

**ENGL 596K: Methods and Materials of Literary Research:  
Introduction to Digital Humanities Methods for Literary and Cultural Studies**

Fall 2014

T, 5:30 PM – 8:00 PM, 203 Modern Languages (labs in 412 Modern Languages)

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Office Hours: W, Th 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM, in 470 Modern Languages

This course is an introduction to digital humanities geared toward applications in literary and cultural studies. While students' interests will help to shape our syllabus, particularly for sessions in the final weeks, we'll be experimenting with: text mining and entity extraction, text encoding, social network analysis, web design frameworks, mapping and GIS, topic modeling, and creative visualization. No prior knowledge of computer programming is presumed; all students will learn some basic principles, and many of our lab activities will include options for students who wish to try out more advanced tools and methods. In our discussions of critical readings and a shared literary text, we'll aim to find ways that digital methods can be integrated with traditional methods as we discuss current literary and cultural studies research problems. Student projects will include conference abstracts, a grant proposal, and a digital project prototype or mock-up accompanied by a conference-length paper.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

1—Students will be exposed a wide variety of current digital methodologies for literary and cultural studies, alongside critical work that evaluates the uses, advantages, and possible limitations of each.

2—Students will practice making arguments based on evidence obtained using digital methods, and they will integrate digital methods into traditional literary studies, including historicist, sociological, and cultural studies methodologies.

3—Students will gain basic competencies or build on existing skills in: markup languages, computer programming, database design, information visualization and the basics of digital project management.

4—Students will use written assignments to gain experience in the short forms that will be useful for professionalization within both academic and alternative (“alt-ac”) career tracks.

**Materials:**

Most of our materials for the course will be journal articles distributed via D2L. Please purchase the first book below; you may want to purchase physical copies of some of the following books that are also available open-access:

- Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees* (Verso, 2005)

- Matthew K Gold, ed. *Debates in the Digital Humanities* (Minnesota, 2012; open-access or paperback)
- Lunenfeld, Burdick, Drucker, Presner, Schnapp, *Digital\_Humanities* (MIT, 2012; open-access or paperback)
- Schreibman, Siemens, and Unsworth, eds. *A Companion to Digital Humanities* (Blackwell, 2008; open-access or paperback)
- We'll also read a novel together starting in the third week of class. I'm leaning toward *Moby-Dick* (deals with literary vis-à-vis scientific knowledge; out of copyright and open to data mining), but I will happily consider alternatives you all suggest. I'll ask you all to obtain a copy of the novel; *Moby-Dick* is also available for free as an e-book and as an audiobook.
- For labs, please obtain a USB flash drive, especially if you won't be bringing a laptop to class. 4 Gigabytes will probably be sufficient, and a smaller one might be, as well. We will start by using the PortableApps suite for Windows (recommended: Chrome, XAMPP, Notepad++, Portable Python, and for those interested in advanced text processing and/or statistics, Portable R).

### **Requirements and Assessment:**

**30% Coursework:** A few times in the semester, I'll ask you to write up short responses to one or more readings, or to produce informal writing after an in-class lab. Reading responses will be assigned the week before, and will be due by 2:00 PM on Tuesdays. Lab write-ups will be due at the same time before the following class (though usually these will be quite simple). Grading on a check-plus (A), check (B+), and check-minus (C) basis. Late assignments will be reduced by a letter-grade per day after they're an hour late.

**20% Participation:** This class will require active but judicious, courteous, and thoughtful participation at each session. Class discussion should be understood as a collaborative enterprise: well-chosen comments move discussion forward, and speakers should continually look for ways to connect their contributions to colleagues' interests and concerns.

**50% Final Project:** The final project for the course can be accomplished individually or collaboratively, and it will consist of a plan in the form of a conference abstract (**5% of course grade**) due **November 4**, and a digital project prototype or mock-up (**15%**), a grant proposal of about 5 to 10 pages (**15%**), and a conference-length paper of about 8 pages that discusses your project's significance (**15%**), **all due December 17**. These requirements are designed to reproduce the rigor of the seminar paper while giving students practice in some of the fundamental genres of short-form academic writing.

### **Attendance:**

You may miss only one class session before each missed class will reduce your final grade by 10%. An additional one or two class sessions may be made up by writing a two-to-three-page report on the week's readings (in addition to any assignments for the week); the second of these must be approved in advance by the instructor.

Please avoid causing distractions from our classroom work, including food of any sort (quietly sipped drinks are fine), interface noises on electronics, ringing phones or phones not in bags, late arrivals, and early departures. (If you must depart early, please let me know before class and sit near the door.)

### **Academic Honesty:**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and the instructor will deal with any incidents according to university guidelines. See <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/academicintegrityforstudents> for the student code of conduct. We'll discuss how to cite outside sources in class, but if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, this is a useful guide:

<http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html>

### **Accessibility and Accommodations:**

It is the University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can discuss options. You are also welcome to contact Disability Resources (520-621-3268) for guidelines on accommodations.

### **Schedule of Topics and Readings:**

1. **26 Aug: What is DH? Who are all of you?** Class intro; **LAB:** HTML and CSS.
2. **2 Sep: DH and Debates on Reading:** Heather Love, "Close but Not Deep"; Bruno Latour, from *Reassembling the Social; Digital Humanities*, "A Short Guide to the Digital Humanities," Matt Kirschenbaum, "What is Digital Humanities and What Is it Doing in English Departments?" in *Debates* and on D2L. **Lab:** Thumb drives setup, testing Portable XAMPP stacks and local WordPress installs. Intro to common content management systems, including WordPress, Drupal, Scalar, Omeka.
3. **9 Sep: Distant Reading and Literary Evidence:** *Graphs, Maps, Trees*; Moretti, "Style, Inc: Reflections on Seven Thousand Titles (British Novels, 1740–1850)"; Dan Cohen, "Searching for the Victorians"; Matt Wilkens, "Canons, Close Reading, and the Evolution of Method" in *Debates*; **Lab:** TAPoR, Voyant tools, and similar distant reading tools.
4. **16 Sep: Topic Modeling and Text Processing.** Alan Liu, "The Meaning of the Digital Humanities," *PMLA* 128.2; Andrew Goldstone and Ted Underwood, "The Quiet Transformations of Literary Scholarship: What Thirteen Thousand Scholars Could Tell Us" *NLH* pre-print; Ben M. Schmidt, "Words Alone: Dismantling Topic Modeling in the Humanities" (*JDH* 2.1); Tanya Clement, "'A thing not beginning and not ending': Using Digital Tools to Distant-Read Gertrude Stein's *The Making of Americans*" *LLC* 23.3. Topic modeling demo in-class.

5. **23 Sep: Novel Discussion, Archives 1:** Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* [students' choice]; Marktwainproject.org and NINES.org demo **Lab:** distant-reading Twain novel, Twain corpus, or another text, using topic modeling, TaPoR, or Voyant.
6. **30 Sep: Archives 2:** Guest Q&A, Andrew Griffin, co-editor of *Queen's Men Editions*; Marlene Manoff, "Theories of the Archive Across the Disciplines"; Ed Folsom et al, *PMLA Forum on Whitman Archive*; group visit to presentation, Jamie A. Lee, "Introducing the Arizona Queer Archives."
7. **7 Oct: Games:** Patrick Jagoda, "Gaming the Humanities (*Differences* 25.1), Jerome McGann, Johanna Drucker, et al, special issue of *TEXT Technology* (12.2) on "The Ivanhoe Game"; Ian Bogost, "Art," "Empathy," "Relaxation," from *How to Do Things with Videogames*; **Lab:** Group session of "The Ivanhoe Game," with Poe's "The Raven" [students' choice]
8. **14 Oct: Social Network Analysis 1:** Franco Moretti, "Network Theory, Plot Analysis"; Newman, Barabási, Watts, "Introduction" from *The Structure and Dynamics of Networks*; Graham Sack, "Character Networks for Narrative Generation"; optional, Dames, Elson, et al, "Extracting Social Networks from Literary Fiction." **Lab:** personal social networks with Gephi.
9. **21 Oct: Social Network Analysis 2:** Hoyt Long and Richard Jean So, "Network Analysis and the Sociology of Modernism"; Finn, "Revenge of the Nerd: Junot Díaz and the Networks of American Literary Imagination," (*DHQ* 7.1); Manuel Castells, "A Network Theory of Power,"; Jon Goodwin, Co-citation networks in Feminist Studies, Theory, etc.; Andrew Piper, "World Authorship: Three Computational Models"; Andrew Goldstone, Jon Goodwin et al, "*Signs* at 40." **Lab:** More with Gephi or D3.js.
10. **28 Oct: Information Visualization and Multimedia Manipulation:** Edward Tufte, "Graphical Excellence," from *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* and *The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint*. Johanna Drucker, "Humanities Approaches to Graphical Display" (*DHQ* 5.1); Shixia Liu, "StoryFlow: Tracking the Evolution of Stories"; Lev Manovich, "Visualizing Vertov"; Optional: Lev Manovich, "What is Visualization?"; Manovich, Douglass, and Tetel, "How to Compare One Million Images?"
11. **4 Nov: Mapping and Virtual Worlds:** Matthew Wilkens, "The Geographical Imagination of Civil-War-Era American Fiction" (*ALH* 25.4); Presner et al, introduction from *Hypercities; Hypercities; Neatline* and other project demos, *Virtual Harlem* and scholarly *Second Life* projects; "Pudding Lane: Recreating Seventeenth-Century London," *JDH* 3.1. **Lab:** Guided workshop on project abstracts, focused project time.
12. **18 Nov: Algorithmic Thinking, Algorithmic Criticism, Algorithmic Artworks:** Stephen Ramsay, "Algorithmic Criticism"; Montfort et al, "Randomness," from *10 Print...* (MIT, 2012); E-literature selections: Queneau's Sonnets; Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries, "Dakota"; @pentametrone and other twitter bots; optional: browse *Electronic Literature Collection*, vols. 1 and 2. **Lab:** Project work time; optional Markov chain bot tutorial.
13. **25 Nov: DH Debates:** Alan Liu, "Where is the Cultural Criticism in the Digital Humanities?" and Lisa Spiro, "This is Why We Fight," in *Debates; JDH* 1.1 "Conversation" section: selections by Alexis Lothian, Moya Z. Bailey, Jean Bauer

(with comments), and Natalia Cecire (both selections) and others at will; Lauren F. Klein, "The Image of Absence" (*American Literature* 85.4). **Lab:** Project work time.

14. **2 Dec: DH in Media History:** William G Thomas and Alan Liu, "Humanities in the Digital Age"; N Katherine Hayles, "How We Read: Close, Machine, Hyper," from *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis*; Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Mechanical Reproducibility"; Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, from *The Medium is the Massage* **Lab:** Project work time.
15. **9 Dec: Final meeting:** Student project presentations; review and conclusion.