The University of Western Ontario
HISTORY 9808A
Digital Public History
Fall 2024

Instructor: Dr. Tim Compeau

Office Hours: By Appointment at HUC A217 or on Zoom.
Email: tcompea@uwo.ca

Course Description:

Digital history is the use of computers, digital media, and other tools for historical practice, presentation, analysis, and research. This course emphasizes both the presentation of history on the web, and the use of computational techniques to work with digital resources. **Required for Public History students and not open to other graduate students.**

Course Syllabus:
This course introduces students to the theory and practice of digital techniques for public history. It explores methods of presenting, communicating, researching, and reconstructing history with digital technology in ways that deepen the public understanding of the past, and foster the inculcation of historical thinking skills. Digital public history can preserve the past and make it more accessible, but its affordances can also challenge authoritative narratives and complicate our experiences with history in surprising ways.

History 9808 complements material in History 9800 and is intended for students in the Public History MA program.

Learning Objectives:
At the end of the course, students will have:
- a familiarity with many of the digital technologies used by public historians, museums, and heritage sites.
- an understanding of how historical communities, identities, and consciousness are formed online.
- experimented with a variety of digital platforms.
- an understanding of the pedagogical, ethical, and practical problems found in digital public history.
- developed skills to research, evaluate, and apply new media for public history.

Course Materials:
Readings, links, and other resource material can be found on Brightspace and at timcompeau.com

Methods of Evaluation:

Assessment:

Social Media: 15%
Participation: 20%
Podcast: 15% (Oct. 3)
Mapping Assignment: 20% (Due. Oct. 24)
Research Project Proposal: 5% (Due Nov. 7)
Research Project: 25% (Due Dec. 5)

Social Media Engagement: (15%). Blogging and other forms of social media engagement play an important role in public history. Students must choose a platform to publicly share their work and thoughts on digital and public history, and other aspects of history and/or professional development. This can be done as a traditional blog, or students can explore other social media platforms or techniques. Be creative. Student work will be discussed in class each week.

Podcast: (15%). Due Oct. 3 Each student is required to create and upload a 15-minute podcast. The format – documentary style, essay, or free flowing discussion – is up to the individual student. More details will be provided in class.

Mapping Assignment: (20%) Due Oct. 24. Using ArcGIS StoryMaps (or another digital platform cleared with the professor), students must design a functional place-based history site, interactive experience, game, etc. More details will be shared in class.

Participation: (20%). Students must be prepared to actively participate in class discussions.

Research Project Proposal (5%) Due Nov. 7. Final Project: (25%) Due. Dec. 5. Students explore a digital technology and its current and potential applications for public history. There are a variety of forms this assignment can take from an experiment with a digital platform or software with an accompanying paper (15% product and 10% paper) or a more traditional investigation of a digital topic (25% essay). Possible assignments could include experiments with digital landscaping, 3D modelling, augmented reality, visualization projects, website creation, game design etc. Details and options will be explored in class. Because students will begin the course with varied levels of experience, evaluation of this final assignment will focus on student willingness to engage with and think about the technology,

and not necessarily on technical outcome. Students must submit a proposal outlining the project and the digital tools they propose to use and will present their work to the class on Nov. 30. Due Dec. 7.

Course Schedule:

Sept 5: Introduction to Digital Public History

Sept. 12: Public Engagement and Shared Authority

Sept. 19: Pseudohistory, Misinformation, and Public History.

Sept. 26: Place-Based Digital History.

Oct. 3: Digital Mapping and GIS Workshop. (Podcast Due).

Oct. 10: Disruptions: From Lockdowns to Artificial Intelligence

Oct. 17: Fall Study Break. No class.

Oct. 24: Material Culture and Digital Reproduction (Mapping Assignment Due)

Oct. 31: Ethics, Dark History Tourism, and Digital Public History.

Nov 7: Digital History Games, Play, and Simulations (Independent Project Proposal Due)

Nov. 14: Digital Genealogy

Nov. 21: The Future of Digital Public History

Nov. 28: Independent Project Workshop

Dec. 5: Independent Assignments and Papers Due

Additional Statements
Health/Wellness Services:

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health Support at https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html

Accessibility Options:

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program. Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction. Request for Accommodations/Medical Issues

Students are entitled to their privacy and consequently they do not need to disclose personal information to their course professors. In the event that students feel the need to discuss personal information, they should see the graduate chair. Unlike undergraduate students, graduate students cannot be referred to Social Science Academic Counselling to have their medical or non-medical circumstances evaluated and to receive a recommendation for accommodation. Those facilities are for undergraduates only, and there is no process beyond the department to secure recommendations for accommodation. Our process is that faculty should deal with routine requests for extensions. However, a student's request for accommodation (on medical, non-medical, compassionate grounds) should go to the graduate chair, Prof. Francine McKenzie (historygradchair@uwo.ca) who will consult and communicate with faculty. Additionally, faculty and students should communicate with the grad chair about any case in which work is not submitted before grades are due. In the event that the graduate chair is also the course professor, then a request for accommodation can be taken to the department chair.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Instructors must indicate whether the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools/software/apps unacceptable in their course. Instructors may refer to the Centre for Teaching and Learning for resources on the use of generative Artificial Intelligence

Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual Course Outlines similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

NOTE: See Policies and Statements on the Graduate section of the History Department Website, https://history.uwo.ca/graduate/program_information/graduate_policies_and_statements.html. This includes additional information on academic support services for health and wellness and gender based sexual violence. You can also find information on other academic policies, including copyright, plagiarism, and accessibility.

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca