

DIGITAL HUMANITIES STUDIO: ARCHAEOLOGY IN A DIGITAL AGE DGHM 150 CM

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION: Leigh Anne Lieberman
Leigh.Lieberman@claremont.edu
Office Hours: Honnold Mudd Library 319 | Thursday | 9:00-11:00am
By Appointment

COURSE INFORMATION: Honnold Mudd Library | Digital Tool Shed | Wednesday | 2:45-5:30pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Digital Humanities are concepts and practices that aim to enhance scholarship with the use of new media, including but not limited to web technologies, mobile devices, GIS, and physical computing. This class will provide students with the opportunity to create Digital Humanities projects in collaboration with scholars, designers, and technologists. Working in teams to execute scholarly arguments in digital form, students will engage in all phases of production including design, research in the relevant humanities disciplines, and technical implementation. Students will participate in critical conversations throughout the semester, fostered by topical writing assignments, technical workshops, and invited guests.

The focus of this semester's course is Archaeology in a Digital Age. In the last few decades, advances in geography, geology, photography, medical sciences, and space exploration have been adapted to uncovering the past. The new data that has resulted from these endeavors can be organized and disseminated in online databases, providing access to information in an unprecedented manner. New imaging techniques, 3D scanning and printing, and virtual reality systems have allowed objects and sites to be preserved in new ways, and enable a much broader audience to interact with ancient civilizations. While most of these new tools have brought positive changes to the field, archaeologists still must question their reasons for adopting certain methods. Are the flashy 3D imaging techniques truly helping us answer research questions? Are complicated technical computing methods always necessary to organize data? In this class, students will be encouraged to think critically about the design of archaeological projects and the integration of digital tools as we collaboratively design and publish our own digital projects.

WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU

This course requires extensive teamwork and preparation; group work must necessarily be supplemented by proactive, independent research. While there are no prerequisites for this course, you should be prepared to:

- cultivate your curiosity, ask questions, and seek new insights;
- contribute your specific disciplinary training and skills to the discovery and design process;
- remain flexible and remember that this course is experiential and experimental in nature, which may require occasional pivots in research direction as we familiarize ourselves with new tools and absorb new methods, materials, and concepts.

WHY THIS COURSE?

As a scholar of the ancient world, my own academic and professional path has been significantly influenced by the digital revolution in archaeological practice. I'm excited to share some of my own experience and insight with you as we explore together how technologies for studying, curating, and presenting the past might change the ways we understand it.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME

Students in this course can expect me to:

- give timely and constructive feedback on individual and collaborative assignments, providing opportunities to improve throughout the semester;
- make myself available during office hours and by appointment to discuss how you can succeed in this class and apply the skills you master in this class beyond the confines of this classroom;
- challenge you to meet the learning objectives of the course while acknowledging that everyone has other commitments and priorities throughout the semester.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course, all students will:

- have substantial and detailed knowledge about the development of archaeological study and discourse, and of how the digital revolution in archaeological practice has affected the discipline;
- be able to critically analyze and evaluate how technology can be used to aid the creation of scholarly materials and arguments;
- be able to weigh in on some of the major methodological debates and questions in the humanities, digital humanities, and digital archaeology;
- learn to use different software tools such as Scalar, Photoscan, Wordpress, and GIS in order to create digital humanities projects that are useful to academics and accessible to the public;
- learn to work effectively in teams made up of students with different academic backgrounds, interests, and skills.

READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS:

All of your readings for this semester will be uploaded to or linked from Sakai. Please note that you are expected to complete the assigned readings before each class meeting. These readings have been selected to help supplement the material we cover in class and to introduce you to the myriad ways in which scholars have approached digital methodologies and ancient evidence. Because we will often discuss these readings in class, you are encouraged to bring copies with you. You are also expected to draw connections from the readings to your assignments when appropriate.

The Reading & Assignment Schedule handout contains more specific information about weekly readings, work to be prepared for class, and assignment deadlines. Please note that this document is *dynamic*; it will necessarily be updated throughout the semester, and new versions will be posted on Sakai and distributed in class.

GRADING & ASSESSMENT:

❖ **Attendance & Participation (20%):** A significant portion of your grade will be based on *Attendance & Participation*. It is my hope that all students will foster a lively and welcoming intellectual environment in class. This means not only contributing to in-class discussion, but also listening to fellow students, engaging with each other's ideas, and providing constructive feedback during in class discussions. It also includes showing up on time to every class ready to discuss the readings and the work.

It is important to note that in the Digital Humanities Studio course, we will make extensive use of digital technologies throughout the semester. That said, the use of laptops, tablets, and/or phones for personal business or work related to other classes during our seminar each week is distracting and disrespectful. I reserve the right to note such activities during class and make deductions from your *Attendance & Participation* grade without alerting you. Please silence your cell phones and use technology responsibly!

- ❖ **Studio Assignments (40%):** Studio Assignments are short-term individual or small group projects that allow you to demonstrate that you've mastered a particular analytical, technical, or presentational skillset. There will be FOUR (4) Studio Assignments in the first half of the semester. Assignments 1 and 2, both accomplished over several weeks, will be worth slightly more than Assignments 3 and 4, which will be finished in a single seminar session. Details regarding each Studio Assignment will be made available well in advance of any check-ins and due dates. Some important introductory details and *tentative* deadlines are as follows:
 - Studio Assignment 1: Digital Project Review
 - 1/30: Part 1 – in class discussion
 - 2/6: Part 2 – check-in
 - 2/10: Part 2 – final deadline
 - Studio Assignment 2: Geospatial Practicum
 - 2/20: check-in
 - 2/27: check-in
 - 3/2: final deadline
 - Studio Assignment 3: Excavating Excavation Records
 - 2/20: in class activity
 - Studio Assignment 4: Microblogging as Scholarship (or, Learning through Live Tweeting)
 - 3/6: in class activity
- ❖ **Final Project (40% Total):** Our goal this semester is to work together to design, research, and build a scholarly project that focuses on some aspect of digital archaeology. All of our activities during the first half of the semester will help us develop the skills necessary to plan and complete this assignment, and we will turn our focus during the second half of the semester toward this final, collective goal.

Details regarding the focus of that project are still in the works. It is my hope that we will be able to study, digitize, and present artifacts that have not been previously examined or published from an archaeological collection that was discovered at CGU last spring. Having access to these artifacts would offer us the unique opportunity to create a platform that scholars and the public could access, learn from, and potentially contribute to. I'm really looking forward to this possibility, and I'll keep you in the loop as details are confirmed in the coming weeks. But, while the particulars are still in flux, some key elements of this project and *tentative* deadlines are as follows:

- Final Project Planning (5%)
 - Grade based on your contributions to the overall planning and design of our project.
 - 3/27: in class activity
- Final Project Annotated Bibliography (5%)
 - 4/14: due by 11:59pm
- Final Project (20%)
 - Grade based on the depth, rigor, aesthetic appeal, and accessibility of the final multi-media product.
 - 4/17: check-in
 - 5/1: check-in
 - 5/13: final edits due by 11:59pm
- Final Presentation (5%)
 - 5/8: Collectively planned presentation of the project to the 5Cs community.
- Final Reflection (5%)
 - Written report examining the research outcome of the Final Project, including a self-reflection of your own contributions to the work.
 - 5/13: due by 11:59pm

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family, other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official college activities. These absences should be cleared with the instructor *in advance* whenever possible and will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness. The time and date of any make-up assessment or assignment is at the convenience of the instructor. Any assessments or assignments missed during unexcused absences may only be made up at the discretion of the instructor.

TECHNOLOGY & DH@CC:

The course will make extensive use of digital technologies. Students may bring their own laptops to class or may borrow devices from library. Any necessary software licenses and accounts will be provided. Additionally, it is recommended that for certain aspects of the Studio Assignments and Final Project, you schedule technical consultations outside of class with the Digital Research Studio Fellows who work for the Digital Humanities Initiative at the Claremont Colleges (DH@CC). The Digital Research Studio Fellows can provide guidance for digital projects from start to finish, from brainstorming to troubleshooting. To schedule a meeting, e-mail dhcc@claremont.edu or ask Professor Lieberman for more information.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Extensions may be granted for assignments if arrangements are made well in advance of the deadline (and not, for instance, the night before an assignment is due). Otherwise, late assignments will be accepted up to three days after the original deadline at a penalty of 10% per day.

CENTER FOR WRITING AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE:

CMC is a campus that focuses on excellence in writing and communication across all disciplines. No matter their level of confidence, students who wish to improve their writing and communication skills should consider visiting the Center for Writing and Public Discourse (CWPD). The CWPD is a free resource that provides inspiration and support to student writers through one-on-one collaboration with trained student consultants. I encourage you to make an appointment with a CWPD consultant regarding written assignments throughout the semester.

COMMUNICATION:

Please check Sakai regularly. Information about assignments, changes to the schedule, or any material you will need during the semester will be distributed in class and/or posted as Announcement or uploaded as a Resource on Sakai. I will also generally make administrative announcements (reminders, news, answer questions, etc.) at the beginning of class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Students in this course, as in all courses at the Claremont Colleges, are required to abide by their college's code of student conduct and academic integrity.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students who require academic accommodations due to a disability must contact the appropriate office at their home college to assure that those accommodations will be provided for the current semester. Links to the offices at each college are provided below. I ask that students please let me know during the first week of class what type of accommodations are expected so that I can plan accordingly and assure that those needs are met.

Academic Support Services at the Claremont Colleges:

Pitzer: <http://pitweb.pitzer.edu/student-life/academic-support-services/>

Scripps: <http://www.scrippscollege.edu/academics/students-with-disabilities>

Pomona: <https://www.pomona.edu/students/disability-accommodations>

CMC: <https://www.cmc.edu/dean-of-students/dss>

Harvey Mudd: <https://www.hmc.edu/student-life/disability-resources/>

5Cs Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC): <http://www.cuc.claremont.edu/sdrc/>