

Dr. Julia Panko

Fall 2017

MENG 6710

Introduction to the Digital Humanities

Class meetings: Mondays, 5:30 – 8:10 pm, EH 317

Office: EH 463

Office hours: TBA

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COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

“Humanities computing.” “Digital literary studies.” “The next big thing.” “A buzzword.” These are just a few of the ways that the Digital Humanities have been described. This course introduces students to the Digital Humanities, an exciting, evolving, and interdisciplinary field of study that attempts to bridge the apparent divide between traditional humanistic study and digital culture. This course will cover the history and different aspects of the Digital Humanities, focusing on its role within literary studies. In particular, we will ask how our understanding of literary texts might be transformed using computational methods of analysis.

In addition to reading a range of critical work and considering the pedagogical applications of the DH, students in this course will practice using some of the field’s major methodological approaches for literary research. This will include hands-on lab activities and a final project where students analyze a collection of literary texts using a DH methodology. In the process, we will examine the insights that DH methodologies can bring, and we will evaluate the field’s controversies and criticisms.

Note: Students enrolled in this course do not need a technological background beyond a standard knowledge of computing.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Students will:

1. Be able to describe the history and prominent definitions of the Digital Humanities.
2. Develop an understanding—theoretical and practical—of several influential DH methodologies.
3. Analyze DH projects, evaluating how each contributes to Humanities scholarship.
4. Perform literary analysis using DH methodologies and reflect on the critical value of such approaches.
5. Be able to articulate the insights, limitations, and pedagogical applications of the DH.
6. Understand and evaluate the major critiques of the DH.

MENG LEARNING OUTCOMES

The MENG Program is dedicated to helping students master the following learning outcomes. This class focuses in particular on LOs 1, 3, 5.

- Learning Outcome 1: Gather, analyze, and communicate information and insights creatively and critically.
- Learning Outcome 2: Cultivate skills in close reading, critical thinking, creative expression, and persuasive writing
- Learning Outcome 3: Understand and apply various theoretical perspectives and discipline-specific terminology to interpretations of texts and /or analysis of data.
- Learning Outcome 4: Acknowledge and articulate the significance of key text(s) in specific genres, periods, cultures, styles, or theoretical perspectives.
- Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate knowledge of current scholarship and practices.
- Learning Outcome 6: Employ discipline-specific conventions and protocols for written or multimodal presentations.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEXTS

There are no required books to purchase for this course; all readings will be available via Canvas and/or online. Course readings will include selections from the following scholarly monographs:

- Matthew K. Gold, ed., *Debates in the Digital Humanities*
- N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis*
- Matthew Jockers, *Macroanalysis: Digital Methods and Literary History*
- Franco Moretti, *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History*
- Susan Schreibman and Ray Siemens, eds., *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*

Because Digital Humanities scholars have made a concerted effort to explore new ways to publish and disseminate scholarly writing, books are less dominant in the DH than they are in other areas of literary studies. Course readings will include book chapters as well as journal articles, but we will also be reading work published in less formal online formats, such as blog posts.

In addition to the readings, students will be asked to explore and assess online DH projects.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grade Breakdown:

%	Assignment	MENG Learning Objectives
10%	Active Participation (including producing work during in-class lab sessions)	L01, L02, L03, L04
20%	Key Projects Analysis	L01, L05, L06
15%	Presentation: Teaching with DH	L01, L03, L05
15%	Weekly Discussion Posts	L01, L02, L05
40%	Final Project: 15% = Contribution to Class Project, including Project Log entries 25% = Reflective Analysis Essay	L01, L03, L04, L05, L06

Active Participation: Discussion is a core component of this class. Students are responsible for: carefully reading all of the day's assigned texts before class; arriving prepared to discuss the texts; bringing the relevant texts to class; contributing to our discussions regularly; and producing the required work during in-class lab sessions. Students are expected to be attentive and focused in class.

Key Projects Analysis: Students will research and evaluate key Digital Humanities projects, focusing on a theme, subject, or research question of their choosing. This assignment includes two parts. First, for the annotated bibliography, you will choose 8 projects linked to your theme and write a 200-250-word annotation for each, describing the project and analyzing its contribution to the field. Second, you will write a 1000-1400-word detailed analysis of one of these projects, analyzing it in greater depth. See the assignment description on Canvas for a list of potential projects as well as questions to guide your annotations and analysis.

Teaching with DH Presentation: Students will give a 10-minute presentation where they explain how they would use a selected DH tool, resource, or method for a classroom exercise. The exercise may be aimed at any educational level. The presentation must explain the pedagogical rationale behind your choice and walk us through how the exercise would work in the classroom. You will prepare a handout (no more than 1 page, front and back) outlining the exercise and summarizing the analysis.

Weekly Discussion Posts: For most (but not all—see Reading Schedule) weeks, you are responsible for contributing at least two posts to the Canvas discussion about the readings for the next class meeting. Think of these as clusters of ideas you want to explore in class; these should include your own observations, as well as questions. Each of these two posts should be at least 100 words. Aim to probe the major ideas from the reading, clarify critical arguments, delve into specific issues from the reading, consider connections between readings, etc. Don't forget to proofread: as with all of your assignments, this work should be polished as well as thoughtful.

So that I and your classmates have time to consider them, these must be posted no later than 5 pm on the Sunday before we meet. Late posts will receive a 0. You do not need to

have finished all of the readings to post your thoughts about them, and your questions can address just one, some, or all of the day's readings.

Final Project: For the final project, we will be collaborating as a class: we will pick a period or genre of literature, assemble and prepare a corpus of texts, and then analyze the corpus using various DH approaches. You will receive 15% of your grade for your contributions towards the class project, including recording your work in a project log. Students may decide to work in teams, depending on the direction(s) the project takes; however, you will be graded on your individual contributions.

The remaining 25% will be based on a 10-page, individually authored essay. The essay will be a critical analysis where you reflect on a specific finding (or findings) from the project (a discovery, feature, or phenomenon that the project reveals). Rather than simply reporting on or describing the project, the essay should interpret the finding(s) within a wider discussion of the value of the Digital Humanities as an approach to literary studies. See Canvas assignment for further guidelines.

Course Grading Scale:

A = 94 - 100	B = 84 - 86	C = 74 - 76	D = 64 - 66
A- = 90 - 93	B- = 80 - 83	C- = 70 - 73	D- = 61 - 63
B+ = 87 - 89	C+ = 77 - 79	D+ = 67 - 69	E = 0 - 60

Grading Criteria Used for MENG 6610 Essays and Written Assignments:

A: An essay or paper in this category:

- is well developed and well organized
- clearly illustrates and develops key ideas
- displays a high degree of inventiveness & originality
- displays a sophisticated and superior use of language
- demonstrates syntactic variety
- is virtually free from errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction

B: An essay or paper in this category:

- is well organized and developed, though it may have small flaws in organization or paragraphing
- illustrates and develops some key ideas
- displays good control of language and a consistent tone
- demonstrates some syntactic variety
- is generally free from errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction

C: An essay or paper in this category: (**NOTE: ONLY Grades of B- or Higher Count Toward Degree Requirements**)

- is adequately well developed and organized
- illustrates and develops one or two key ideas
- displays capable and accurate use of language
- may display occasional errors in mechanics, usage, sentence structure, and diction, but not a consistent pattern of such errors

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Workload Expectations

Students should expect to do between 3 and 4 hours of work outside class for each hour in class.

Attendance

Since this is a graduate class, your attendance is extremely important. I expect regular and punctual attendance. There are no excused absences. Whether you miss class because of an illness, a family commitment, a flat tire, work, etc., it counts as an absence. This semester, you are allowed one absence without penalty. Use this wisely: it is for an emergency. Three late arrivals or early departures will count as one absence.

Missing two classes will decrease your final course grade by one letter grade.

Missing three classes will result in not passing the course. Students who miss more than two classes should drop the class this semester and enroll again at another time.

Late Work

Written assignments are due at the times indicated in the reading schedule. Except in the case of extreme and documented emergency, late written assignments will drop by five percentage points for each day (24-hour period) that they are late. Late discussion questions will not be accepted and will receive a 0.

Core Beliefs

According to PPM 6--22 IV, students are to “[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student's core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs.”

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a violation of the WSU Student Code and is not acceptable in this course (IV.D.2.b). Any sources—whether or not they are scholarly, and whether or not they are quoted directly—must be explicitly acknowledged. Academic dishonesty also includes submitting old or duplicate essays for multiple classes, fabricating sources, or allowing others to produce your work for you. These behaviors will not be tolerated. Students whose work appears plagiarized, or whose sources are not properly documented, are subject to **failure (receiving a zero) of a specific assignment or failure of the entire course.** Students who plagiarize will receive a Notice of Academic Integrity Violation and will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Emergency Closures

If for any reason the university is forced to close for an extended period of time, we will conduct our class via Canvas. Look for announcements through the class website and your

Weber email account. I recommend that you set up your notifications so that you receive Canvas announcements immediately through your email so that you have as much notice as possible about class announcements.

Americans with Disabilities Act

If you require accommodations or services due to a disability, you must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Services Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including the syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary. For more information about the SSD, contact them at 801-626-6413, ssd@weber.edu, or <http://departments.weber.edu/ssd>. Closed-captioning is required for audio/visual materials per EEO.

Note

If you prefer an alternate name or gender pronoun, please advise me of your preference.

The instructor reserves the right to amend course policies at her discretion.

PROVISIONAL READING SCHEDULE

Readings must be completed by the start of class on the days indicated below.

All readings can be found on Canvas. Make sure to bring either print or digital copies of each reading with you to class (on a screen bigger than a phone). Find a way to annotate or otherwise record notes on these readings.

Please note that the schedule and assignment due dates are subject to change (notice will be given). Topics and readings may be revised as we go, depending on how our class projects take shape and on the availability of tools.

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION – DEFINING THE DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Monday, August 28

“Day of DH: Defining the Digital Humanities” from *Debates in the Digital Humanities*

Roberto Simanowski and Luciana Gattass, “Debates in the Digital Humanities Formerly Known as Humanities Computing”

Patrik Svensson, “The Landscape of Digital Humanities”

Alan Liu, “Map of the Digital Humanities”

Elijah Meeks, “Comprehending the Digital Humanities” (Read the sections “Comprehending the Digital Humanities,” “Topology,” “Topics,” and “Documents”)

Pick a DH project, explore it online, and be prepared to talk about its goals, key features, audience, and contribution to the humanities. You could pick one of the projects listed at DH Commons or the DH Initiative, or browse online and choose any project that appeals to you.

WEEK 2: CLASS DOES NOT MEET

Monday, September 4

Holiday – Class Does Not Meet

Complete Survey: Electronic Devices (due by 5pm on Monday)

Read ahead for next week, and work on Wednesday’s assignment.

Wednesday, September 6th

DUE to Canvas: Make a list of three time periods or genres you might focus on for a Digital Humanities study. For each of these three topics, come up with a list of 10 books (or other literary works) that would count as your “data set.” For one of these lists, see how many of the texts are available online (try Project Gutenberg and the University of Adelaide); indicate whether and where you found each text on that list.

Fill out the Project Log, indicating what you did and how long it took. This will count as your first contribution to the final class project.

Sunday, September 10

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday’s readings

WEEK 3: DIGITAL LITERARY STUDIES

Monday, September 11

Jessica Pressman and Lisa Swanstrom, "The Literary And/As the Digital Humanities"
Franco Moretti, "Graphs" from *Graphs, Maps, Trees: New Models for Literary History*
Ted Underwood, "We Don't Already Understand the Broad Outlines of Literary History"
Kirschenbaum, Matthew. "What is the Digital Humanities and What's It Doing in English Departments?" *Debates in the Digital Humanities*
Sandy Baldwin, "The Idiocy of the Digital Literary"

Lab 1: Exploring and Assessing Literary DH Archives

Note: we will do all of the DH labs in class, together. Unless indicated otherwise, you do not need to prepare for the labs in advance.

Sunday, September 17

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday's readings

WEEK 4: READING AND TEXT MINING

Monday, September 18

N. Katherine Hayles, "How We Read: Close, Distant, Hyper" from *How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis*
Stephen Ramsay, "The Hermeneutics of Screwing Around; or What You Do with a Million Books"
Brian Croxall, "Courting 'The World's Wife': Original Digital Humanities Research in the Undergraduate Classroom" and related short blog post "Cirrus and Duffy" by Zach Sold
Ted Underwood, "Where to Start with Text Mining?"

Lab 2: Out-Of-The-Box Text Analysis

Sunday, September 24

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday's readings

WEEK 5: TEXT ANALYSIS

Monday, September 25

Stephen Ramsay, "Toward an Algorithmic Criticism" from *A Companion to Digital Literary Studies*
Ted Underwood, "Seven Ways Humanists Are Using Computers to Understand Text"
Matthew Jockers, selections from *Macroanalysis*
Jean-Baptiste Michel, Erez Lieberman Aiden, et al., "Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books"

Lab 3: Preparing a Digital Literary Corpus

Wednesday, September 27

DUE by 11:59 pm on Canvas: Key Projects Analysis

Sunday, October 1

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday's readings

WEEK 6: TOPIC MODELING

Monday, October 2

Ted Underwood, "Topic Modeling Made Just Simple Enough" (2012)

Matthew Jockers, "Theme" from *Macroanalysis*

Matthew Jockers, "500 Themes from a corpus of 19th-Century Fiction" (interactive site for exploring Jockers' topic modeling; explore)

Lab 4: Topic Modeling with Out-Of-The-Box Tools

Sunday, October 8

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday's readings

WEEK 7: TOPIC MODELING

Monday, October 9

Shawn Graham, Scott Weingart and Ian Milligan, "Getting Started with Topic Modeling and MALLET": read through "Lesson Goals" and "What Is Topic Modeling And For Whom Is This Useful?"

Explore Matthew Wilkens's 100-topic model of 1,543 novels published in the United States between 1774 and 1875:

Read the "About Page"

Using the "Overview" view, choose one topic to investigate further. What are the top 5 novels associated with that topic? When (years) was that topic most prominent in the corpus? Record your answers.

Using the "Bibliography" view, choose one novel to investigate in more detail (or choose one of the novels included in the topic you investigated in the previous step). If you have the option to choose a novel you've read, do so. What are its top 3 topics? Record your answers.

Bring your notes to these questions to class, and be ready to discuss them.

Lab 5: Topic Modeling with MALLET

WEEK 8: TOPIC MODELING

Monday, October 16

Lisa Rhody, "Topic Modeling and Figurative Language"

Andrew Goldstone and Ted Underwood, "What Can Topic Models of PMLA teach us about the History of Literary Scholarship?"

Lab 6: Planning a DH Project

Sunday, October 22

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday's readings

WEEK 9: MAPPING

Monday, October 23

Diana S. Sinton, "Mapping"

Chris Johanson et al., "Teaching Digital Humanities through Digital Cultural Mapping"

Alan McConchie and Beth Schechter, "Anatomy of a Web Map" (click each slide to advance)

Jo Guldi, "The Spatial Turn in Literature"

Lab 7: Mapping I

WEEK 10: DH PEDAGOGY PRESENTATIONS

Monday, October 30

DUE: Presentations today

Sunday, November 5

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday's readings

WEEK 11: MAPPING

Monday, November 6

Ian Gregory, "Using Geographical Information Systems to Explore Space and Time in the Humanities"

Sara McLafferty, "Women and GIS: Geospatial Technologies and Feminist Geographies"
Explore the project "Mapping the Lakes"

What are the different types of maps used by these projects? What insight is revealed when we map the journeys of the Romantic poets on to geospatial data?

Lab: Mapping II

Sunday, November 12

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday's readings

WEEK 12: CRITICISM AND CONTROVERSIES

Monday, November 13

Brian Greenspan, "Are Digital Humanists Utopian?" *Debates in the Digital Humanities*
Allington et al., "Neoliberal Tools (and Archives)"
Chun et al. "The Dark Side of the Digital Humanities"
Pannapacker, "On The Dark Side of the Digital Humanities"
Adeline Koh: "A Letter to the Humanities: DH Will Not Save You"

Sunday, November 19

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday's readings

WEEK 13: CRITICISM AND CONTROVERSIES, cont.

Monday, November 20

Alan Liu, "Where is Cultural Criticism in the Humanities?"
Susan Brown, "Networking Feminist Literary History"
Tara McPherson, "Why Are the Digital Humanities so White?" *Debates in the Digital Humanities*
Kim Gallon. "Making a Case for the Black Digital Humanities" *Debates in the Digital Humanities*

WEEK 14: OPEN CLASS – TOPIC TBD

Monday, November 27

Readings and/or in-class activities will be determined later in the semester, based on our progress so far and on student interest.

Sunday, December 3

DUE to Canvas by 5pm: Discussion Questions for Monday's readings

WEEK 15: CONCLUSIONS

Monday, December 4

Cecire, Natalia. "Theory and the Virtues of Digital Humanities" (Introduction through section on "Conversations")
Benjamin M. Schmidt, "Do Digital Humanists Need to Understand Algorithms?" from *Debates in the Digital Humanities*

Wednesday, December 6

DUE: Final Project: Project Log + Individual Analysis