

English 504/Comp Lit 554—Colloquium in Digital Culture and the Digital Humanities
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TTh 9:30-11:20, PAR 212
Office hours by appt.

Seven years ago, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* called the digital humanities “the first ‘next big thing’ in a long time.” Today, DH has arrived. Its domain encompasses research institutes, learned journals, Mellon fellowships, and an NEH mandate. Its language permeates the MLA convention program. It arouses messianic expectations and fiery condemnations in seemingly equal measure.

But what *is* it? The term “digital humanities” applies to a huge range of loosely related enterprises from coding with XML-based TEI standards to the critical study of digital culture and born-digital literature to simply the dissemination of humanistic research in digital form. Rather than following any one path in this seminar, our objective will be to step back and survey the field as it has emerged and in its full institutional complexity. What does a graduate student in the humanities need to know about DH *right now*? Who are the major thinkers and what are the major debates? How might one situate oneself or one’s project in relation to the digital turn? To answer these questions – and raise new ones – we will meet in a weekly colloquium format with invited experts leading discussion on key themes in DH: Rachel Sagner Buurma (Swarthmore) on close and distant reading, Daniel Shore (Georgetown) on working with digital corpora, David Squires (Washington State U) on open access, Angela Bennett (U of Nevada, Reno) on eco-DH and data aggregation, and local faculty members on digital archiving and editing, DH maker movements, data visualization and GIS, and the future of the humanities in a digital era. Practical issues of project-based scholarship, DH funding opportunities, and digital pedagogy will be covered. No prior technical knowledge or experience is assumed.

English 504 / Comp Lit 554 is a core graduate seminar in the Textual Studies Program. Course credit can be applied towards the Textual and Digital Studies Graduate Certificate. For more information, see <http://depts.washington.edu/text>.

Requirements

1. **Participate actively** in class discussions. Do all the reading, attend all the sessions, and don’t use laptops or mobile devices in class for anything other than classwork.
2. **Present** on a designated unit (for days when we do not have a visitor). Presentations should (1) distill the readings down to a 10-minute overview of what is central to the unit, and (2) offer two questions for the ensuing class discussion.
3. **Produce a short assessment** of an existing DH project in your field. Instructions to follow in week 2. *Due 4/21, by 5pm in Canvas.*

4. **Propose a grant-funded DH project** that would enrich your field and/or address a gap in the scholarship on your object(s). This assignment has two parts: **a micro-conference** in the final week of class where you will deliver a short (10-min.) paper laying out a case for your proposed DH project, and **a mock-application** for a National Endowment for the Humanities DH Startup Grant (<http://www.neh.gov/grants/odh/digital-humanities-start-grants>), which will serve as your final paper. We will set aside some time in week 6 to workshop project ideas. Instructions to follow in week 4. *Due 6/12 by 5pm in Canvas.*

Grading Scale

3.7 and above = A = you're doing fine.

3.6 and below = B = we should talk

Schedule

All readings are available in Canvas under Assignments.

Week 1: Introductions, Overview, and Polemics

3/28: Anne Burdick et al., from *Digital Humanities*, and Daniel Allington, Sarah Brouillette, and David Golumbia, "Neoliberal Tools (and Archives): A Political History of DH"

3/30: Matthew Kirschenbaum, "What is the Digital Humanities and What is it Doing in English Departments?"; Alan Liu, "Where is Cultural Criticism in the Digital Humanities?"; and either Tara McPherson, "Why are the Digital Humanities So White?" or Kim Gallon, "Making a Case for the Black Digital humanities"

Week 2: Project Management, Evaluation, and Code (Sarah Ketchley, UW)

4/4: Miriam Posner, "How Did They Make That?" and practical guides to DH project evaluation, design, and management

(Sarah) 4/6: Matthew Kirschenbaum, "Hello Worlds: Why Humanities Students Should Learn to Code"; either Miriam Posner, "Some Things to Think About Before You Exhort Everyone to Code" or Evan Donahue, "A 'Hello World' Apart: Why Humanities Students Should Not learn to Program"; and Mark C. Marino, "Why We Must Read the Code"
Recommended background: Paul Ford, "What is Code?" (the relevant parts)

Week 3: Critical Making and Maker Movements (Tyler Fox, UW)

4/11: Matt Ratto, "Critical Making"; Gilbert Simondon, "On Techno-Aesthetics" and "Technical Mentality"; and Daniela Rosner, "Approaching Design as Inquiry"

(Gabrielle) 4/13: Jentery Sayers, "Prototyping the Past"; Garnet Hertz, *Conversations in Critical Making*, preface, Sayers interview, and Galloway interview; Helen Burgess and David M. Reider (eds.), special issue of *Hyperrhiz* on "Kits," introduction and skim a few kits

Week 4: Text Encoding, Digital Editions, and Archives (Miceal Vaughan, UW)

(Diana) 4/18: Susan Schreibman, "Digital Scholarly Editing"; Martin Mueller, "A Very Gentle Introduction to the TEI" (feel free to skip the middle section); Kate Singer, "Digital Close

Reading: TEI for Teaching Poetic Vocabularies”

4/20: Piers Plowman Electronic Archive, “About,” “Transcriptional Protocols: General Intro,” and browse the PPEA; introduction to Vaughan edition of *Piers Plowman’s* A-version

Week 5: Close and Distant Reading I (Rachel Sagner Buurma, Swarthmore)

(Joe) 4/25: Stephen Ramsay, *Algorithmic Criticism*, ch. 1; Ted Underwood, “Distant Reading and Recent Intellectual History”; Franco Moretti, “Style, Inc.: Reflections on Seven Thousand Titles”; and Paul Nulty, “Titles in Digital Book Collections, 1700-1900”

4/27: Browse the Early Novels Database, its datasets, documentation, and an accompanying draft essay; and a packet of short readings on data use/reuse and digital pedagogy

Week 6: Data Visualization and GIS (Luke Bergmann, UW)

(Ronnie) 5/2: Johanna Drucker, “Humanistic Theory and Digital Scholarship; “Humanities Approaches to Graphical Display”; and “Temporal Modeling” from *SpecLab*

5/4: William Kretschmar, “GIS for Language and Literary Study” and selected GIS projects; Luke Bergmann, “Toward Speculative Data: ‘Geographic Information’ for Situated Knowledges, Vibrant Matter, and Relational Spaces”

Week 7: Open Access in Theory and Practice (David Squires, Washington State U)

(Maggie) 5/9: Kathleen Fitzpatrick, “Open”; Matthew Battles and Jeffrey Schnapp, selections from *The Library Beyond the Book*; and Andrew Stauffer, “The Nineteenth-Century Archive in the Digital Age” and Book Traces (<http://www.booktraces.org>)

5/11: Aaron Swartz, “Who Runs Wikipedia?”; Nathaniel Tkacz, “Wikipedia and the Politics of Mass Collaboration”; Robert Darnton, “The Library: Three Jeremiads”; and Jerome McGann, “Philology in a New Key”

Week 8: Working With Digital Corpora (Daniel Shore, Georgetown U)

(Julianne) 5/16: Matthew Jockers, from *Macroanalysis*; Andrew Goldstone and Ted Underwood, “The Quiet Transformations of Literary Studies”; Ryan Heuser and Long Le-Khac, “The Semantic Cohort Method” (feel free to skim pp 33-48)

5/18: Ben Zimmer, “I’m going to have to science the shit out of this”; Charles Fillmore, “Idiomacity”; and Daniel Shore, “Shakespeare’s Constructicon”
Recommended background: Noam Chomsky, from *Syntactic Structures*

Week 9: Close and Distant Reading II (Angie Bennett, U of Nevada, Reno)

(Jeff&Kate) 5/23: Andrew Piper, “There Will Be Numbers,” and either James English and Ted Underwood, “Shifting Scales: Between Literature and Social Science” or Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Stephanie Lemenager, “Introduction” to a *PMLA* special section on Eco-DH

5/25 A. R. Bennett “The Ecology of Art-iculation and Aggregate Reading”; Bruno Latour “Circulating Reference”; Franco Moretti, “Graphs”

Week 10: Conclusions and DH Futures

5/30: Presentations

6/1: Presentations, cont’d; Wendy Chun, Richard Grusin, Patrick Jagoda, and Rita Raley, “The Dark Side of the Digital Humanities”; Timothy Burke, “The Humane Digital”