UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

FALL 2021 - MITH 610/COMM 738D -

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL STUDIES IN THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

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CLASS SESSION: ██████████████████

OFFICE HOURS: ██████████████████████████

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Digital Studies is an interdisciplinary approach to scholarship and teaching that offers graduate students a chance to combine the critical study of new forms of digital media and identity with creative and analytical practices utilizing digital media and the application of computational tools and techniques to traditional areas of humanistic study and critical social scientific inquiry. While it is often hands-on or applied, Digital Studies encourages—indeed demands—work that is primarily critical, theoretical, historical, or experimental in nature. Digital Studies is thus a critical, scholarly, and creative response to the widespread influence of digital media across nearly every aspect of contemporary life; more specifically, it recognizes that teaching, research, and scholarship cannot remain isolated from the networks, platforms, and new media all around us.

In this course, we will think through the histories of digital technology, situating them within the cultural and social contexts in which they emerge. Students will consider approaches to the digital that include critical analysis of platforms, technoculture, big data, networks, infrastructure, archives, and design thinking. We will recognize how to strengthen social media analysis by understanding platforms and infrastructure. We will pair big data analysis with ethical archival practices that consider the people and artifacts at the center of our work. In addition to studying content and form related to digital culture, students will be introduced to computational tools that enhance textual, geospatial, and network analysis. This is not a methods course, nor is there an expectation that students master new tools in a short window; instead, this course introduces the histories, theories, and controversies at the center of the interdisciplinary work of digital studies. With this introduction, students determine which digital tools and methods are most appropriate for their research. Throughout the term, we will learn from each other's differing approaches to digital inquiry, prompting new questions and new modes of engagement.

No special skills are necessary or assumed other than a willingness to experiment and learn. Students from all disciplines are welcome.

This classroom will serve as a space where ideas, topics, and materials that provoke discussion and debate are welcome. This comes with the understanding that engaging in these ideas creates a certain risk for participants. It is my goal that this classroom environment is a place where students may learn to be comfortable in the state of risk rather than seeking the safety of avoiding the ideas necessary to advance knowledge.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the term, graduate students in this course will:

Practice design thinking by co-creating your own syllabus

Engage in the collaborative production of materials for a public

Enhance existing or begin new project which centralizes critical experimentation and innovation with digital tools or artifacts

Create a statement of principles that will begin to guide your practice as an interdisciplinary digital scholar

REQUIRED RESOURCES:

You will be required to purchase (rent, or borrow) 2-3 books of your choosing

All other materials available through ELMS or UMD library

DIGITAL PRAXIS

My task as your instructor is to help facilitate your knowledge. These exercises are the mechanism I use to understand what you have learned and how you can take what you have learned and use it productively. The goal is always to submit work you feel confident about with enough time to get feedback. The exercises we will engage in this semester come from emergent values at the cneter of digital studies in the arts and humantiies. We will engage in a praxis that allows us to put these values into action. We will have the opportunity to the detemine whether these value are sufficient for our own prinicple as a reseacher/scholar or if we need to revise.

Co-creation:

Your first major task in the course will be revising this document to meet your individual needs a to conriburete to a

Collaboration and Openness

Design Thinking:

Students will submit a 1500/2500-word proposal in which they focus on utilizing one of the critical methods we study during the term to analyze a media artifact, draw comparisons on multiple methods, or craft an argument about the utility of a single or multiple methods in their subfield of study. In addition to the proposal, students should provide insight about where they would submit this article (journal or conference) and a workplan of how they would go about completing. Students will submit their abstract to their classmate and the instructor for review. During the last class session each student will provide a 10-minute conference presentation of their work followed by an audience Q&A. A more detailed explanation can be found on ELMs.

Experimentation:

You will be assigned a peer review for one of your classmates. In this abstract review you will provide feedback on paper in practice for your review of conference submissions or journal articles. Rather than simply providing a score, your task is to provide feedback that enhances the paper for future submission. You will separately provide author and editor (instructor) feedback. We will discuss best strategies and approaches for reviewing during class during the term. A more detailed explanation can be found on ELMs.

Innovation:

Students will submit a polished 1500-word essay (or digital production) at the conclusion of the term for the public. This could take the form of a blog post, medium essay, or even a TikTok video (paired with explanation of how you used the medium to convey the message). The goal of this assignment is to take a piece of academic work, theory, or research and utilize a strategy to make it usable by a public outside the academy/your field of study. Students could write about their ethics case, a current study, or bring synergy to a current debate in the field. The key is to identify your public and demonstrate your capacity to update your writing/presenting to meet their need and facilitate understanding/change. A more detailed explanation can be found on ELMs.

A NOTE ON GRADING IN GRADUATE SEMINARS

The purpose of the graduate seminar is to expose you to new ideas, provide the space to synthesize concepts, engage in critical review of ideas, host lively discussions with colleagues and recive feedback on your work. As such the focus in this course is to pro

Co-Creation	
Collaboration and Openness	
Design Thinking	
Experimentation	
Innovation	

COURSE PROCEDURES AND POLICIES:

Official University undergraduate policies can be found here:
http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html.

COMMUNICATION ABOUT THIS COURSE

This course uses ELMS and email regularly. All course documents, information, grades, and readings will be available on ELMS. Please make sure your email information with UMD is up-to-date so that you can receive all relevant information. You are responsible for receiving information sent through ELMS and email. My preferred method of contact for short clarifying questions is email. However, be sure to first check the syllabus and schedule as the answers to many questions can be found in these documents. *I will return emails during business hours M-F and within 24 hours on the weekend.* For extended questions and feedback on assignments, grades, and readings you are encouraged to visit during office hours or set up other times to meet which are mutually convenient.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES:

Please let me know if you need to miss class. All notes are the responsibility of the student. Be sure to consult with classmates to retrieve any missed notes. Feel free to use office hours to provide clarity on anything missed in your absence. Being absent does not remove the requirement to complete work on time. Please make every attempt to be in class on presentation days. If you must be absent, please make a viable alternate arrangement by switching days with a classmate or speaking with the instructor well in advance.

[V-100(G) University of Maryland Policy on Excused Absence.

EMERGENCY PROTOCOL

In the event of a university closure or delay or the need to cancel class arises you will be notified via email. If the instructor needs to cancel class, students will be notified as soon as possible and online activities may be provided. Please ensure that you check your email and ELMS for any communication in these instances.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:

Students are expected to be in class on time and leave class only when it is finished. The instructor is committed to doing the same. Frequent late arrival or early departure will be considered as a disturbance to class. Should you leave the class early or arrive late for an unavoidable reason, please let me know before or soon after the class. Please show respect to your peers and me by having your attention on the subject of the day rather than work from other classes or side conversations. This is a course based on the premise that technology is integral to our lives and learning. Therefore laptops, tablets, and cell phone use are allowed and encouraged if they aid in your participation in the class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

(https://www.president.umd.edu/sites/president.umd.edu/files/documents/policies/III-100A.pdf). The UMD Honor Code prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. On every examination, paper or another academic exercise not exempted by the instructor, students must write by hand and sign the following pledge:

> *I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).*

Allegations of academic dishonesty will be reported directly to the Student Honor Council: http://www.shc.umd.edu

Students who engage in academic dishonesty in this course will receive no points for the assignment in question and will be immediately reported to the Honor Council and Office of Judicial Programs for further action. There will be no warnings.

Definitions for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, etc. can be found at:
http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html.]

If you are concerned about issues of plagiarism, please see the instructor. It is my goal that we all work toward academic integrity and that no one is penalized.

ACCESSIBILITY AND DISABILITY SUPPORT:
https://www.counseling.umd.edu/ads/

Students with a documented disability should inform the instructors within the add-drop period if academic accommodations will be needed. NB: You are expected to meet with your instructor in person to provide them with a copy of the ACCOMMODATIONS LETTER and to obtain your instructor's signature on the ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF STUDENT REQUEST form. You and your instructor will plan together how accommodations will be implemented throughout the semester. To obtain the required Accommodation Letter, please contact Disability Support Service (DSS) at 301-314-7682 or dussup@umd.edu.

Separately if you would like to talk about ways in which the classroom can be more welcoming and we together can better ensure your success please feel free to reach out via email or in person.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE:

Class lectures and other materials are copyrighted. They may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission from the instructor. Copyright infringements may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. **The instructor does not permit video or audio recordings of class sessions without consent.**

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCE SEXUAL MISCONDUCT:

[http://www.president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-vi-general-administration/vi-160a-0. You may consider using the following text from the Faculty Handbook:

> The University of Maryland is committed to providing support and resources, including academic accommodations, for students who experience sexual or relationship violence as defined by the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy. To report an incident and/or obtain an academic accommodation, contact the Office of Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct at 301-405-1142. If you wish to speak confidentially, contact Campus Advocates Respond and Educate (CARE) to Stop Violence at 301-741-3555. As 'responsible university employees' faculty are required to report any disclosure of sexual misconduct, i.e., they may not hold such disclosures in confidence. For more information: http://www.umd.edu/ocrsm/]

DIVERSITY:

[https://www.president.umd.edu/sites/president.umd.edu/files/documents/policies/III-900A.pdf

The University of Maryland values the diversity of its student body. Along with the University, I am committed to providing a classroom atmosphere that encourages the equitable participation of all students regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Potential devaluation of students in the classroom that can occur by reference to demeaning stereotypes of any group and/or overlooking the contributions of a particular group to the topic under discussion is inappropriate.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Course schedule is subject to change with written notice from instructor

August 31	Introductions - Let's start with ethics. Davisson, A. & Booth. P. (2016). Controversies in Digital Ethics. Bloomsbury Academic (Introduction) (ebook) Ess, C. Digital Media Ethics. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication. AoIR ethics (online)

September 7	Why a critical approach to media and digital communication research?
	
	Fraser, N. (2013). What's critical about critical theory?. In Feminists Read Habermas (RLE Feminist Theory) (pp. 37-72). Routledge.
	
	Luker, K. (2008). Salsa dancing into the social sciences : Research in an age of info-glut. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. (2008) (available as e-book)
	     Read as needed with focus on:
	     Introduction
	     Chapter 2: What's it all about?
	     Chapter 4: What's it a case of anyway?
	
	Crotty, M. (1998). The foundations of social research : Meaning and perspective in the research process. London: Sage Publications.
	
	     Read as needed with focus on:
	     Introduction
	     Chapter 6: Critical Inquiry- The Marxist Heritage
	     Chapter 7:Crtiical Inquiry- Contemporary Critics and Contemporatry Critique
	
	Markham, A., & Baym, N. (2009). Internet inquiry : Conversations about method. Los Angeles: Sage Publications. (2009). (available as e-book)
	
	     What Constitutes Quality in Qualitative Internet Research? By Nancy Baym
	
	     Producing work that is meaningful across Time, Space, and Culture by Annette Markham

September 14	Rhetorical Analysis, (Critical) Discourse Analysis, and Content Analysis, Important distinctions. Hart, R. & Daughton, S. (2005). Modern Rhetorical Criticism, 3rd ed. Boston, Pearson. (Chapter 1). Foss, S. K. (2009). Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice, 4th ed. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press. (Chapter 1-2) Van Dijk, T. A. (2001). 18 Critical discourse analysis. The handbook of discourse analysis, 349-371. Wodak, R. (2001). What CDA is about–a summary of its history, important concepts and its developments. Methods of critical discourse analysis, 1, 1-13. Maier, M. (2017). Content analysis: advantages and disadvantages. In M. Allen (Ed.), The sage encyclopedia of communication research methods (Vol. 1, pp. 240-242). SAGE Publications, Inc,

	Maier, M. (2017). Content analysis, definition of. In M. Allen (Ed.), The sage encyclopedia of communication research methods (Vol. 1, pp. 243-245). SAGE Publications, Inc, Holman, A. (2017). Content analysis, process of. In M. Allen (Ed.), The sage encyclopedia of communication research methods (Vol. 1, pp. 246-248). SAGE
September 21	Critical Studies and Pedagogy: Designing a Lesson Plan for the Classroom Readings: TBD
September 28	Audience and Reception Studies Radway, J. A. (1983). Women read the romance: The interaction of text and context. Feminist studies, 9(1), 53-78. Radway, J. (1988). Reception study: Ethnography and the problems of dispersed audiences and nomadic subjects. Cultural studies, 2(3), 359-376. Hall, S. (2001). Encoding/decoding. Media and cultural studies: Keyworks, 2. Hall, S. (2005). The rediscovery of 'ideology': Return of the repressed in media studies. In Culture, society and the media(pp. 61-95). Routledge. Morley, D. (2006). Unanswered questions in audience research. The Communication Review, 9(2), 101-121. Schrøder, K. C. (2019). Audience Reception Research in a Post-broadcasting Digital Age. Television & New Media, 20(2), 155–169.
October 5	Cultural Studies, and Critiquing Production Durham, M., & Kellner, D. (2006). Media and cultural studies : Keyworks (Rev. ed., Keyworks in cultural studies, 2). Malden, MA: Blackwell. (excerpts) Warner, K. (2015). Cultural politics of colorblind tv casting (Routledge transformations in race and media). Florence: Taylor and Francis. (available as e-book)
October 12	Making and Designing vs. Researching and Writing – Intro to DH The Digital in the Humanities: An Interview with Marisa Parham By Melissa Dinsman Gold, Matthew K., & Klein, L.F. (2019). A DH that Matters," in Debates in Digital Humanities. Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press. Liu, A. (2012). Where is cultural criticism in the digital humanities?. Debates in the digital humanities, 490-509. Liu, A. (2013). The meaning of the digital humanities. pmla, 128(2), 409-423. Kirschenbaum, M. G. (2012). What is Digital Humanities?. Is a Tactical Term." Debates in the Digital Humanities, 415-428.

	Posner, M. (2013). How did they make that?. Miriam Posner's Blog, 29. [Allied Media Conference Participants, "Generating Shared Principles for Design Justice," designjustice.org May 02, 2016](#) ["Before you make a thing"](#)
October 19	Transforming DH Bailey, M. (2015). # transform (ing) DH Writing and Research: An Autoethnography of Digital Humanities and Feminist Ethics. DHQ: Digital Humanities Quarterly, 9(2). Gallon, K. (2016). Making a case for the Black digital humanities. Debates in the Digital Humanities, 42-49. Lothian, A., & Phillips, A. (2013). Can digital humanities mean transformative critique?. Journal of E-Media Studies, 3(1), 4. Parham, M. (2019) Sample | Signal | Strobe: Haunting, Social Media, and Black Digitality In Gold, M. K., & Klein, L. F. (Eds.). Debates in the digital humanities. U of Minnesota Press. Posner, M. (2017, December). What's Next: The Radical Unrealised Potential of Digital Humanities." dhdebates.(nd). Web. Risam, R. (2015). Beyond the margins: Intersectionality and the digital humanities. DHQ: Digital Humanities Quarterly, Volume 9, Number 2. Risam, R. (2018). Decolonizing the digital humanities in theory and practice. In *The Routledge companion to media studies and digital humanities* (pp. 78-86). Routledge. Ruberg, B., Boyd, J., & Howe, J. (2018). Toward a queer digital humanities. *Bodies of information: Intersectional feminism and the digital humanities*, 108-128.
October 26	CTDA Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis Brock, A. (2018). Critical technocultural discourse analysis. New Media & Society, 20(3), 1012–1030. Brock, A. (2021) Distributed Blackness, NYU Press. (excerpts) Lu, J. H., & Steele, C. K. (2019). 'Joy is resistance': cross-platform resilience and (re) invention of Black oral culture online. Information, Communication & Society, 22(6), 823-837. Maragh, R. S. (2018). Authenticity on "black Twitter": Reading racial performance and social networking. Television & New Media, 19(7), 591-609. Sweeney, M. E. (2016). The Ms. Dewey "experience": Technoculture, gender, and race. Digital sociologies, 401-420.
	DRAFT LESSON PLAN DUE
November 2	Digital Ethnography

	Markham, A. N. (2016). Ethnography in the digital internet era. *Sage handbook of qualitative research. Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage Publications*. Florini, S. (2019). Beyond Hashtags: Racial Politics and Black Digital Networks (Vol. 19). NYU Press. (methods appendix) Postill, J., & Pink, S. (2012). Social Media Ethnography: The Digital Researcher in a Messy Web. *Media International Australia*, *145*(1), 123–134. One of the books below: Gray, K. L. (2020). *Intersectional tech: Black users in digital gaming*. LSU Press. Massanari, A. (2015). Participatory culture, community, and play : Learning from reddit (Digital formations, vol. 75). New York: Peter Lang. Introduction & Chapter 6 Roberts, S. T. (2019). Behind the Screen: Content Moderation in the Shadows of Social Media. Yale University Press.
November 9	Tools Readings TBD
November 16	Tools Readings TBD
November 23	THANKSGIVING **PROPOSAL DUE**
November 30	Reviewing with Care
December 7	Research, Activism & Public Scholarship Three cases: Algorithms of Oppression Race after Technology Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest **REVIEW DUE**
December 14	**FINAL PRESENTATIONS**
December 21	**WRITING FOR THE PUBLIC DUE**