

	HIST 870: Digital History Call # 8403 Section 001 Fall 2009	
Class Meetings Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:00 AM-12:15 PM 638 Oldfather Hall	Professor Douglas Seefeldt University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of History 606 Oldfather Hall 402-472-3251 dseefeldt2@unl.edu	Office Hours T 9:00-10:30 AM R 3:30-4:30 PM or by appointment

“Cyberspace exists, insofar as it can be said to exist, by virtue of human agency.”
–William Gibson, *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (1988)

Course Objectives

This course is designed to help graduate students develop expertise in the theories and tools of digital historical scholarship. It intends to promote collaborative learning processes and develop your skills as both thinkers and writers regardless of your field of study.

Required Texts

(Please note that additional readings will be posted to the course Blackboard site and are listed in the “Course Schedule” section below):

Daniel J. Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig. *Digital History: A Guide to Gathering, Preserving, and Presenting the Past on the Web*. (U. Pennsylvania Press, 2006). 0812219236 (This book is available online should you prefer to read it that way: <<http://chnm.gmu.edu/digitalhistory/>>)

Ted Friedman. *Electric Dreams: Computers in American Culture*. (New York University Press, 2005). 0814727409

Ian F. McNeely with Lisa Wolverton. *Reinventing Knowledge: From Alexandria to the Internet*. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008). 0393337715

Participation

Grad students should attend all course meetings unless noted. In addition to engaging the same materials as the undergraduate section of the course, graduate students will read additional materials and contribute meaningful reading analysis posts to the graduate student discussion threads (see course schedule below for weekly assignments).

Assessment

20% Participation (100 points)

Comprised of regular attendance at lecture and additional graduate student only meetings, active participation in a number of online reading discussion posts, timely submission of assignments, and completion of a self-evaluation at the end of the term.

10% Website Review (50 Points)

One approximately 3-4 page critical review of a history-based website for publication on digitalhistory.unl.edu

50% Tool Exercises (250 points, 50 points each)

Five new media tool exercises and critiques

20% Final Essay (100 points)

A four to five-page personal essay reflecting on your experiences this semester as an historian using new media tools

Final Grade Scale

A+	486-500	B-	400-419	D	320-334
A	470-485	C+	385-399	D-	300-319
A-	450-469	C	370-389	F	000-299
B+	435-449	C-	350-369		
B	420-434	D+	335-349		

Course Schedule & Assignments

Please complete the readings and assignments prior to each Tuesday meeting, as we will discuss the material as a group. I reserve the right to change the schedule as necessary and will give you notice when I do via group email and by posting announcements to the course Blackboard site.

Aug 25 & 27: Reinventing Knowledge, Part I

Assignments: Familiarize yourself with the course syllabus, complete the Student Information Sheet and bring it to class on Tuesday 8/25. Read the following and bring your reading reflection to class on Thursday 8/27.

- David A. Bell, “The Bookless Future”

Sep 1 & 3: Reinventing Knowledge, Part II

Assignment: Read McNeely and Wolverton, *Reinventing Knowledge* and post your reading reflection before class on Thursday 9/3.

Sep 8 & 10: A Short History Of Computing, Part I

Assignment: Read the following pieces and post your reading reflection before class on Thursday 9/10.

- Vannevar Bush, “As We May Think”
- Tim Berners-Lee, “Enquire Within upon Everything,” “Mind to Mind,” and “Weaving the Web”

Sep 15 & 17: A Short History Of Computing, Part II

Assignment: Read Ted Friedman, *Electric Dreams* and post your reading reflection before class on Thursday 9/17.

Sep 22 & 24: What Is Digital History? Part I

Assignment: Read the following pieces and post your reading reflection before class on Thursday 9/24.

- Michael O'Malley and Roy Rosenzweig, "Brave New World or Blind Alley?"
- Carl Smith, "Can You Do Serious History on the Web?"
- Edward L. Ayers, "The Pasts and Futures of Digital History"
- Daniel Cohen, "History and the Second Decade of the Web"
- Orville Vernon Burton, "American Digital History"
- *Journal of American History*, "Interchange: The Promise of Digital History"

Sep 29 & Oct 1: What Is Digital History? Part II

Assignment: Read the following pieces and post your reading reflection before class on Thursday 10/1.

- David J. Staley, "Visual Secondary Sources," chapter 3 of *Computers, Visualization, and History*
- Daniel Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, "Promises and Perils of Digital History," Introduction to *Digital History*
- Daniel Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, "Exploring the History Web," chapter 1 of *Digital History*

Oct 6 & 8: Project Planning

Assignment: Read the following pieces and post your reading reflection before class on Tuesday 10/6.

- Daniel Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, "Getting Started," chapter 2 of *Digital History*
- Carole L. Palmer, "Thematic Research Collections"

***No class meeting on Thursday 10/8 (professor at WHA conference)

Oct 13 & 15: Tool Exercise #1: Zotero

Assignment: Follow exercise instructions and post critical reflection before class on Thursday 10/15.

Oct 20 & 22: Tool Exercise #2: del.icio.us

***No class meeting on Tuesday 10/20 (Fall Semester Break)

Assignment: Follow exercise instructions and post critical reflection before class on Thursday 10/22.

Oct 27 & 29: Tool Exercise #3: Wikipedia

Assignment: Follow exercise instructions and post critical reflection before class on Thursday 10/29.

***This week the undergraduate students will present their digital history project topics to the class for feedback and discussion. Graduate students will participate in this process by offering constructive criticism and suggesting relevant secondary and primary sources.

Nov 3 & 5: Scanning & Digital Imaging

Assignment: Read the following pieces and post your reading reflection before class on Thursday 11/5.

- Daniel Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, “Becoming Digital,” chapter 3 of *Digital History*
- Paul Conway, *Digital Technology Made Simpler*
- Marilyn Deegan and Simon Tanner, “Conversion of Primary Sources”
- Daniel Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, “Owning the Past?” chapter 7 of *Digital History*

Nov 10 & 12: Design, Navigation & Writing for Digital Media

Assignment: Read the following pieces and post your reading reflection before class on Thursday 11/12.

- Daniel Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, “Designing for the History Web,” chapter 4 of *Digital History*
- Stephen Robertson, “Doing History in Hypertext”
- Marie-Laure Ryan, “Will New Media Produce New Narratives?”
- Excerpts from Andrew Bonime and Ken C. Pohlmann, *Writing for New Media*

Nov 17 & 19: Tool Exercise #4: XML Markup & TokenX Text Analysis Tool

Assignment: Follow exercise instructions and post critical reflection before class on Thursday 11/19.

Nov 24 & 26: The Future of the Digital Past

Assignment: Read the following pieces and post your reading reflection before class on Tuesday 11/24.

- Daniel Cohen & Roy Rosenzweig, “Preserving Digital History,” chapter 8 of *Digital History*
- Daniel V. Pitti, “Designing Sustainable Projects and Publications”

***No class meeting on Thursday 11/26 (Thanksgiving Break)

Dec 1 & 3: Tool Exercise #5: Google Earth

Assignment: Follow exercise instructions and post critical reflection before class on Thursday 12/3.

***This week the undergraduate students will present oral progress reports, explaining to the rest of us the nature of the digitized historical source materials and the scholarly interpretation they are presenting along with objects. Graduate students will offer constructive criticism.

Dec 8 & 10: Digital History Project Review

Assignment: Read the following pieces and post your reading reflection before class on Tuesday 12/8.

- “Web site reviews” published by the *Journal of American History*
- Gary J. Kornblith review of “The Valley of the Shadow”
- Kevin Derksen review of “The Differences Slavery Made”
- William G. Thomas “Writing A Digital History Journal Article from Scratch”

Assignment: A 3-4 page critical review of a history-based website due via email attachment before class on Thursday 12/10.

***Attend group presentations of completed projects to the UNL digital community (place TBA) Thursday 12/10.

Finals Week

Assignment: Final essay and self-evaluations due via email attachment by 5:00 p.m. on Friday 12/18.