In this course, I ask students to commit to an improvisational and collaborative spirit, because the Public and Digital History graduate seminar is experimental in nature. Although we begin the semester with a general outline for proceeding and general goals for outcomes, I want the class to remain flexible and open to changes in direction and ambition in response to our ongoing work. Ultimately, I will make final decisions on structure and outcomes, but I like to give students assignments that enhance student agency and student research skills. This is frustrating for some students who want a clear direction from the beginning, but I believe that this structure ultimately helps students learn what to do when they encounter the regular setbacks involved in research, writing, and teaching (and anything else). Because we are all learning by doing, the seminar provides an environment that helps students become more comfortable with not knowing things. It’s easy to get overwhelmed by the volume of things one has to learn in grad school, so it’s important to remember that the most creative and productive people are motivated by not knowing things. In this course we will be encountering the unfamiliar in methods and areas of knowledge and other forms; I hope everyone will get friendlier with frustration and failure, so that we can use those obstacles to ask better questions or find new sources and collaborators, and we will try again.

In a more practical vein, the course introduces students to the main practices of public and digital history. This year the course is devoted to digital collections and digitization. The course has three main activities

- Each student will identify a collection of documents in an archive, museum, or library at UT-Austin (preferably documents useful for the student’s own research program). Each student will then work with the staff of that institution to have the documents digitized; they will help promote the newly digitized collections and develop new undergraduate curriculum units based on their digitized collections.
- We will also study the history of documents digitization: who started it? Who decides what goes online? Who uses online documents? And who benefits most from the digitization of research materials? How can those benefits be shared most equitably?
- Throughout the semester, students will work on writing for the public by designing a website and filling it with blog posts (and possibly podcasts or videos) about our experimental course and about their own individual projects.

As a result of these individual and collaborative activities, the graduate students in this course will further their own research, support the digitization programs of UT institutions, make documents available to faculty researchers, undergraduate students, and the public, and show readers of all kinds how their documents can be used to learn something new about the past.
Goals: The goals of the course are:

- to complement students’ academic work and preparation for dissertation writing with practical experience producing history for the public
- to acquire skills in basic digital methods useful for research, information management, data visualization, and visual presentation.
- to encourage students to include public and digital history in their professional profile as historians
- to collaborate with a team of faculty, collections staff, digital specialists, and other students to increase the volume of primary documents available to researchers and to the public
- to become familiar with the digitized archives in the student's field and to add substantially to the online possibilities for research in that field.
- to share that knowledge with faculty, other students, and the public

We will meet with a variety of specialists doing public and digital history (museum curators, archivists, preservationists, public librarians, bloggers, website managers, designers, specialists in digital methods, digital technology, and digitization).

Grading: Your grade in this course will be based on my evaluation of your contributions to class discussion
- your writing (your website)
- your digitization project: concept, negotiations, practice, result
- the lesson plans you devise and post.
- Your presentation of your project.

Policy on Academic Integrity: Don’t cheat. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, ask. Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. For further information: Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

Students with Disabilities: The University of Texas provides on request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. At the beginning of the semester, students who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Service for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at (512) 471-6259 [voice], (866) 329-3986 [video phone], via e-mail at ssd@austin.utexas.edu or http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/

Religious Holy Days: If you need to miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence if you notify me in advance.

Do Unto Others: Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you have the right to report it. See:

Guns:
UT Austin is obliged to follow a law that allows the concealed carry of loaded handguns in our classrooms. Course participants with a license to carry a handgun must keep it concealed and on their person in a proper holster at all times. Handguns may not be brought to the classroom in backpacks, bags, or purses. That is because course participants will be called on at unpredictable times to move about the room for the purposes of group work or presentations causing them to be separated from their belongings, which violates the law.
The law bars instructors from prohibiting guns in our classrooms but I am allowed to say that I would prefer to teach in a gun-free space. And I am allowed by law to point out that my preference is not based on a naïve belief that nothing dangerous ever happens in classrooms, but is based on reliable studies that show that carrying a gun might make people feel safer but does not, in fact, make people safer. In addition, I would prefer to teach in a gun-free space because I believe that the possibility that loaded, concealed guns are present in the classroom has the potential to prevent the full practice of free expression.

Schedule

*Week 1 Jan 23. Introductions
Definitions. Building Bibliography.
Discuss topics for thinking about online collections, research, docs.

*Week 2 Jan 30. Digital tools. Digitization Issues
Dale J. Correa, PCL, History Liaison, presentation on using Zotero. 9:45

Bring your laptop and be ready to log on--this is an interactive presentation.
(Let me know if this is a problem for you).
Learning about Digital workflow tools.

Read:

The digital landscape:
Joan Neuberger, “Digital History: A Primer” Part 1, 2, 3, (optional 4, 5) these
blogs are old-ish, but I think they still lay out the landscape in a general way that is useful.

The stakes:

T.J. Owens, “Digital Sources & Digital Archives: The Evidentiary Basis of Digital History (Draft)”

Michael Sacasas, “Do Artifacts Have Ethics?”
https://thefrailestthing.com/2014/11/29/do-artifacts-have-ethics/

Optional Reading:
These are foundational books you should know about. If you are new to digital history read them more carefully at some point.

Dan Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig, Digital History: A Guide
http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/

Debates in Digital History, Lauren F. Klein, Matthew K. Gold, eds.
http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates?data=toc-open

Write: 3 discussion questions about the reading, 3 take-aways (short statements of things you learned or things you want to know more about).
Due: Email to me by noon Monday Jan 29. Post on the Canvas page for this week.
Be prepared to discuss the issues raised in these readings in detail. What are the author’s overall arguments? What evidence do they use to support those arguments? Which issues are interesting to you? Why?

*Week 3. Feb 6 UT Digital Collections
Liza Talbot, LBJ Library 9:30.
Ian Goodale PCL/LBJ: Yugoslavia and Prague Spring sites; meta data.
The Prague Spring Archive
http://scalar.usc.edu/works/prague-spring-archive/home

Yugoslavia at LBJ
http://scalar.usc.edu/works/yugoslav-materials-in-the-lbj-archives/index
READ:


On Canvas

Write (500-750 words):
Evaluate the digitization of documents at one of the following: Harry Ransom Center, Briscoe Center for American History, LLILAS Benson, LBJ Presidential Library.
Email to me by noon Feb 5. Post on the Canvas page for this week.

Browse the archives linked above and go to one of the repository websites, explore its digital holdings, search for research materials. Are the sites easily searchable? How are they organized? What sort of documents are digitized? Who is the target audience: public or academic? Can you answer some of the questions raised by Putnam and Saracas by searching the online holdings?

Write a short essay on practical issues and conceptual ones.

Write as if you were explaining the issues raised by digitization to a public audience interested in the ways research is done online.

Due: Email to me by noon Monday Jan 29.

*Week 4. Feb 13 UT Digital Collections/ Blog Writing

Stephanie Malmros, Briscoe Center for American History (10)
Christina Bleyer, LLILAS Benson Latin Amer Studies and Collections. (11:30)

READ:
Browse some history blogs. Do you know a history blog (or a blog in your own field) that you think has consistently great writing? Or mediocre writing? Or is excellent or mediocre in other ways? (Reading something not-so-great is often more helpful that reading the best, right?)

Res Obscura (individual, public/academic audience)

Black Perspectives: the blog of the African American Intellectual History Society (society blog, academic/public audience)

The Imperial and Global Forum (History Department, academic/public
audience)

The National Museum of the Native American Blog (institutional, public audience)

The Junto: a Group Blog on Early American History (group of historians, academic audience)

And of course: Not Even Past (History Department, public/academic)

Write (500-750 words) What makes a good blog essay? Use specific examples
Email to me by noon Monday Feb 5. Post on the canvas page for this week.

* Week 5. Feb 20. Ethics, Values, Politics, Copyright

***Meet at 9:55 am at Harry Ransom Center (lobby)***
Andrea Gustavson and Elizabeth Gushee.

READ:
http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/13


http://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/debates/text/55


Write: (750 words) a blog on the politics of digital history & digitization.
Email to me by noon on Feb 19 and post on Canvas
*Week 6. Feb 27. Digital History Critiques

READ:
Andrew Prescott, “I'd Rather be a Librarian,” Cultural and Social History, 11:3 (2014): 335-341
“Digital History and Argument” AHA Report on DH.
All on Canvas (Files)

Eric Weiskott, “There is no such thing as the Digital Humanities,” Chronicle of Higher Education, Nov 1, 2017

Write: (750 words) a blog essay on the problems with digital history in response to these articles. Email to me by noon Feb 26 and post on Canvas.

*Week 7. Mar 6 Digitization Project. Making a website

By now you should have decided on the documents you want to digitize.

Write a prospectus for your project.
Include:
The documents: name, location, short description, short description of how they contribute to your research, name of liaison at repository, plans to digitize, plans to produce metadata, plans to make public
Are you having problems with any of this?

Due: Post on Canvas by noon Monday Feb 17

Sign up for Wordpress site (or Scalar or Omeka if you prefer). We’ll work on building sites in class but I don't want to waste time signing up.

Print out, sign, and bring permission waiver to class.

SPRING BREAK
NO CLASS MAR 13

*Week 8 Mar 20
NO CLASS
Independent work on Projects
*Week 9 Mar 27  
**Writing about documents. Writing workshop**  
Work on your project (more details as we begin).  

READ:  
Paul Dicken, “You Want to Write for the Public, Really?”  
https://www.chronicle.com/article/You-Want-to-Write-for-a/230781  

Jonathan Wai and David Miller, “Why Academics Should Write for the Public”  

Alane Salierno Mason, W. W. Norton Executive Editor  
“10 Tips for Academics Writing for a General Audience”  
https://medium.com/@wwnorton/10-tips-for-academics-writing-for-a-general-audience-d9f946fb4d5de  

READ: Find a blog specifically about a document or documents  
Write (750 words) a blog about one of your documents.  
Due: Email to me and post on Canvas by noon, Monday Mar 26  
Peer editing  

**Weeks 10-12**  
We will decide if we need to re-organize these last weeks when we see how your digitization projects take shape. The goals are to:  
Post documents  
Write about documents  
Write up and post lesson plans  
Present your project to the public.  

*Week 10 Apr 3. Writing About Documents*  
READ:  
Josh Hadro, NYPL: “Why We Digitize,”  
Browse: NYPL Digital Collections:  
https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/  
Browse: Digital Public Library of America: https://dp.la/  
Browse: National Humanities Center Toolboxes:  
http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/tlibrary.htm  

What do you want to put on your own website?  

READ:  
“For Teachers” Digital History
Go look for models on line and in the library.
Share links on Canvas page for this week
Write lesson plans based on your documents for K-7, 8-12, College

*Week 14. Apr 24 Practice Presentations.*

*Week 15. Public Presentations.*

*

Some Additional Resources:


Scholars Talk Writing: Sam Wineburg
https://www.chronicle.com/article/Scholars-Talk-Writing-Sam/232365
## His 381 Spring 2018 Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Speakers</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-Jan 23</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-Jan 30</td>
<td>Zotero Digitization: Stakes</td>
<td>Correa</td>
<td>Neuberger Putnam Putnam Owens Owens Sacasas</td>
<td>Digitization Disc Qs Take Aways</td>
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<td>3-Feb 6</td>
<td>LBJ Blogs</td>
<td>Talbot Goodale</td>
<td>Prague Spring YugoPunks Vandergrift</td>
<td>Digitization websites programs</td>
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<td>4-Feb 13</td>
<td>Briscoe Benson</td>
<td>Malmros Bleyer</td>
<td>History Blogs</td>
<td>Good blog writing</td>
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<td>5-Feb 20</td>
<td>HRC Digitization Politics Ethics</td>
<td>Gustavson Gushee *at HRC</td>
<td>Spiro Earhart Gallon UNICEF</td>
<td>Blog on politics</td>
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<td>6-Feb 27</td>
<td>DH more politics</td>
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<td>Critiques</td>
<td>Blog on Critiques</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-Mar 6</td>
<td>Projects Websites</td>
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<td>[Decide on docs]</td>
<td>Project prospectus Sign up for wordpress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-Mar 20</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Work on projects</td>
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<td>9-Mar 27</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dicken Wai &amp; Miller Mason</td>
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<td>Blog about your documents</td>
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<td>10-Apr 3</td>
<td>Why we digitize?</td>
<td>Hadro NYPL DPLA NEH</td>
<td></td>
<td>What do you want to put on your website?</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-Apr 10</td>
<td>Lesson Plans In Class Critiques</td>
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<td>12-Apr 17</td>
<td>Finalize Lesson Plans</td>
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<td>13-Apr 24</td>
<td>Practice presentations Polish websites</td>
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<td>14-May 1</td>
<td>PRESENTATIONS</td>
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