

HUMA/HIST 5V71 - Humanities Computing

Instructor: Kevin Kee, Ph.D.

Office Hours: W, 1:00-3:00, or by appointment

Class Time: W, 9:00-11:50

Class Location: TH269G

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Course Description:

What is “humanities computing”, also known as “digital humanities”? We will begin to answer this question by *thinking about* DH through definitions, theoretical problems and examples. Digital humanities is a noun, but also a verb: it is “digitizing”, “distant reading”, “mapping”, “building”, “modeling and simulating”, “playing and gaming”, “teaching” and “collaborating”. We will also begin to answer the question by thinking with digital humanities, exploring the ways in which computing can support our research agendas, and augment our research practices.

Required Reading:

- The majority of the readings are online. Several of the readings may be found at the Reserve Desk in the library, or through the library Portal. The location of the readings is indicated in Zotero, either in the “URL” field, or in a tag (tags include: “Brock Portal” and “On reserve”). An appended note will indicate if the article or book has been submitted for review, but not yet published.
- You are required to purchase Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History* (Verso, 2007).

The [Digital] Method (Tools):

This course will support the incorporation of computing into your workflow and your MA/PhD project research. Each week you will play with and use at least one new tool. These are listed under “The [Digital] Method” below.

- You will be required to use software offered free for trial use. You may choose to subsequently purchase the software.
- You are required to purchase Adobe Acrobat Pro. Version 8 is for sale at the Brock Bookstore for approximately \$60, and version 10 for approximately \$75.

Assignments:

1. Seminar Leadership (Total: 20%)

You will lead one seminar during the course (in-class, in the Wiki). Specifically, you will:

- a. at least one week prior to the seminar, create a Wiki article, post a review of approximately one paragraph for each required reading, and post three questions for discussion (5%);
- b. lead discussion for approximately 90 minutes, drawing and expanding upon the posts to the Wiki, and asking additional questions as appropriate (10%);
- c. in the two days following the seminar (i.e. by Friday), post to the Wiki the notes that you have taken during the seminar discussion. These notes will serve as a record of our discussion (5%).

2. Seminar Participation (in-class, in the Wiki) (Total: 20%)

- a. You will prepare for seminars by: i. reading the required readings; ii. adding (in the Wiki) to your colleagues' comments on the readings; iii. responding (in the Wiki) to the seminar leader's questions. (10%)
- b. During seminars, you will contribute by participating in discussions (including referencing the two blogs and four Twitter feeds that you are following) and activities. (10%)

3. Weekly Reflection (in your blog) (10%)

You will create a blog, or create a separate HUMA/HIST 5V71 section on your already established blog. Each week, you will reflect in the blog on what you are learning in the course. Specifically, you will:

- a. reflect on the insights you are taking from the class readings, in-class discussion, Wiki discussion, your colleagues' blog postings, and the 2 blogs and 4 Twitter feeds that you are following (minimum one paragraph);
- b. reflect on your use of "The [Digital] Method" software tools (minimum one paragraph);
- c. other (as referenced in the other Assignments listed here).

4. Essays/Presentations (Total: 50%)

- a. During the second (or third) class, you will present (5 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of discussion) your proposed MA/PhD research project. You will outline how this proposed project might be informed by HUMA/HIST 5V71. You will outline what you most need to learn from HUMA/HIST 5V71 to support your MA/PhD research project. In the week that follows your presentation, you will blog about what you took from the class discussion that followed your presentation. *Presentation: September 21 and 28.* (5%)
- b. On one occasion during the course, you will profile the Featured Researcher of the week in a presentation of approximately 5-10 minutes. (5%)
- c. On one occasion during the course, you will evaluate a large-scale DH project that relates to your proposed MA/PhD research project. (See the "Featured DH Project[s]" below for examples.) Your evaluation will consist of a written report (of approximately 1000-1250 words) that assesses the virtues and shortcomings of the large-scale DH project. You will post this assessment to the Wiki on the day of your presentation. You will share your evaluation with the class in a presentation of 5-10 minutes. (15%)
- d. You will write an essay of approximately 10 pages (2500 words) addressing the manner in which HUMA/HIST 5V71 will inform your proposed MA/PhD research project. You must reference your presentation of September 21, and how your initial impressions changed or remained the same. This essay may include what you have learned, vis-à-vis your proposed MA/PhD research project, from your evaluation of the large-scale DH project (outlined in point c. above), and from your profile of the Featured Researcher. (20%)
- e. During the last seminar, you will present the above essay to the class. *Presentation November 30* (5%)

In-class Recording:

Audio or video recording of seminars is permitted only with the prior written consent of the instructor. Any approved recording must be solely for the personal use of the individual student.

Attendance and Participation:

This is a seminar course. Attendance at each class is expected and required. Students are also expected and required to be active participants in the activities and discussions; silence in class is equivalent to absence.

Late Policy:

I will gladly grant an extension to a student who provides a Medical Exception Certificate form. (For specifics about Brock's policy, and the downloadable form, go to <http://www.brocku.ca/health-services/policies/exemption>). I will also grant an extension to a student who has suffered a significant personal loss, where documentation is provided. Otherwise, late assignments will be penalized 2% a day and 4% per weekend.

Email Policy:

Please expect an email turnaround time of up to 72 hours. To ensure that your email makes it to the top of my Inbox, please begin the Subject Line with the following: "Email from student"

Academic Dishonesty:

Brock University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences according to the "Academic Regulations and University Policies" in the Graduate Calendar (see section "XVIII. Academic Misconduct" at <http://www.brocku.ca/webcal/2011/graduate/acad.html#sec66> for more information.)

Acknowledgements:

I developed this course with the help of friends and colleagues in the Digital Humanities. Thanks especially to Geoffrey Rockwell (University of Alberta), Bill Turkel (University of Western Ontario), Stefan Sinclair (McGill University), Sean Gouglas (University of Alberta), and Mills Kelly (George Mason University). While creating this course I consulted the presentation on DH syllabi that Lisa Spiro gave to the 2011 Digital Humanities (Palo Alto) conference. Thanks also to colleagues who have posted their syllabi online. This course builds on courses that I have taught previously, primarily in digital history; these were informed by colleagues including John Bonnett, Shawn Graham, and John Lutz, as well as the students who took the courses. Finally, thanks to Spencer Roberts, Simulating History Research Assistant, who helped with course-preparation.

Class Schedule

Introduction: What is HUMA/HIST 5V71?

September 14

Seminar discussion:

- McCarty, "The PhD in Digital Humanities"

The [Digital] Method:

- Read – <http://williamjturkel.net/2011/02/21/stealth-mode/>
- Backup – <http://williamjturkel.net/2011/02/22/backup-and-versioning/>
- Wiki – <https://kumu.brocku.ca/hist5v71/Wikis;>
https://kumu.brocku.ca/hist5v71/Main_Page
 (see also <http://www.5min.com/Video/Wikis-in-Plain-English-4206>);
- Zotero – <http://zotero.org>
- Dropbox – <https://kumu.brocku.ca/hist5v71/Dropbox>

What is Digital Humanities?**September 21**Seminar discussion:

- Cohen, “Humanities Scholars Embrace...”
- Scheinfeldt, “Stuff Digital Humanists Like”
- Hockey, “The History of Humanities Computing”
- Foster, “How Computation Changes Research”
- Unsworth, “The State of Digital Humanities, 2010”
- Bonnett and Kee, “Transitions”
- McCarty, “What is humanities computing?”

Featured Researcher: Willard McCarty, King’s College LondonFeatured DH Project: The Centre for History and New Media, George Mason UniversityThe [Digital] Method:

- Blogs – <http://wordpress.com/>
(see also <http://www.5min.com/Video/Blogs-in-Plain-English-985462>)
- Twitter & Social Networking
(see also <http://www.5min.com/Video/Social-Networking-in-Plain-English-4331>)
- RSS – <http://www.5min.com/Video/RSS-in-Plain-English-4205>
- Google Reader – https://kumu.brocku.ca/hist5v71/Google_Reader

Presentations 1**Digitizing and Marking-up (especially text)****September 28**Seminar discussion:

- Deegan and Tanner, “Conversion of Primary Sources”
- McGann, “Marking Texts of Many Dimension”
- Renear, “Text Encoding”
- Cummings, “The Text Encoding Initiative”
- Willett, “Electronic Texts”

Featured Researcher: Stefan Sinclair, McGill UniversityFeatured DH Project: The Text Encoding InitiativeThe [Digital] Method:

- HTML – <http://code.google.com/edu/submissions/html-css-javascript/#introduction>
http://www.w3schools.com/html/html_intro.asp
<http://htmldog.com/guides/htmlbeginner/>

Presentations 2

Distant Reading**October 5**Seminar discussion:

- Cohen, “Analyzing Literature by Words and Numbers”
- Cohen, “In 500 Billion Words...”
- Crane, “What Do You Do with a Million Books”
- Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees*

Featured Researcher: Dan Cohen, George Mason University

Featured DH Project: Culturomics (<http://www.culturomics.org/>) OR Proceedings of the Old Bailey Online (<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/>)

The [Digital] Method:

- Basic Textual Analysis (see <http://www.wordle.net/> AND <http://ngrams.googlelabs.com/>)

Mapping**October 12**Seminar discussion:

- Cohen, “Digital Maps...”
- Bodenhamer, Corrigan, Harris, “Introduction”
- Ayers, “Turning toward Place, Space and Time”
- Knowles, “GIS and History”
- Novak and Gilliland, “Buried Beneath the Waves”
- Cooper, Gregory, “Mapping the English Lake District”

Featured Researcher: Anne Kelly Knowles, Middlebury College

Featured DH Project: Spatial Humanities (<http://spatial.scholarslab.org/>)

The [Digital] Method:

- Adobe Acrobat Pro (OCR a PDF; set up rules for automatic OCR)
(see also <http://williamjturkel.net/2011/02/27/make-everything-digital/>)

Building**October 19**Seminar discussion:

- Ramsay, “On Building”
- Turkel, “A Few Arguments”
- Ramsay and Rockwell, “Writing as Programming, Parts 1 and 2”
- Elliott, MacDougall and Turkel, “New Old Things”
- Turkel, “Hacking History”
- Turkel and Elliott, “Making and Playing with Models”

Featured Researcher: Bill Turkel, University of Western Ontario

Featured DH Project: RepRap (see http://reprap.org/wiki/Main_Page) OR criticalmaking.com

The [Digital] Method:

- Evernote – <https://kumu.brocku.ca/hist5v71/Evernote>

Modeling and Simulating**October 26**Seminar discussion:

- Rauch, “Seeing Around Corners”
- McCarty, “Knowing True Things”
- Aarseth, “Genre Trouble”
- Mitchell and Montfort, “Shaping Stories and Building Worlds”
- Graham, “Behaviour Space”
- Turkle, “Simulation and Its Discontents”

Featured Researcher: Shawn Graham, Carleton University

Featured DH Project: Virtual Harlem OR Rome Reborn

The [Digital] Method:

- Scrivener – <https://kumu.brocku.ca/hist5v71/Scrivener>
(see also <http://williamjturkel.net/2011/04/04/write-and-cluster/>)

Playing and Gaming**November 2**Seminar discussion:

- Ramsay, “The Hermeneutics of Screwing Around”
- Rockwell and Kee, “The Leisure of Serious Games”
- Bogost, *Persuasive Games*
- Kee et al, “Towards a Theory”
- Compeau and MacDougall, “Tecumseh Lies Here”
- Peters, “World of Borecraft”

Featured Researcher: Rob MacDougall, University of Western Ontario

Featured DH Project: Pastplay (playingwithhistory.com)

The [Digital] Method:

- DevonThink (for Mac users)
(see also <http://williamjturkel.net/2011/04/04/write-and-cluster/>)
PC users see:
<http://academiclifehacker.wordpress.com/2007/01/12/windows-alternatives-for-devonthink/>

Teaching**November 9**Seminar discussion:

- Cohen, “Digital Humanities Boots Up on Some Campuses”
- Bass and Enyon, “New Media Technologies”

- Bass and Enyon, “Capturing the Visible Evidence of Invisible Learning”
- Read an additional essay of your choice at <http://www.academiccommons.org/issue/january-2009>
- Gouglas, Sinclair and Morrison, “Coding Theory”
- Kee, Darbyson, “Creating and Using Virtual Environments”
- Kelly, “True Facts or False Facts”

Featured Researcher: Mills Kelly, George Mason University

Featured DH Project: simulatinghistory.com OR “Making the History of 1989”
(<http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/>)

The [Digital] Method:

- DevonAgent; and GoogleAdvancedSearch (see: <http://goo.gl/PTWQX>)

Collaborating

November 16

Seminar discussion:

- Watch: Cohen, “The Ivory Tower and the Open Web”
- Cohen, “For Bentham and Others...”
- Gee, “Society and Higher Education, Parts 2 and 3”
- Wyman et al, “Steve.museum”
- Simon, “Discourse in the Blogosphere”

Featured Researcher: Nina Simon, Museum of Art and History

Featured DH Project: [Museum 2.0](http://Museum2.0.org)

The [Digital] Method:

- A software tool of your choice

No class

November 23

Presentations

November 30