Creating Digital History G57.2033 Fall 2010

Cathy Moran Hajo, 212-998-8666 cathy.hajo@nyu.edu Room 501 King Juan Carlos Building
Thursdays, 4:55-7:35 in Room 607 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 the results of historical research for a general audience
* Practice collaborative writing
* Learn the basics of HTML and CSS
* Help build a digital archive around the theme of Greenwich Village history
* Create a digital exhibit

SYLLABUS (PDF)

For classes with a LAB, please bring your laptop computer if you have one.

SEPT 9 - WEEK 1: COURSE INTRODUCTION

We will discuss the course goals, assignments, the use of the Wikidot site and other software that will be used in the course, and have an introduction to Greenwich Village history. Special Guest Speaker: Sheryl Woodruff, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation.

LAB: USING THE WIKI
SEPT. 16 - WEEK 2: WHAT IS DIGITAL HISTORY?
How does the medium (the World Wide Web) change the practice of doing history? Is Digital History different from History?

READINGS:
- Tom Scheinfeldt "Where’s the Beef? Does Digital Humanities Have to Answer Questions?" *Found History* [blog], May 10, 2010.

HTML/CSS EXERCISE

LAB: SETTING UP WEB SERVERS AND CHOOSING AN HTML EDITOR

SEPT. 23 - WEEK 3 - NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY SITE VISIT
- Read a book on Greenwich Village History from this bibliography (or select your own).

Class will meet at the NYPL Manuscripts Reading Room, at 5:40 pm. Enter the Library on the 42nd Street entrance. Map/Directions

HTML/CSS EXERCISE
- Meloni & Morrison, *SAMS Teach Yourself HTML & CSS in 24 Hours*, Chapters 3-4: Understanding HTML and XHTML and Understanding CSS

SEPT. 30 - WEEK 4: 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? Class will meet at Tamiment Library, 10th floor Bobst Library, then return to classroom. Special Guest Speaker: Michael Nash, Tamiment Library.

READINGS:


• Po-Yi Hung and Abigail Popp, "*Learning to Do Historical Research: How to Frame a Researchable Question*", *Williamcronin.net* [website], (last revised Mar. 23, 2009).

**HTML/CSS EXERCISE**

• Meloni & Morrison, *SAMS Teach Yourself HTML & CSS in 24 Hours*, Chapters 5-6: Working with Texts and Working with Fonts

**TAKE SURVEY BEFORE CLASS**

http://nyu.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_bydSIMj7GVWoHT6

**RECOMMENDED**

If you are interested in working on any of the following, look into the AASLH guides. Bobst has most.


• *Local Schools: Exploring their History* by Ronald E. Butchart, AASLH (1986).


• *Unlocking City Hall: Exploring the History of Local Government and Politics* by Michael W. Homel (2001)

• *Getting Around: Exploring Transportation History* by H. Roger Grant (2003)

• *Joining In: Exploring the History of Voluntary Organizations* by Karen J. Blair (2006)

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**OCT. 7 - WEEK 5: WRITING HISTORY FOR THE WEB**
Writing history for a general audience without sacrificing academic rigor takes time and practice.

**READINGS:**
- Jakob Nielsen, *Writing for the Web.*
- The Guardian, "How to Write: Memoirs and Biographies" (Sept. 24, 2008)

**HTML/CSS EXERCISE**
- Meloni & Morrison, *SAMS Teach Yourself HTML & CSS in 24 Hours*, Chapters 7-8: Using Tables and Using External and Internal Links

**LAB: RESEARCH TEAM MEETING**

**OCT. 14 - WEEK 6: NO CLASS.**
I'll be out of the city at the Association for Documentary Editing meeting. Work on your projects.

**HTML/CSS EXERCISE**
- Meloni & Morrison, *SAMS Teach Yourself HTML & CSS in 24 Hours*, Chapters 9-10: Working with Colors and Creating Images for Use on the Web

**OCT. 21 - WEEK 7: DIGITIZATION AND COPYRIGHT**
*Scanning, Digitizing, Transcribing Primary Source Materials and Getting Permission to Use Them.*

**READINGS:**
- Daniel Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig, ""Becoming Digital” and "Owning the Past,"* in *Digital History* (2006).
- Peter B. Hirtle, Emily Hudson and Andrew Kenyon, *Copyright and Cultural Institutions: Guidelines for Digitization for U.S. Libraries, Archives, and Museums*
- Lawrence Lessig, "Keynote speech at EDUCAUSE" (2009), speech begins at about minute 27. It lasts about an hour and 15 minutes.

**HTML/CSS EXERCISE**
- Meloni & Morrison, *SAMS Teach Yourself HTML & CSS in 24 Hours*, Chapters 11-12: Using Images in Your Website and Using Multimedia in your Website

**LAB: DIGITIZATION- SCANNING**

**OCT. 28 - WEEK 8: METADATA AND TAGGING**

**READINGS:**
- National Archives Document Analysis Worksheets
- Diane Hillmann, //Using Dublin Core/.

**HTML/CSS EXERCISE**
- Meloni & Morrison, *SAMS Teach Yourself HTML & CSS in 24 Hours*, Chapters 13-14: Working with Frames and Working with Margins, Padding, Alignment and Placing

**LAB: OMEKA, DUBLIN CORE, AND TAGGING**

**NOV. 4 - WEEK 9: A SENSE OF TIME AND PLACE**

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

**READINGS:**


**NEW!** "What is a Date? (1), Aug. 4, 2010 [http://hyperstudio.mit.edu/blog/what-is-a-date-1/] Hyperstudio blog.


**HTML/CSS EXERCISE**


**LAB: TIMELINE ASSIGNMENT/GOOGLE MAPPING/**

**NOV. 11-WEEK 10: HISTORICAL GIS (SPECIAL PRESENTER, HIM MISTRY, BOBST DATA STUDIO)**

*Digging deeper into place-based historical research using Geographic Information Systems.*

**READINGS:**

- David Rumsey and Meredith Williams, *Historical Maps in GIS*, Chapter 1 of *Past Time, Past Place: GIS in History* 2002 and Benjamin C. Ray, "Teaching the Salem Witch Trials," Chapter 2 of *Past Time, Past Place: GIS in History* 2002 -

**HTML/CSS EXERCISE**


**LAB: HTML/OMEKA MAPPING AND TROUBLESHOOTING**
NOV. 18 - WEEK 11: BUILDING EXHIBITS

READINGS:
- Check out the Off the Wall blog [http://ncphoffthewall.blogspot.com/]

HTML/CSS EXERCISE
- Meloni & Morrison, *SAMS Teach Yourself HTML & CSS in 24 Hours*, Chapters 19-20: Creating Fixed or Liquid Layouts and Creating Print-Friendly Web Pages

LAB: OMEKA EXHIBITS/HTML TROUBLESHOOTING

NOV. 25 - WEEK 12: NO CLASS - ENJOY THANKSGIVING!

Work on your assignments over the break, in between football and leftovers.

DEC. 2 - WEEK 13: BUILDING WEB SITES AND AUDIENCES

READINGS:

HTML/CSS EXERCISE

LAB: OMEKA AND HTML TROUBLESHOOTING

++ DEC. 9 - WEEK 14: INFORMATION ABUNDANCE

With the spread of the Web, historians and the general public need to cut through the forest not just to find the trees, but the leaves as well.
READINGS:
- Patrick Leary, "googling the victorians" (2005).

HTML/CSS EXERCISE

LAB: OMEKA AND HTML TROUBLESHOOTING

DEC. 16 - WEEK 15: WEB EXHIBITS DUE - NO CLASS

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