History 390-004—The Digital Past

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Thursday 4:30-7:10 pm

Robinson Hall B 203

Office- Robinson Hall B 226C

Hours 3:30-4:25 or by appointment

teaching.anneladyem.com

This course, which satisfies the university's IT requirement, prepares students to utilize and understand a wide variety of current and emerging digital technologies through application to historical research. These digital technologies can influence the practice of history, and although no background in history is required, students will acquire analytical research and writing skills which are essential to studying history and for future work. The course will involve discussions and workshops on how to use digital tools for historical research and learning the best practices for writing and publishing online. We will also explore the challenges and ethics historians are faced with in the digital age. Students will use the skills they learn throughout the course to create an individual research project examining a topic in an entertainment media of their own choosing.

This class WILL include discussions with the class. You must do the reading and assignments before class in order to pass.

**SUBJECT TO CHANGE—updated syllabus with course readings will always be posted on teaching.anneladyem.com**

August 31—Introductions

September 7—Digital History

September 14—Digital Research [IT Requirement 1]

September 21—Copyright and Open Access [IT Requirements 1 and 3]

September 28—Metadata and Omeka  [IT Requirement 2]

**Midterm Group Podcast Proposal Due**

October 5—Digital Storytelling [IT Requirement 2]

October 12—Mapping [IT Requirement 2]

October 19— **Midterm Group Podcast Due and Presentations**

October 26— Visualizations [IT Requirement 2]

November 2— Building Digital History Projects [IT Requirement 2]

November 9—HTML, Text mining [IT Requirement 2] **Final Website Project Proposal Due**

November 16—Security, Sustainability, and Ethics [IT Requirement 3 and 4]

November 23—NO CLASS

November 30— **Final Website Project Presentations**

December 7—**Final Website Project Presentations**

Final due Thursday December 14, 4:30pm


Important Dates

**Last day to drop with no tuition penalty September 5**

**Final Drop Deadline)** September 29


Learning Goals

We have four primary learning goals, as per the Mason Core requirements.

1.  Students will be able to use technology to locate, access, evaluate, and use information, and appropriately cite resources from digital/electronic media.

2.  Students will understand the core IT concepts in a range of current and emerging technologies and learn to apply appropriate technologies to a range of tasks.

3.  Students will understand many of the key ethical, legal and social issues related to information technology and how to interpret and comply with ethical principles, laws, regulations, and institutional policies.

4.  Students will understand the essential issues related to information security, how to take precautions and use techniques and tools to defend against computer crimes.

Grading:

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|---|---|
| Participation | 15 points |
| Blogging | 15 points |
| Midterm Group Proposal | 10 points |
| Midterm Group Podcast | 20 points |
| Final Website Proposal | 10 points |
| Final Website Project | 30 points |

## Phones and Computers

It is impossible to complete a class like this without use of technology. Your computer will be used for class, and I expect that you will be using it for class work only. If you use your computer or phone for purposes outside the class, you will lose your participation grade for the day.

## Attendance

It should go without saying, but you have to come to class if you want to do well. In order to understand the technologies and discussions we will be covering, you have to be in the class. I will need documentation for any absences.

## Late Work

All assignments must be turned in at the date and time they are due. Late assignments will drop a letter grade. (A to a B) If you do have a documented emergency and cannot turn in your assignment, please contact me. I can try and accommodate you.

## Office Hours

My office is Robinson Hall B 226C, and I will be in the office from 3:30-4:25 the day of class or by appointment. If you need to contact me, the best way to reach me is email. That's amcdivit@gmu.edu

Honor Code

Don't plagiarize. The George Mason Honor Code states that students pledge to not cheat, steal, or lie in your academic work. All violations will be turned into the Honor Committee for review.

Disabilities

Any student who requires special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me to make necessary accommodations (as soon as possible, please). Students must present appropriate verification from the Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Room 4205; 703-993-2474). All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Acknowledgments

This course has been taught by many professors at George Mason before me, and I owe a lot to Erin Bush and Lincoln Mullen.