

# DIGITAL HUMANITIES AS STORYTELLING

School of Information Sciences (SIS)  
INSC 590  
University of Tennessee - Summer 2019  
3 credit hours

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**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Class Meetings:** Mondays: 5:05-6:20pm on Zoom

**Zoom Course ID:** <https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/97070058791>

The illiterate of the future will be ignorant of the pen and camera alike.

—Moholy-Nagy, Bauhaus Master

## Course Description:

The course will introduce the overall concept of Digital Humanities, especially as it pertains to libraries, and will further strive to help participants conceptualize, plan, and develop digital stories for Digital Humanities scholarship and pedagogy.

A fundamental approach of this course will be to consider **first the story, and then what digital media/technologies will facilitate its telling.** Topics include organizing and managing digital storytelling projects, developing literacy with fundamental approaches to digital storytelling, and building technical competency with a variety of entry-level DH research methodologies and tools. No previous experience with digital humanities, digital storytelling, or specific digital technologies or platforms is required, though students must be comfortable and competent with basic computing technology.

Course activities shall include collaborative discussion, learning, and praxis (i.e. hands-on tool learning and use). While we will read some theory, especially about DH librarianship, the focus will be on practice-based research and/or creative expression. We will be learning by making, in support of Digital Humanities scholarship and pedagogy.

*Why storytelling?* Digital storytelling can enhance the efforts of Digital Humanities scholars who are aligned with research centers, libraries, and academic departments around the world and participating in intensive, collaborative, multi-disciplinary courses and projects. From writing compelling research grants to documenting project outcomes, storytelling both facilitates other forms of DH research and is a form of digital scholarship in and of itself.

This is not a lecture or Powerpoint class; this is a guided exploration. Students who choose to take this course agree to following classroom conditions:

- **We will embrace the challenges posed by using digital technology and strive to be creative problem-solvers.**
- **We will practice critical skills for digital humanities and scholarship support, including but not limited to using new web applications, software, and multimedia tools.**
- **We will respectfully discuss concepts, issues, and controversies within the field.**
- **We will conduct thought experiments. Questioning will be encouraged.**

A note about **Course Design**: This course is highly hands-on and participatory. Missing class will put students at a significant disadvantage. Full class participation will require a reliable and speedy Internet connection, a working and clear microphone/headset, and a willingness to share your screen when called upon. Because of the in-class demonstrations, off-topic text chat will be discouraged and microphone participation will be emphasized and required.

## Student Outcomes:

Upon completing this course, the student should be able to do the following:

- ❖ **Apply:**
  - basic knowledge of digital humanities practices, approaches, and forms.
- ❖ **Cultivate:**
  - skills across a variety of core digital humanities and storytelling methodologies, tools, and platforms.

❖ **Integrate:**

- current trends and best practices, including appropriate research technologies for a variety of disciplines into their skillset.

❖ **Critically Evaluate:**

- works of digital humanities/scholarship, including the analytical activity, platform/tools used, audience, and products of the research/creative activity;
- the role of libraries and librarians as collaborators in digital humanities.

❖ **Create:**

- a work of creative, critical, digital storytelling.

## Required Textbook/Supplies:

Most required readings are from open-source, open access, and Creative Commons resources listed in the schedule. If not freely available, they may be posted on Canvas in the "Assigned Readings" folder. Students are also highly encouraged to subscribe to [dh+lib](#) for up-to-the-minute readings on the state of digital scholarship/digital humanities and libraries.

In lieu of purchasing a textbook, all students are required to purchase a hosting package from Reclaim Hosting. Not only will this site serve you for this course but think of it as an investment in your professional brand and/or ePortfolio.

**Student Hosting Package, \$30/one year. This includes a web domain of your choosing. We will walk through this process together in class, but you may do so sooner using this link:**

**<https://portal.reclaimhosting.com/aff.php?aff=079>**

## ❖ Course Policies ❖

### Communication:

I am required to communicate with you through your UTK email address. If you prefer to use another address, consult the OIT Helpdesk to obtain directions for forwarding your UTK mail to your preferred address.

Email is the most expedient way to get in touch with me. I try to respond to messages within 48 hours. I observe email free evenings and weekends for work-life balance, so please touch base in advance of deadlines with any urgent issues or questions.

The Canvas system will be used to post relevant course information, including this syllabus, assignments, course readings, and class policies.

### Participation:

A student's participation grade is based on the degree of his/her active engagement with the course. Class discussions are a visible way your professor gauges student participation. *You may also be called upon to share your work by sharing your computer screen at any given time.*

The best students are critical thinkers that contribute to discussions, lectures and activities with thoughtful questions and comments. Since participation is absolutely essential to this course's success, it is impossible to earn an "A" with anything less than a superb participation grade.

### Computing Requirements:

Course assignments must be submitted via Canvas and students must attend and participate in class via Zoom.

To receive full participation credit, each student must have access to a computer with reliable Internet service and a fully functional (internal or external) microphone. Because of the technology demos and activities, attending via mobile devices or tablets is discouraged.

### Class Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to attend class regularly and be prepared to **participate fully** in each discussion. Students are expected to read all of the assigned readings and view assigned videos.

**Listening to recordings cannot be used as a substitute for attending class.**

Tardiness and absences **will** result in a lower participation grade. Although this is a distance ed course, it is absolutely necessary that you devote your undivided attention to the sessions.

It is assumed that each student will miss **no more than one session and will speak in class -- the equivalent of a "B" grade for participation.** Missing more classes or failing to participate will lower your grade; frequent participation will raise the grade.

A substantial portion of your grade will be based on in-class work and participation. Unexplained absences will affect your grade. **If you must be absent from class, you should:**

- Inform me in advance or as soon as possible after class;
- Submit any work due from the missed class period;
- Watch/listen to the archive of the class you missed;
- Obtain notes, handouts, etc. from Canvas and/or a classmate.

### **Acceptable reasons for absence from class include:**

- Illness
- Serious family emergencies
- Special curricular or job requirements (e.g., interviews, professional conferences) or participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate
- Military obligation
- Severe weather conditions
- Religious holidays
- Obligations for court imposed legal obligations (i.e., jury duty, subpoena).

Missing more than one class meeting for reasons other than those listed above (or as negotiated with me in advance) will have a negative impact on your course participation grade. Any additional absences are permitted only in extreme circumstances (e.g. hospitalization, death in the family, etc.) and require documentation.

### **Tardy Policy:**

Class begins promptly. **Students arriving more than 20 minutes late for class are counted as absent.** Habitual lateness, even just five minutes, is a sure way to drive down your participation grade.

### **Inclement Weather:**

The chancellor (or appointed representative) may officially close or suspend selected activities of the university because of extreme weather conditions. When a decision to close is made, information is posted on the front page at <http://utk.edu>. SIS will cancel classes when UT is closed. Please check the SIS student listserv (UTKSIS-L@LISTSERV.UTK.EDU) for messages about closing.

### **Class Cancellations:**

Should it be necessary to cancel a class meeting, every effort will be taken to do so in advance. Look for e-mail announcements via Canvas.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Students who may need course adaptations because of a disability are welcome to make an appointment to speak with me. Students with disabilities must register with the Student Disability Services, 2227 Dunford Hall, Knoxville, TN 37996-4020, before accommodations can be made. If you require course accommodations but have not contacted Student Disability Services, please call (865) 974-6087 or email [sds@utk.edu](mailto:sds@utk.edu) to inquire about the registration procedure.

### **Civility:**

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: <http://civility.utk.edu/>.

### **CCI Diversity Statement:**

The College of Communication and Information recognizes that a college diverse in its people, curricula, scholarship, research, and creative activities expands opportunities for intellectual inquiry and engagement, helps students develop critical thinking skills, and prepares students for social and civic responsibilities. All members of the College benefit from diversity and the quality of learning, research, scholarship and creative activities is enhanced by a climate of inclusion, understanding and appreciation of differences and the full range of human experience. As a result, the College is committed to diversity and equal opportunity and it recognizes that it must represent the diversity inherent in American society. The College is acutely aware that diversity and fairness are foundations that unite the College's faculty, staff, students, and the larger communication and information community.

### **Instructor Status as a Title IX Mandatory Reporter:**

University of Tennessee faculty are committed to supporting our students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. Please be aware that if you choose to confide in a faculty member regarding an issue of sexual misconduct, dating violence, or stalking, we are obligated to inform the University's Title IX Coordinator, who can assist you in connecting with all possible resources both on- and off-campus. If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, the Student Counseling Center (865-974-2196) and the Student Health Center (865-974-3135) are both confidential resources.

For additional resources and information, visit [titleix.utk.edu](http://titleix.utk.edu).

### **Written Assignments:**

All written assignments must be 1.5 spaced and typed in a highly readable 12-point font (e.g. Arial, Times New Roman, etc.).

### **Writing Abilities:**

In order for your professor to teach effectively, s/he cannot spend time teaching basic English usage (grammar, spelling, and so on). The occasional typo is forgivable, but assignments with larger problems will be marked down. Any written project with repetitive or distracting errors will be marked down a letter grade, regardless of content.

Student work is assigned a grade based on quality of thought and writing style, thoroughness of research and of references, appropriateness of length, and originality. Only exceptional work will receive an "A" grade. Papers that are received after the due date will be assigned a lower grade than would otherwise be received.

All sources must be cited, quotations must be in quotation marks and attributed correctly. Not doing so constitutes plagiarism (see below).

The standard SIS resource for matters of documentation is:

Turabian, Kate L. 2007. *A manual for writers of research papers, theses, and dissertations : Chicago style for students and researchers*. 7th ed, Chicago guides to writing, editing, and publishing. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

### **Academic Honesty & Plagiarism:**

Students should be familiar and maintain their Academic Integrity as:

*Study, preparation, and presentation should involve at all times the student's own work, unless it has been clearly specified that work is to be a team effort. Academic honesty requires that the student present his or her own work in all academic projects, including tests, papers, homework, and class presentation. When incorporating the work of other scholars*

and writers into a project, the student must accurately cite the source of that work. (Hilltopics, pg 15).

Students should abide by the Honor Statement described in the same Hilltopics, p. 73:

*An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.*

Plagiarism in any of its several forms is intolerable, and attention to matters of documentation in all written work is expected and required. Inadvertence, alleged lack of understanding, or avowed ignorance of the various types of plagiarism are not acceptable excuses.

Specific examples of plagiarism are:

1. Copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source;
2. Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
3. Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge);
4. Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor's approval;
5. Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

Students who may be unsure of the nature of plagiarism should consult the instructor or a guide for writing research reports. (Additional resources are available at <http://www.lib.utk.edu/instruction/plagiarism>.) Infractions of academic integrity are penalized according to the severity of the infraction but may include a course grade of "F."

### **Grading Standards:**

Student work is assigned a grade based on quality of thought and writing style, thoroughness of research and of references, appropriateness of length, and originality. Only exceptional work will receive an "A" grade. Assignments that are received after the due date will be assigned a lower grade than would otherwise be received. All sources must be cited, quotations must be in quotation marks and attributed correctly. Not doing so constitutes plagiarism.

Most assignments are graded on a 5, 10, 15 or 20 point scale according to a rubric. Generally speaking, the rubrics for written assignments cover the following criteria: content and style, coherence and organization, depth of critical analysis, creativity and originality, and spelling and grammar (mechanics).

The grading measures how well the course and/or assignment objectives are met. C grades represent average work that minimally fulfills assignments as specified and shows the most general knowledge of the material. B and A grades will be rewarded for work that goes beyond basic requirements, shows mastery of the course's concepts, and demonstrates originality of thought.

Similarly, below average work, or work that fails to address the assignment's specifications will receive a D or failing grade, as appropriate. Incompletes will be given only in the most extreme extenuating circumstances. Below is the breakdown of how grades are calculated.

### Grading Scale & Percentages:

Assignment	What to Submit	% of Grade	MSIS Program Outcome
Class Participation	Attend each class on time, participate using microphone, polls, and chat. Contribute to online discussion forums.	20	
Mini Digital Assignments (2)	Submit URL to view your timeline, map, etc. via Canvas.	30	1, 6, 8, 9
Digital Scholarship Project Pecha Kucha	Submit URL to a Zoom or other video screencast recording of you delivering your talk labeled LastName_PK via Canvas.	10	3, 4, 6, 8
Final Project Proposal - Teams of 2-4	Submit a URL to Google document labeled this way: LastName_LastName_Case via Canvas.	10	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Final Project - Teams of 2-4	Submit URL via Canvas.  Submit any presentation aids (optional) via Canvas.	30	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

### Due Dates & Late Work:

Assignments should be submitted to the "assignments" area of Canvas and are due (officially) at 5:00 p.m. EST on the due date listed on the syllabus. If your assignment is not ready by the deadline, one point will be deducted for each 24-hour hour period the assignment is not turned in.

**Please note:** An ailing computer or bad Internet connection is not an acceptable excuse for missing a deadline. The fact that computers, software, and other technology may fail you only underscores how responsible students must be in order to meet deadlines.

## Preparation of Written Work:

Please follow the chart below for file format and naming requirements!

- ❖ All sources must be cited or attributed, quotations must be formatted and attributed correctly. Not doing so constitutes plagiarism.
- ❖ Grades for assignment submissions that include incomplete in-text citations or reference lists will be lowered by one-half grade level (e.g., an assignment that would have received 17/20, or an 85/100: B, will be lowered to 16/20, 80/100: B-).
- ❖ All text assignments must be word-processed, 1.5-spaced, and include your name and the title of the assignment from the syllabus. Please follow the document naming scheme provided in the assignment quick-reference table above.

## Recommended Texts & Further Study:

Check out Miriam Posner's [Digital Humanities & The Library Bibliography](#) or any of these books:

- ❖ Cohen, Daniel J., and Joseph Thomas Scheinfeldt. *Hacking the Academy New Approaches to Scholarship and Teaching from Digital Humanities*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/dh.12172434.0001.001>
- ❖ *Disrupting the Digital Humanities*. Earth, Milky Way: Punctum Books, 2018. <https://www.disruptingdh.com/>
- ❖ Fitzpatrick, Kathleen. *Planned Obsolescence: Publishing, Technology, and the Future of the Academy*. New York: NYU Press, 2011.
- ❖ Gold, Matthew K., Ed. *Debates in the Digital Humanities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016. <http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/>
- ❖ Lima, Manuel. *Visual Complexity: Mapping Patterns of Information*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton UP, 2011.
- ❖ Moretti, Franco. *Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for a Literary History*. London: Verso, 2005.
- ❖ Schreibman, Susan, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth. *A Companion to Digital Humanities*. ed. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004. <http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/>

Your professor is always happy to recommend more books to read and so on. Just ask.

Lectures and books on digital humanities are not enough - we need to re-skill ourselves by getting down and dirty with the actual research process of faculty members.

–Bob Scott, Digital Humanities Librarian at Columbia University