Syllabus HIST GA.2033 Fall 2012

Cathy Moran Hajo, 212-998-8666 cathy.hajo@nyu.edu Room 405 King Juan Carlos Building.

Class meets on Tuesdays, 4:55-7:35 in Room 701 of King Juan Carlos Building.

Historians who work with the public have a particular need to be comfortable with digital tools. The course offers students a basic grounding in the technological skills needed to conduct online historical research and to present the results of their research online. It also introduces students to issues in digital history such as copyright, intellectual property, information abundance, and how the Web changes the relationship between historians and their audience.

Course Aims:

* Learn research skills appropriate and necessary for conducting research in the digital age
* Learn to write and promote the results of historical research for a general audience
* Describe historical objects using structured metadata and folksonomies
* Learn to build digital maps and visualizations
* Contribute materials to a digital archive on Greenwich Village history
* Create a digital exhibit

Major Readings


Syllabus (PDF.)

In weeks marked LAB, please bring your laptop computer if you have one.

Sept 4- Week 1: Course Introduction / Greenwich Village History

Special Guest: Sheryl Woodruff, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation.

We will discuss the course goals, assignments, the use of the Wikidot site and other software that will be used in the course. Sherly Woodruff will provide a brief introduction to Greenwich Village history.

TAKE SURVEY

Join the Researching Greenwich Village History blog at

Sept. 11-Week 2 - Digitization Lab
Meet at Bobst Image Lab, 2nd floor of Bobst Library. Bring a thumb drive and something that you would like to scan for the hands on portion of the session.

We will discuss preservation v. access scanning, how to obtain good images. Copyright discussion will be held on Week 3.

Readings:


Further Reading on Copyright (not required)

- Patricia Aufderheide and Peter Jaszi, Reclaiming Fair Use: How to Put Balance Back in Copyright (Chicago: 2011).
- Peter B. Hirtle, Emily Hudson and Andrew Kenyon, Copyright and Cultural Institutions: Guidelines for Digitization for U.S. Libraries, Archives, and Museums (2009)

Sept. 18-Week 3: What is Digital History? and Copyright

How does the medium (the World Wide Web) change the practice of doing history? Is Digital History different from History?

Readings:


LAB: Using archival search databases, internet searches, and local repositories to locate items.

Assignments Due: Post your biographical blog entry. Post the general topic you have selected for your digital archive on your student wiki page.

Sept. 25-Week 4: Writing History for the Web

How does the digital medium change the ways historians write? How do you attract and keep an audience?

Readings:

• Tim Hitchcox, "Academic History Writing and its Disconnects" *Digital Humanities Quarterly* Mar. 2012.
• Explore the History Blogging Project [http://www.historybloggingproject.org/]
  o "How To" articles
  o "Writing Content" articles
  o "Blog Showcase"

Assignments Due: Post the general topic of your web exhibit to your student wiki page.

Oct. 2-Week 5: Metadata and Tagging

Finding things in the digital jungle requires careful attention and consistent treatment of keywords, metadata, and tags.

Readings:

• Susan Cairns, "Tag! You’re It! What Value do Folksonomies Bring to the Online Museum Collection?," Museums and the Web Conference 2011.
• Diane Hillmann, *Using Dublin Core.*

Lab: Introduction to Omeka and Dublin Core

Assignments Due: Scanning practicum must be completed. Post the first of three blog entries. Post one item to the digital archive with metadata by Saturday, the 6th. Wait for feedback before adding more items.

Oct. 9 -Week 6: Hands-on Metadata Workshop

We will go over the sample items posted by students. Students should bring additional digital items to enter during the workshop, as well as any questions about how to handle specific items.

Lab: Entering Omeka Objects

Assignments Due: Read and rate other students comments on the blog, post comments on at least two other posts, and promote your post using social media tools. *** Post at least nine additional items with metadata to the digital archive by the end of Friday, Oct. 12 for a total of at least ten.

Oct. 16-Week 7: Visualizing the Past

How can we use digital tools to explore detailed data in geographical format? How can historians use visualization as a tool for research and display?

Readings:

• John Theibault, “Visualizations and Historical Arguments,” in *Writing History in the Digital Age* Spring 2012 version.
• Laura Zucconi, Ethan Watrall, Hannah Ueno, and Lisa Rosner, "Pox and the City: Challenges in Writing a Digital History Game" in *Writing History in the Digital Age* Spring 2012 version.
Assignments Due: All digital archive items (20 minimum) must be mounted with full metadata. Each item should have an entry in the permissions log (permissions do not have to be cleared yet.)

LAB: Introduction to Pastmapper and the Census.

Oct. 23-Week 8: Building Exhibits Using Omeka

Readings:

- Look at a few Omeka-driven exhibits at the Omeka Showcase of Exhibits

Lab: Pastmapper groups meet for last 30 minutes of class.

Assignments Due: Review and correct metadata for your digital archive items.

Oct. 30-Week 9: Researching History

How does the Web impact the way that we do historical research? How does it change the way that we think about sources?

Readings:


Read this book if you have not done primary source research in your undergraduate or graduate studies


TAKE SURVEY BEFORE CLASS

Lab: Pastmapper Group meetings

Assignments Due: post your second blog entry. All Pastmapper data should be entered.

Nov. 6-Week 10: Time and Place

Time and place are popular organizing principles for historical presentations. Creating maps, timelines and periodization offer powerful ways to organize and relate historical facts and artifacts.

Readings:

Lab: Creating Google maps and Omeka Timelines for your exhibits

Assignments Due: Read and rate other students blog posts, comment on at least two posts, and promote your post using social media. Post both Pastmapper blog posts.

Nov. 13-Week 11: Social Media: Finding, Building and Using Your Audience

How do you attract attention to your digital products? How can you harness the power of Web 2.0 to engage with and use your audience?

Readings:

- Kate Theimer, Chapter 1, "Web 2.0 Basics" in Web 2.0 Tools and Strategies for Archives and Local History Collections (2010).
- Trevor Owens, Crowdsourcing Cultural Heritage: The Objectives are Upside Down, Trevor Owens’ blog, Mar. 2012.

Assignments Due: Have a draft of the sections and pages (titles only) for your exhibit mounted to the GVHDA.

Nov. 20-Week 12: No Class - Enjoy Thanksgiving!

Try to squeeze in some work on your web exhibit over the break, in between football and leftovers!

Assignments Due: Web exhibit review posted to wiki

Nov. 27-Week 13: Hands on Exhibit Workshop

Plan to work on your exhibits in class, bringing any problems you are having, whether with the research, copyright, exhibit structure, or other topic. We will present and discuss issues and questions informally.

Lab: Omeka Exhibits

Assignments Due: Post your third (final) blog post. Permissions for all items used in digital archive must be cleared (and entered in permissions spreadsheet) and items set to public access.

Dec. 4-Week 14: The Challenge of Big Data

As more and more material is digitized, how do we organize, analyze and synthesize big data?
Readings:

- Big Data, Wikipedia
- Lev Manovich, "How to Compare One Million Images" in David M. Berry, Understanding Digital Humanities (2012)

Recommended:

NEH Digging Into Data Challenge site.

Lab: Omeka and HTML Troubleshooting

Dec. 11-Week 15: No class — work on your exhibits!

Assignments Due: Dec.14: Your web exhibit is due; it should be set to "public" so that it appears on the GVH digital archive site.