Critical Digital Humanities

INF 3015H Summer 2020 - Session 1 - May-June (F Section)
Course Instructor: Dr. T.L. Cowan
Reading list developed primarily by Arun Jacob;
Course Structure co-developed with Arun Jacob, Nelanthi Hewa and Haley Bryant

Course Description

The goals of this course are to: explore a broad spectrum of perspectives on the digital humanities; develop a profound understanding of a range of digital media projects as well as the ability to critically evaluate the tools and methods involved in creating those projects; and become more thoughtful, critical, and reflective scholars of digital media, technologies, and spaces. By the end of this course, students will be able to critically examine the relationship between digital technologies and the humanities, broadly conceived as an interdisciplinary field of study, and plan, develop, and evaluate digital humanities research projects.

Course Expectations and Learning Outcomes

There are four expectations with corresponding learning outcomes as follows:
1. Students will engage rigorously in course materials to develop a greater understanding of the histories, contemporary issues and future directions of the field of Critical Digital Humanities. (Outcome 1: Depth and Breadth of Knowledge)
2. Engaging in thoughtful and productive dialogue during course meetings (Outcome 3: Level of Application of Knowledge & Outcome 4: Professional Capacity/Autonomy).
3. Leading class discussion once during the semester (Outcome 3 & Outcome 4).
4. Develop an original research project on the topic of Digital Humanities, media, culture and technology, carry out primary and secondary research. (Outcomes 1-6)
See further: https://ischool.utoronto.ca/areas-of-study/phd-in-information/

Grades

Weekly Response Papers (6x10%)
- Due May 11th, 18th, 25th, June 1st, 8th, 15th 60%

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Final Project  
- Due June 30th  

Participation  

**Weekly Response** (1000 - 1250 words):  
For each response, students will focus on one assigned reading and provide a critical reading of it. The exegetical exercise requires:  
1. Restating and reconstructing an author’s arguments.  
2. Contextualizing the argument within current debates in the field.  
3. Highlighting how the argument provides a new perspective on current debates in the field.  
4. Considering how/if this shapes the student’s research project/practice.  

**Final Project:** Building on the 6 response papers as well as additional materials, students will write and/or create a piece of scholarship that may include an essay and/or a digital humanities project.  

See further:  
http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca/grade-interpretation  

**Course Schedule May-June**  

**Unit 1: Defining Critical Digital Humanities**  

**Weekly Response 1 Due (May 11).**  

<http://www.westminsterpapers.org/articles/10.16997/wpcc.209/print/>  


Unit 2: Race, Social Justice, and DH: Applied Theories and Methods

Weekly Response 2 Due (May 18).


Unit 3: Intersectional Feminist Digital Humanities: Theoretical, Social, and Material Engagements

Weekly Response 3 Due (May 25).


Unit 4: Digital Humanities and Digital Labour

Weekly Response 4 Due (Jun 1).


Unit 5: Digital Privacy, Politics and Power

Weekly Response 5 Due (Jun 8).

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Unit 6: Anti-Colonial Digital Humanities Critiques and Praxis

Weekly Response 6 Due (June 15).


Statement of Acknowledgement of Traditional Land

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Writing Support

As stated in the iSchool’s Grade Interpretation Guidelines, “work that is not well
written and gramatically correct will not generally be considered eligible for a grade in the A range, regardless of its quality in other respects”. With this in mind, please make use of the writing support provided to graduate students by the SGS Office of English Language and Writing Support (http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/English-Language-andWriting-Support.aspx). The services are designed to target the needs of both native and non-native speakers and all programs are free. Please consult the current workshop schedule (http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/CurrentYears-Courses.aspx) for more information.

Academic Integrity
Please consult the University’s site on Academic Integrity (http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/). The iSchool has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism as defined in section B.I.1.(d) of the University’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf). You should acquaint yourself with the Code. Please review the material in Cite it Right and if you require further clarification, consult the site How Not to Plagiarize (http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize). Cite it Right covers relevant parts of the U of T Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (1995). It is expected that all iSchool students take the Cite it Right workshop and the online quiz. Completion of the online Cite it Right quiz should be made prior to the second week of classes. To review and complete the workshop, visit the orientation portion of the iSkills site: uoft.me/iskills

Accommodations
Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or a health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Accessibility Services Office (http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as) as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let them and I know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.
Supplementary Texts


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