassessed.

When a student asks for a reappraisal, the original grade may be raised, lowered, or confirmed. The decision of the Department may be appealed to the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies Executive Committee only on grounds of procedural irregularity or new evidence. Appeals must be submitted within 21 days of notification of the decision of the Department.

For more info on Department of History grade reappraisal policy, visit: http://history.laps.yorku.ca/students/grading-system/

We will accommodate students with disabilities working with the York University Learning Disability Services office (http://www.yorku.ca/cds/lds/). Please contact the instructor directly to make sure we are informed of your needs. If you will require any kind of accommodation for religious reasons, please let us know as soon as possible. Attendance is otherwise mandatory.

The History Department is located on the second floor of Vari Hall, 2140. The usual office hours during the academic term are M-F, 8:30am-4:00pm. The department's phone number for general inquiries is 416 736 5123.

The History Department website: Upcoming events, resources for undergraduate history students, faculty and staff information, and much more: http://history.laps.yorku.ca

Undergraduate Program in History: links to information on history major career paths, degree programs (what is required for majors, minors, etc.), and decree checklists: http://history.laps.yorku.ca/undergraduate-program/

History Advising Hours: The History department offers advising times weekly. The hours are posted on our website 1-2 weeks in advance. The days and times change to accommodate student's different schedules. We encourage all students to come for advising at least once a year. You don't have to have an issue or problem. It's a good idea to review your progress and advising will help you to make informed and thoughtful decisions. No appointment is necessary; students will be seen on a first-come, first-served basis. Director of Undergraduate Studies, Deborah Neill, can be contacted at dushist@yorku.ca or 416-736-2100 x 66968.

History Help and Mentorship Centre: Help for any student enrolled in a history course (help with writing assignments, research, exam-taking, etc.) from current, full-time history department graduate students. See http://history.laps.yorku.ca/students/history-help-and-mentorship-centre/ for more information or email histhelp@yorku.ca for an appointment.

The Writing Centre: One-to-one help with a writing instructor on any writing assignment.

You will need to enroll to set up your appointment, though they also offer some drop-in sessions. The enrollment link and further information is found at http://www.yorku.ca/laps/writ/centre/. Bring a copy of your assignment to your appointment.

Topics

Week 1: Introduction to Course

September 8, 2016
- Brief introduction to course themes, structure, and assignments
- Register accounts at http://digitalhist.com
- Register Twitter handles

Week 2: What is Digital History?

September 15, 2016
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Cohen and Rosenzweig, *Digital History*, "Introduction: Promises and Perils of Digital History"
- Read: Douglas Seefeldt and William G. Thomas, "What is Digital History?" *Perspectives on History*, May 2009
- Read: Paul W. Bennett, "Historians and Digital History: Why Do Academics Shy Away from Digital History?" *Active History: History Matters*, 5 June 2015. *Also read comments thread*

Lab

Welcome to WordPress!:
- Register account at http://digitalhist.com, if you have not already
- Update user profile
- Create a sample post: [name] Test Post
- Review all sections of WISIWYG editor
  - Text entry field
  - Publish
  - Categories
  - Tags

- ○ Featured Image
- ○ Excerpt
- Assignment - Write test post:
  - ○ Write four sentences in text editor
  - ○ Format some of the text to be bold, italics, and underline
  - ○ Start a bullet-point list and add three items
  - ○ Create a footnote for the following citaiton:

    Kheraj, Sean. "Restoring Nature: Kheraj, Sean. "Restoring Nature: Ecology, Memory, and the Storm History of Vancouver's Stanley Park" *Canadian Historical Review* 88, no. 4 (2007): 577-612.

  - ○ Highlight the title of the article in the footnote and create a hyperlink to that article on the Web
  - ○ Save a historical image from Library and Archives Canada
  - ○ Embed the image into your test post
  - ○ Write a caption using this format: [Title], [Year]. Source: [photographer, if known], [Archive], [File number]
  - ○ Link the image to its original source page on LAC website
  - ○ Search YouTube for any video from Library and Archives Canada
  - ○ Embed video into your test post

Week 3: History on the Web
September 22, 2016
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Cohen and Rosenzweig, *Digital History*, Ch. 1 "Exploring the History Web"

Lab

Evaluating History on the Web:
- Group #1 Explore and Review: Arcadia, Explorations in Environmental History
- Group #2 Explore and Review: Canada's Year Without Summer
- Group #3 Explore and Review: Histories of the National Mall

- Group #4 Explore and Review: [The September 11 Digital Archive](#)
- Assignment: Answer the following questions and post to course blog
  - Overall, how effective is this Website at using digital technologies to convey stories about the past?
  - What are your impressions of the user interface?
  - What would you add or remove from this project?
  - What are your thoughts about the map tool?
  - What are your thoughts about the timeline tool?
  - Write a post on *Reflections on the Digital Past* blog that reviews your site

Week 4: Making a Website
September 29, 2016
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Cohen and Rosenzweig, *Digital History*, Ch. 2, ["Getting Started"](#) and Ch. 4, ["Designing for the History Web"](#)

Lab

Building a Website:
- Build a website with your partner for your project pitch
- Review four free website development services:
  - [WordPress.com](#)
  - [Blogger](#)
  - [Wix](#)
  - [Weebly](#)
- Select a service that best suits your project pitch
- Sign-up for an account with your service and set up a website
- Select theme or template
- Write an "About" page for your website
- Assignment: Send link to your website to instructor

Week 5: Open Access and Copyright
October 6, 2016
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Cohen and Rosenzweig, Ch. 6, "Owning the Past"
- Read: Lessig, Lawrence. *Free Culture: How Big Media Uses Technology and the Law to Lock Down Culture and Control Creativity*. New York: Penguin, 2004. "Introduction"
- Read: Geist, Michael. "Fairness Found: How Canada Quietly Shifted from Fair Dealing to Fair Use" in *The Copyright Pentalogy: How the Supreme Court of Canada Shook the Foundations of Canadian Copyright Law* Ed. Michael Geist. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2013.

Lab

The Creative Commons:
- Visit and review Creative Commons website
- Assignment: Select a Creative Commons license and add embedded license on your project pitch website

Week 6: Podcasting the Past
October 13, 2016
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (required):
- Read: Ractham, Peter and Xuesong Zhang "Podcasting in Academia: A New Knowledge Management Paradigm within Academic Settings" *Proceedings of the 2006 ACM SIGMIS CPR Conference on Computer Personnel Research*
- Listen to an episode of one of the following podcasts:
  - Nature's Past: Canadian Environmental History Podcast
  - Backstory
  - The Memory Palace

Lab

Make a Podcast:
- Record a five-minute discussion with your lab partner about your project pitch

- ○ Audio recording tools: handheld digital audio recorder; GarageBand or Audacity on a PC; Skype recorder; iPhone or Android audio recording app
- Edit audio using Audacity or GarageBand (depending on operating system)
  - ○ [Audacity](#)
  - ○ [GarageBand](#)
- Upload audio to your website or other online audio storage service ([archive.org](#), SoundCloud,
- Write RSS feed for your podcast and upload file to your website
  - ○ [iTunes Podcast XML Generator](#)
- Assignment: Write blog post on *Reflections on the Digital Past* featuring your audio file and a link to your feed. Use an audio player in your post. The post should also explain your methodology for creating your podcast, including a list of software and tools.

Week 7: The Digitization Challenge I
October 20, 2016
Field Trip to Archives

Fall Reading Days
October 27, 2016
No class

Week 8: The Digitization Challenge II
November 3, 2016
Discussion
Open-Access Readings (Required)
- Read: Cohen and Rosenzweig, *Digital History*, Ch. 3 ["Becoming Digital"](#)

Lab

Digitizing Documents
- Select a sample historical document for digitization
- Photograph document
- Use image editing software to crop and enhance digitized document

- Write relevant metadata and source info
- Transcribe document or use OCR software to create text from digitized document
- Assignment: Write blog post for *Reflections on the Digital Past* featuring your digitized document, transcript, and source info

Week 9: Search
November 10, 2016
Digital History Project Proposals Due
Discussion
Open-Access Readings (Required)
- Read:Cohen and Rosenzweig, *Digital History*, Ch. 5 "Collecting History Online"
- Cohen, Dan. "Is Google Good for History" Last modified January 7, 2010

Lab

Critical Analysis of Search Tools
- Select two from the following list of search tools for historical research:
    - Google Scholar
    - Proquest
    - JSTOR
- Generate a list of search terms for a project on the history of the American Revolution
- Use your search terms in two of the tools above and make use of the various advanced options in your search
- Generate a list of five relevant primary and/or scholarly secondary sources on the history of the American Revolution
- Assignment: Write a 500-600 word review of your two search tools as a blog post on *Reflections on the Digital Past* and include your list of sources found

Week 10: Project Pitches 1
November 17, 2016
Lab partners will give presentations on project pitches

Week 11: Project Pitches 2

November 24, 2016

Remaining lab partners will give presentations on project pitches

Week 12: Project Management and Planning

December 1, 2016

Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Listen: Appleford, Simon, and Jennifer Guiliano. ["Building Your First Work Plan."](#) DevDH.org, 2013.

Lab

Managing a Group Project with Basecamp
- Meet with your project team and exchange contact info
- Based on project pitch, assign roles to all team members
- Sign up for accounts on Basecamp and set up a project page for your group
- Invite all team members to the project in Basecamp
- Develop your project work plan:
  - Review and revise project timeline from pitch and add to milestone goals to "Schedule" in Basecamp
  - Establish work to be done to accomplish milestone goals and add to "To-Dos" in Basecamp
- Start a "Message Board" discussion about ideas for how to start your project
- Update project website, including info on team

Week 13: Preserving the Past Online

January 5, 2017

Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):

- Read: Cohen and Rosenzweig, Digital History, Ch. 7 "Preserving Digital History"

Lab

Open Lab
- Meet with project team
- Review Schedule and To-Dos in Basecamp
- Proceed with project work

Week 14: Wikipedia I
January 12, 2017
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Rosenzweig, Roy. "Can History be Open Source? Wikipedia and the Future of the Past" *Journal of American History* 93, no. 1 (June 2006): 117-146
- Read: Editing Wikipedia
- Read: Evaluating Wikipedia

Lab

Introduction to the Wikipedia Project and Practicing the Basics
- Create a Wikipedia account and enroll in this assignment here
- Complete "Practicing the Basics"

Week 15: Wikipedia II
January 19, 2017
Lab

Adding to a Wikipedia Article
- Login to Wikipedia assignment
- Complete "Add to an article"

Week 16: Analyzing Digital History I

January 26, 2017
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Cohen, Daniel J. and Roy Rosenzweig. "Web of Lies? Historical Knowledge on the Internet" *First Monday* 10.12 (2005).
- Read: Milligan, Ian. "Mining the Internet Graveyard: Rethinking the Historians' Toolkit" *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 23, no. 2 (2012): 21-64.

Lab

Intro to Text Analysis
- Use http://voyant-tools.org/ to analyze the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the US Bill of Rights
- Use features and tools to adjust stopwords
- Create two png visualizations for each of these documents
- Assignment:
  ○ Share your observations with the rest of the class

Week 17: Analyzing Digital History II
February 2, 2017
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Graham, Shawn, Ian Milligan, and Scott Weingart, *Exploring Big Historical Data: The Historian's Macroscope*
  ○ The Joys of Big Data for Historians
  ○ Big Data
  ○ Putting Big Data to Good Use: Historical Case Studies
  ○ Early Emergences: Father Busa, Humanities Computing, and the Emergence of the Digital Humanities
  ○ Why this All Matters Now: The Third Wave of Computational History
  ○ Accessing the Third Wave Today
  ○ The Limits of Big Data, or Big Data and the Practice of the History
  ○ Chapter One Conclusion

Lab

Using the Historian's Macroscope
- Explore [Google NGram Viewer](#) and [JSTOR Data for Research](#)
- Use both of these tools to develop two historical or historiographical insights
- Create visualizations for your insights
- Assignment:
  - Present your insights to class
  - Presentation must include visual evidence

Week 18: Gaming and Simulations
February 9, 2017
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Taylor, Tom. ["Historical Simulations and the Future of the Historical Narrative"](#) *Journal of the Association for History and Computing* 6, no. 2 (September 2003).

Lab

Interacting with a Historical Simulation
- Play [Freeciv](#)
- While playing, make notes of your observations on the experience
- Assignment:
  - Write 500-600 word blog post about your experience with Freeciv as a historical simulation
  - Include one screenshot from your game
  - Do you consider this an effective tool for developing historical thinking? Why or why not?
  - What would you add to make this a more effective tool for developing historical thinking?

Week 19: Virtual Reality
February 16, 2017

Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Bonnett, John. "Following in Rabelais' Footsteps: Immersive History and the 3D Virtual Buildings Project" *Journal of the Association for History and Computing* 6, no. 2 (September 2003).
- Listen: "Is virtual reality the best way to get inside the history books?" Day Six, CBC Radio

Lab

Spherical Photography
- Using an Android or iOS smartphone, download and run Street View app
- Look up a historic site and view in Google Cardboard VR headset
- Download YouTube app and watch a 360 video from New York Times
- Using an Android or iOS smartphone, photograph sites on campus using the Photo Sphere app
- Return to class and view your photos in Google Cardboard VR headset
- Upload one spherical photo to Google Maps
- Assignment:
  - Embed uploaded spherical photo in blog post on *Reflections on the Digital Past*
  - Write blog post about potential uses of VR for historical scholarship, history education, and/or public history

Winter Reading Week
February 23, 2017
No class

Week 20: Mobile Computing and Augmented Reality
March 2, 2017
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Compeau, Timothy and Rob MacDougall. "Tecumseh Lies Here: Goals and Challenges for a Pervasive History Game in Progress." In

Pastplay: Teaching and Learning History with Technology, edited by Kevin Kee. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014.
- Listen: ["Augmented Reality with Kevin Kee"](#) Spark, CBC Radio

Lab

Rephotography
- Download Timera app to iOS or Android smartphone
- Select a historical photograph of York University
- Use the Timera app to create a rephotography image using your historical photograph
- Assignment:
  - Save your rephotography image
  - Add your image to Google Maps and pin it to its precise location
  - Write a 100-200 word blog post on *Reflections on the Digital Past* featuring your image
  - Post should include a description of the site and the historical photograph

Week 21: Spatial History
March 9, 2017
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Bonnell, Jennifer and Marcel Fortin. ["Introduction."](#) In *Historical GIS Research in Canada*, edited by Jennifer Bonnell and Marcel Fortin, ix-xix. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2014.
- Read: Lutz, John, Patrick A. Dunae, Jason Gilliland, Don Lafreniere, and Megan Harvey. ["Turning Space Inside Out: Spatial History and Race in Victorian Victoria."](#) In *Historical GIS Research in Canada*, edited by Jennifer Bonnell and Marcel Fortin, 1-26. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2014.
- Review: [NYC Space/Time Directory](#) and [Building Inspector](#)

Lab

Making a Google Map

- Complete [Lesson 1 of *Geospatial Historian*](#) up to the section on Google Earth
- Assignment:
  - Taking the skills you learned in Lesson 1, create an original Google Map of your personal history of the York University campus
  - Your map must include: at least one placemarker and one vector layer
  - Embed your map in a blog post on *Reflections on the Digital Past* and write a 100-200 word description of your map in the post

Week 22: 3D Printing
March 16, 2017
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Elliot, Devon, Rob MacDougall, and William J. Turkel. ["New Old Things: Fabrication, Physical Computing, and Experiment in Historical Practice,"](#) *Canadian Journal of Communication* 37, no.1 (April 2012):121-128.

Lab

3D printing demonstration

Week 23: Public History and the Digital Divide
March 23, 2017
Discussion

Open-Access Readings (Required):
- Read: Hurley, Andrew. ["Chasing the Frontiers of Digital Technology: Public History Meets the Digital Divide"](#) *The Public Historian* 38, no. 1 (February 2016): 69-88.
- Read: Trofanenko, Brenda. ["Playing into the Past: Reconsidering the Educational Promise of Public History Exhibits."](#) In *Pastplay: Teaching and Learning History with Technology*, edited by Kevin Kee. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014.

Lab

Open Lab

Week 24: Project Launch and Presentations
March 30, 2017
All groups will launch and present their projects