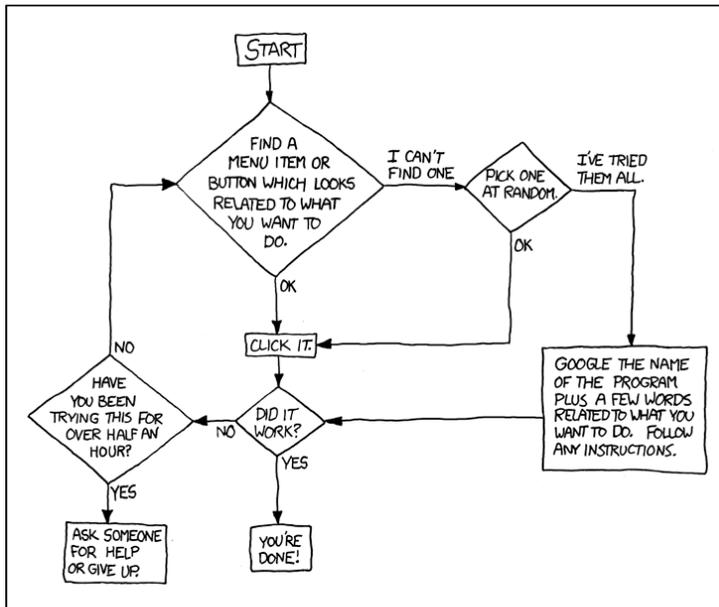


# HACKING THE HUMANITIES

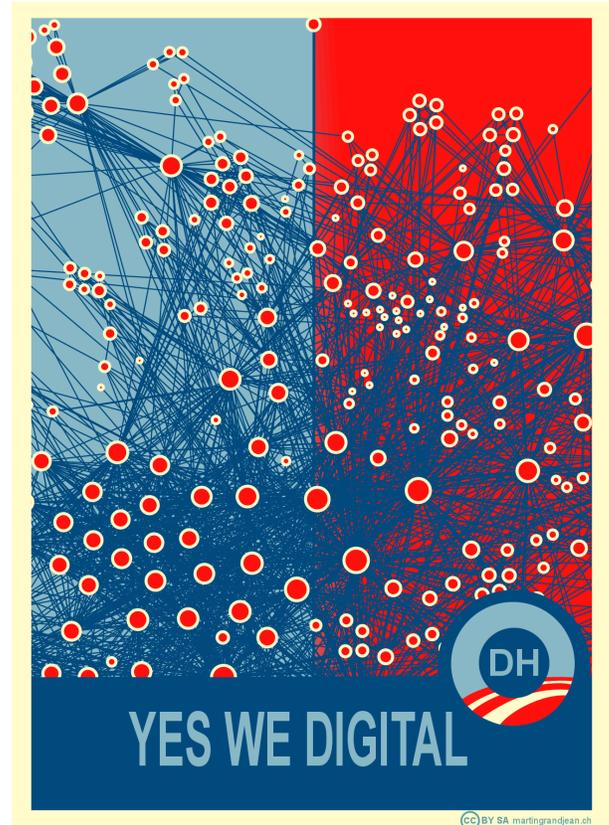
INSTRUCTOR: Austin Mason      EMAIL: [amason@carleton.edu](mailto:amason@carleton.edu)      WEB: [medieval.com/hackinghumanities2015](http://medieval.com/hackinghumanities2015)

DEAR VARIOUS PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, CO-WORKERS,  
AND OTHER "NOT COMPUTER PEOPLE."

WE DON'T MAGICALLY KNOW HOW TO DO EVERYTHING IN EVERY  
PROGRAM. WHEN WE HELP YOU, WE'RE USUALLY JUST DOING THIS:



PLEASE PRINT THIS FLOWCHART OUT AND TAPE IT NEAR YOUR SCREEN.  
CONGRATULATIONS; YOU'RE NOW THE LOCAL COMPUTER EXPERT!



## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Disclaimer: this course will not make you an expert in all things digital. It is designed, instead, to change your attitude towards digital technologies (including the coding that goes into them behind the scenes) and give you the confidence to become “the local computer expert.” With the basic skills you will learn here, some healthy curiosity, and enough trial-and-error you will become an active producer of digital knowledge, not just a passive consumer. The internet and digital technologies have come to permeate all aspects of our lives in the twenty-first century, and yet the primary modes of University education and scholarly communication remain those developed in an analog age (like lectures, essays, and print monographs). But that is rapidly changing. The digital world is infiltrating the academy and profoundly disrupting the humanities. It is changing the way scholars search for source materials, the archives—ever more of them digital or born digital—they consult, and the way they collect and store their research. It is changing the way humanists analyze their sources, prompting new and exciting research questions, and encouraging greater collaboration in historically single-authored fields. New media are also changing the way humanities research is reported and greatly enhancing the range of audiences it can reach. And perhaps most importantly, digital technologies are changing classrooms from places of listening and of individual writing to places of collaborative doing and knowledge production. Students in this class will learn to hack the humanities by making a collaborative, publishable Digital Humanities project, while acquiring the skills and confidence necessary to actively participate in the digital world, both at the university and beyond.

## READINGS

The required readings for this course are all available online. In addition to the individual assignments listed on the weekly syllabus, we will occasionally dip into various online “companions” to digital humanities. Feel free to check them out and explore topics that interest you in more depth at your leisure.

*Intro to Digital Humanities*, Johanna Drucker, UCLA Center for Digital Humanities

*A Companion to Digital Humanities*, ed. Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth

*Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. Matthew K. Gold

*Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web*, Daniel Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig

## A DOMAIN OF ONE'S OWN

Since the readings are free, the only requirement that will cost you money in this class is **25\$ to purchase server space and register a domain** to host your online projects.

Digital Humanities makes extensive use of the internet; indeed, the field arguably would not exist without web technologies. While you are all no doubt seasoned consumers of information on the internet, many of you may not have produced much information online beyond social media profiles or photo feeds. There are many excellent free blogging platforms and even more robust content management systems that can be used to host some data for you for free, but such services rarely give you access to — or even the slightest understanding of — the inner workings of the database backend. We want more control. To that end, you will each create a space where you can try out new technologies, gather data, experiment with different forms of analysis, and publish your own work and ideas to the world.

You will each purchase server space and register a domain through Reclaim Hosting, which costs 25\$ for one year. After the class, you can take it down, let it lapse, or continue to build and experiment as you see fit. One member of each group will host the group project, but everyone will try out building a personal site, blog, or project on their own server space during the course.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### GROUP FINAL PROJECT (40%)

The majority of your work in this class will be building a collaborative digital humanities project hosted online. The final projects for the course will revolve around the history of Carleton and its campus as the college nears its sesquicentennial anniversary (that's the 150). It is much easier, not to mention more satisfying, to learn new skills by applying them to concrete projects rather than arbitrary examples, and the local setting of our college—its physical environment, its buildings, and its historical and literary archives—will constitute our data set. Collectively, we will use new digital technologies to tell stories (well-researched, carefully documented, scholarly sophisticated stories) of how Carleton's past inhabitants built, inhabited and experienced the spaces that we encounter (or no longer encounter) today.

You and your group will therefore **design and execute a web-based, scholarly DH project** using the tools and platforms of your choosing and keyed to your discipline of choice. All projects will make use of local resources, including the holdings of the [Carleton College archives](#), local newspapers from the [Northfield historical society](#), literary works set in the local environment, and environmental data. Part of your research will therefore involve getting out from behind the desk and into the community to gather real world data, a process which we will begin together but you will continue on your own.

Details of the final project assignment milestones and expectations will be provided separately.

## BLOGS AND PARTICIPATION (30%)

### BLOG POSTS (15%)

Each week you will be given a blog prompt and asked to post a **thoughtful response of 300-400 words to the course blog before class meets each Tuesday**. These assignments might ask you to review a digital humanities project website using [these guidelines](#), try out and evaluate a digital tool for research, or engage in an area of debate on the usefulness or potential troubles surrounding particular digital initiatives.

### COMMENTS (5%)

In addition to the blog posts, **you are required to read and comment on your classmates' posts**. DH is a collaborative enterprise, and the conversation is half the fun. You will begin this conversation online by commenting on at least two of your classmates' posts, which we will then pick up in class. Comments can be encouraging or challenging, but should remain polite and directly engage with the content of the post. **Comments must be posted by classtime each Thursday**.

### CLASS PARTICIPATION (10%)

I do not take attendance, but I will take note of your active and engaged participation in class each day. Much of our work will involve discussion of the readings and collaboration on digital assignments. If you are not in the room, you cannot join in either of these activities, and if you have not done the reading you cannot contribute much to discussion.

## TECH ASSIGNMENTS (20%):

These assignments represent the lab portion of the course. They cover basic web skills and key applications that are intended to give you the technical knowledge you need to design and build your final project. Some weeks they will begin with basic instruction in class that you will complete online. Others will involve working through an online exercise on your own before delving deeper into the topic in class. Either way, the work must be completed before the next class meeting.

## TUTORIAL ASSIGNMENT (10%):

On one week near the end of the course, in lieu of the regular blog post, you will be asked to pick a DH tool that we haven't discussed yet and figure out an interesting use case for it (or, vice versa, think of a use case and figure out a potentially viable DH tool) and create an online tutorial for the rest of us. Tutorials involving screencasts, screen captures, and "1-2-3" step-by-step instructions are not terribly hard to create, and we will go over the basics in class. You will thus begin the (hopefully lifelong!) process of paying forward what you've learned in the course and becoming the "[local computer expert](#)."

## MOODLE

This course will use WordPress as the primary website platform. Our Moodle site will consist mainly of a list of links to other platforms and will serve primarily as a repository for any PDFs we read.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

The weekly schedule of discussion topics, reading assignments, and tech tool lab sessions. Watch and Read are self explanatory, but Explore means you should skim over the entire collection of articles, projects, or whatever is listed, and then pick a few that grab your attention to read or investigate more fully. Think critically about why you were drawn to those instead of others as you formulate your responses and discussion questions.

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### WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL HUMANITIES

#### 1A: September 15

- Introductions, Syllabus
- [SketchUp](#) and 3D basics

#### 1B: September 17

##### Read:

- Stephen Ramsay, [Who's In and Who's Out](#)
- Mark Sample, [The Digital Humanities is not about Building, it's about Sharing](#)
- Moya Z. Bailey, [All the Digital Humanists Are White, All the Nerds Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave](#)

##### Explore:

- The New York Times' series, [Humanities 2.0](#)
- [Virtual Paul's Cross Project](#)

##### Lab: *Essential Course Tools Overview, How to Blog*

- Course website and WordPress basics
  - Shared bibliography using [Zotero](#)
  - [Dirt Digital Research Tools](#)
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### WEEK 2: HOW IT WORKS: DH PROJECTS AND THE CODE AT THEIR HEART

#### 2A: September 22

##### Watch:

- Miriam Posner, [How Did They Make That?](#)

##### Read:

- Johanna Drucker, [Analysis of DH Projects](#)

##### Lab: *Under the hood: HTML/CSS 101*

- [DevTools](#): inspecting the web
- [Codecademy tutorials](#)

#### 2B: September 24

##### Read:

- Matt Kirschenbaum, [Hello Worlds: Why Humanities Students Should Learn to Program](#)
- Evan Donahue, [A "Hello World" Apart \(why humanities students should NOT learn to program\)](#)

##### Explore:

- [DHCommons](#)
- [NEH Office of Digital Humanities](#)

##### Lab: *Under the hood: JavaScript and Programming 101*

- [JSBin online HTML/JavaScript editor](#)
- [w3schools tutorials](#)

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WEEK 3: BIG DATA, METADATA, AND THE DATABASE

3A: September 29

**Read:**

- Tim Hitchcock, [Academic History Writing and the Headache of Big Data](#)
- Stephen Marche, [Literature is not Data: Against Digital Humanities](#)
- Scott Selisker and Holger Syme, [In Defense of Data: Responses to Stephen Marche's "Literature is not Data"](#)

**Explore:**

- [Digging into Data](#)
- [AnnoTate – crowdsourcing to transcribe the Archives](#)

**Lab:** *Metadata and Classification*

- Collecting Data, Where and How
- Spreadsheets/Google Sheets

3B: October 1

**Read:**

- Stephen Ramsay, "Databases," [A Companion to Digital Humanities](#)
- Patrick Murray-John, "[Hacking on Cooper-Hewitt's data release at THATCamp, Or, How to get me to work for free](#)"

**Explore:**

- [Omeka Showcase](#)

**Lab:** *The Database "Back-End"*

- Setting up your own server, cPanel 101
- Content Management Systems
- Server-side programming 101

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WEEK 4: SPATIAL HUMANITIES

4A: October 6

**Read:**

- Jo Guldi, [What is the Spatial Turn?](#) (read the introduction and at least one disciplinary section of interest)
- Anne Kelly Knowles, "[GIS and History](#)," in Anne Kelley Knowles, ed., *Placing History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and GIS are Changing Historical Scholarship* (2008): 1–20.

**Explore:**

- [Spatial Humanities Projects & Groups](#)
- [Digital Atlas of Roman and Medieval Civilization](#)
- [ESRI StoryMaps](#)

**Lab:** *GIS / Mapping Basics*

- Google Fusion Tables
- ArcGIS Online

4B: October 8

**Read:**

- Alan McConchie and Beth Schechter, [Anatomy of a Webmap](#) (use arrows to advance or go back)

**Lab:** *WebMapping 101*

- Google Maps API
- Leaflet
- [CartoDB](#)

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WEEK 5: 3D MODELING AND SIMULATION

**5A: October 13**

**Read:**

- David J. Bodenhamer, [Beyond GIS: Geospatial Technologies and the Future of History](#)
- Diane Favro, “Se Non È Vero, È Ben Trovato (If Not True, It Is Well Conceived): Digital Immersive Reconstructions of Historical Environments,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 71, no. 3 (2012): 273–77.

**Explore:**

- [3D Visualization of the Upper Nodena Village Site](#)
- [The World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893](#)

**Lab:** *PhotoModeling Historic Buildings*

- Advanced SketchUp

**5B: October 15**

**Read:**

- Marie Saldaña, [An Integrated Approach to the Procedural Modeling of Ancient Cities and Buildings](#)

**Watch:**

- James Coltrain – [Connecting Digital Humanities Data with the Scholarly 3D Toolkit](#)

**Lab:** *3D Visualization and Procedural Modeling*

- Google Earth
- CityEngine

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WEEK 6: GETTING MORE OUT OF TEXTS

**6A: October 20**

**Read:**

- Julie, Meloni, [A Pleasant Little Chat about XML](#)
- [A gentle introduction to XML + TEI](#)

**Explore:**

- [Artists’ Books Online](#)

**6B: October 22**

**Lab:** *Structured Markup and Text Analysis*

- [Editing Zotero styles](#)
- TEI
- [Voyant Tools](#)

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WEEK 7: SEEING DATA IN NEW WAYS

**7A: October 27**

**Read:**

- Edward Tufte, [Envisioning Information](#)

- John Theibault, [Visualizations and Historical Arguments](#)

**Explore:**

- [JStor Data for Research](#)
- [Data Visualization and Infographics Resources](#)

**7B: October 29**

**Lab:** *The Visual Display of Quantitative (and Qualitative!) Information*

- [Google Motion Charts \(GapMinder\)](#)
- [Many Eyes](#)
- [Tableau Public](#)

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WEEK 8: NETWORKS OF TEXT AND SPACE

**8A: November 3**

**Read:**

- Scott Weingart, [Demystifying Networks, Parts I & II](#)

**Explore:**

- [ORBIS](#)
- [Hestia](#)
- [Mapping the Republic of Letters](#)

**Lab:** *Network Analysis 101*

- [Google Fusion Tables](#)
- [NodeXL](#)
- [Gephi Quick Start Tutorial](#)

**8B: November 5**

Group Work and Project Check in

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WEEK 9: GROUP WORK TO FINALIZE PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS

**9A: November 10**

**Prepare:**

- Your final project materials
- Your complete Zotero bibliography of sources

**9B: November 12**

**Packaging and Prettifying a Project**

- Finalize projects and comment on the “Project Gallery”

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WEEK 10: PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

**10A: November 17**

**Prepare:**

- A “[Pecha Kucha](#)” style presentation of your final project:
  - 20 slides, for 20 seconds each (6:40 total), following the 1/1/5 rule: at least 1 image per slide, each used only 1 time, and less than 5 words per slide

**10B: November 19**

**Presentations and Publication!**

- Now put those skills to use and join a project on the [DH Commons!](#)