Digital media, digital tools, digital modes of communication, and the experience of living in the digital era have all brought new opportunities, challenges, ambiguities, questions, anxieties, goals, values, and visions into play across the entire spectrum of social institutions that affect our personal and professional lives. It is also the case that exposure to, engagement with, and opportunities to assess these dynamics (individually and collectively) has not proceeded in a uniform and equivalent manner across these areas: as the writer William Gibson (Neuromancer, The Difference Engine, Pattern Recognition, among others) famously said circa the early 1990s, “The future is already here – it’s just not very evenly distributed.” In the academy, this is particularly true of the humanities, where research methods, teaching strategies, professional priorities and disciplinary reward systems have combined to continue reproducing a status quo in terms of graduate training and career structures that favors an inertial attachment to pre-digital norms rather than exploring, analyzing, and experimenting with new media and examining it in light of contemporary contexts.

In this course we will break this pattern by assuming that being conversant with cutting-edge approaches in research, criticism, and analysis require us to be conversant with issues in the digital humanities. We will be exploring arguments made by leading thinkers about what it means to be active and creative members of the digital era, in terms of the public sphere, alt-ac modes of history, and in regard to university careers. We will use an entry-level suite of digital tools that are useful for research and pedagogy (diigo, google sites, pechakucha) and introduce more sophisticated ones (for example, GIS, tagging/metadata, text mining, data visualization), with the goal of making a start on gaining insight into opportunities that are available to you that can be used in your own research, teaching, and engagement with the wider public. In your final paper or project you will build on our work from the semester to follow a line of thought or practice at a more advanced level, and, in consultation with me, develop a relevant list of resources to help you to take further steps if you’d like to do so after the course’s end.
Books

- David Weinberger, *Too Big to Know: Rethinking Knowledge Now that the Facts aren’t the Facts, Experts are Everywhere, and the Smartest Person in the Room is the Room* (Basic Books, 2012)

- Nina Simon, *The Participatory Museum* (Museum 2.0, 2010) and available online at: http://www.participatorymuseum.org/read/


Links for Class Work Use

diigo.com

Seven Important Digitization Projects in the Digital Humanities

Supplemental Reading


www.acls.org/uploadedFiles/Publications/Programs/Our_Cultural_Commonwealth.pdf

http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub142/pub142.pdf


@ mediacommons: Kristen Nowrotzki and Jack Dougherty and eds., *Writing History in the Digital Age*
http://writinghistory.trincoll.edu/introduction/
reading schedule

week 1
1/19  introduction: where we’re starting from, where we’re going, and why

reading:
Tim O’Reilly, “What is Web 2.0: Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software” | | O’Reilly Media
http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-2.0.html

Web 2.0: wikipedia entry  http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0

Patricia Cohen, New York Times series: “Humanities 2.0” (six articles)
//topics.nytimes.com/top/features/books/series/humanities_20/index.html?s=oldest

Susan Hockey, “The History of Humanities Computing” in A Companion to Digital Humanities,
http://www.digitalhumanities.org/companion/view?docId=blackwell/9781405103213 /9781405103213.xml&chunk.id=ss1-2-1&toc.depth=1&toc.id=ss1-2-1&brand=default

Christine Borgman, “The Digital Future is Now: A Call to Action for the Humanities,” DHQ

http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2008/05/25/everyones_a_historian_now/?page=full

Weinberger, Too Big to Know (Prologue, Chapters 1-2)

week 2
1/26  Discussion of the introductory reading

reading:
Weinberger, Too Big to Know (Chapters 3-9)

week 3
2/2  Discussion of Weinberger and the question of expertise and knowledge circa 2012:
Where/How do academics fit in this shifting ecology?
"Weinberger paper/post due"

reading:
1st Round of Choices from he Supplemental Reading List

week 4*
2/9  Presentations of Individual Choices from the Supplemental List/Discussion

reading:
Simon, Participatory Museum (Preface and Chapters 1-4)
Online discussions of the issue of alt-ac careers

week 5
2/16  Discussion of the issues relating to alt-ac careers (w/ an emphasis on graduate training)

reading:
Simon, *Participatory Museum* (Choose three chapters from 5-9, plus last chapter)

week 6
2/23  Discussion of the Sociological, Political, Philosophical and Pedagogical Consequences of Focusing on Participation: Simonian Museum Practices as Case Study

[Simon paper/post due]

reading:
Fitzpatrick, *Planned Obsolescence* (Chapters 1-2)


week 7*
3/1  Digital Tools Presentation (GIS; Text Mining; Wikis; e-book creation; Tagging/Metadata; Omeka; Data Visualization; etc.)

reading:
Fitzpatrick, *Planned Obsolescence* (Chapters 3-5, Conclusion + Readers’ Reports and Comments on the mediacommons site of the draft ms.)

week 8
3/8  Discussion of Academic Scholarship and Publishing: Transformations [Fitzpatrick paper/post due]

reading:
diigo links
seven important digital projects

week 9*
3/15  Presentations of diigo links/seven important digital projects reflections

reading:
Nielsen, *Reinventing Discovery* (Chapters 1-5)
week 10

3/22  no class  |  spring break

week 11

3/29  If Science Goes Open Source will hsci/tech/med? Discussion of Nielsen
[Nielsen paper/post due]

reading:
Nielsen, Reinventing Discovery (Chapters 6-9)


week 12

4/5  Discussion of Nielsen (con.); The Classroom in the Digital Age

reading:
Bok, Our Underachieving Colleges (Chapters 1-6)

Derek Bruff, “A Social Network can be a Learning Network” Chron. of Higher Ed. (11/6/11)
http://chronicle.com/article/A-Social-Network-Can-Be-a/129609/

http://ineducation.ca/article/open-learning-cms-and-open-learning-network

“Science and Global Politics” HSCI 3533 (Honors) Course Blog
http://scipop.typepad.com/scienceandglobalpolitics/
See: Intro Post; Second Post, “Designing University Courses to Incorporate Student Blogging: Examples”—look at the examples; and browse some of the student entries.

week 13

4/12  The Classroom in the Digital Age (con.); Do digital era issues amplify, change, or have no relevance for Bok’s critique of current UG pedagogies?
[Bok paper/post due]

reading:
Bok, Our Underachieving Colleges (Chapters 7-12)

week 14

4/19  Where does hsci/tech/med stand in relation to the contemporary academy and its challenges?
Assignments

1. There will be four short reflection papers, on four of the five main texts (Weinberger, Simon, Fitzpatrick, Nielsen, Bok) – your choice which four. Each “paper” will be written in the style of a blog post (say, roughly 500-750 words, with links if appropriate). Each paper is worth 2.5% and is graded s/u for a total of 10% of the course grade. They are due in either Weeks 3, 6, 8, 11, and/or 13, by 8 p.m. the Wednesday night before the seminar meeting. They will be posted in our class space on google sites.

2. There will be four presentation days: week 4 (from choices from the supplemental reading); week 7 (digital tool choice); week 9 (diigo starting links + 7 important digitization projects); and week 15 (PechaKucha presentation of final project). The first three presentations will count for 10% each; the p/k presentation will count for 20% [50% total].

3. The final 40% component of the grade will be a final paper or project, to be decided upon in consultation with the instructor. The paper can be an exploration of a topic related to any of the areas we’ve covered; it can be work on a topic you are focused on in your research, but looked at from the perspective of digital humanities; it can be building a prototype using a digital tool(s) new to you; it can be a report on attending a THATCamp or other digital learning opportunity: in short, the point is to find a way to draw on the knowledge base we’ve built up over the semester and customize it stretch yourself further, augment ongoing work, or allow you the space to further explore a theme or issue of interest to you (re historiography, scholarly research methods, academic genres of writing and publishing, pedagogy, or the relationship of the academy to the larger public world in the digital era). The Final Paper is due on Friday, May 11th by 6 p.m. in my office, phsc 619, or to the class dropbox.