

IML 346
Methods in Digital Research

Spring 2014
2 units
Wednesdays, 2:00 – 3:50 pm
SCI L104

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Office Hours TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Media-rich scholarship constitutes an entirely new area of academic production and brings with it a host of questions, tools, opportunities and challenges. What does sophisticated scholarly multimedia look like? Where do we find it? What are the rules that govern it? And why is it leading the transformation of contemporary academia?

Digital media also shifts the nature of the way scholarly work is conducted, opening up new ways of producing, collaborating and disseminating the knowledge. How does the advent of social networking change the boundaries of the university? How do we consider the work we do here in the classroom in the context of the larger culture?

This intermediate course offers you a laboratory within which to explore the parameters of digital scholarship in preparation for your own digital projects. After surveying new directions in digital work, including interactive scholarship, information visualization, and the merger of form and content as "design", the course will help you craft a set of research questions for a larger project, determine an appropriate media platform, and design an initial prototype or a media-rich proposal. We will explore several new media tools and applications, and you will leave the course with either a complete thesis proposal or a 'digital portfolio' that surveys your new media practices and suggests new avenues for research.

The primary focus of this course is the development of a strong, smart thesis proposal and prototype, along with appropriate media-based documentation designed to showcase the project. Class requirements also include an expanded familiarity with the rich history of emerging media-rich scholarship; collaborative engagement with other students in the course; peer review of project proposals; and facility with research and production tools. Students will leave the course with:

- The ability to critically assess and interpret media-rich scholarship.
- A research-based thesis proposal, or a digital portfolio of media-rich scholarship, and accompanying media-rich presentation/documentation.
- The ability to work with sophistication in media applications.
- The ability to use Web 2.0 tools for scholarly practice.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Assorted readings on course wiki

GRADING BREAKDOWN

POLICIES

Fair Use and Citation Guidelines

We assert that all of our course work is covered under the Doctrine of Fair Use. In order to make this claim, however, all projects will need to include academically appropriate citations in the form of a Works Cited section, which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The Works Cited is either included in the project or as a separate document, as appropriate to your project. The style we use is APA 5th edition and you may refer to these guidelines:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Emergency Plan

In the event that classes cannot convene at the university, all IML courses will continue via distance education. Specifically, the IML portal and course wikis will be deployed to enable faculty-student interaction (asynchronously and also via virtual office hours), complete syllabi, course readings and assignments, software tutorials, project assets, parameters and upload instructions, peer review processes and open source alternatives to professional-level software used in the IML curriculum. Further details are available on the course wiki.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

The following weekly schedule is subject to change. Please consult the course wiki for the most current information, assignments and due dates.

Week 1

Introduction

Week 2

What is Scholarly Multimedia?

Week 3

Design for Thought

Week 4

Vectors Review Due and Interview Techniques

Week 5

Information Visualization

Week 6

Interactivity and Narrative

Week 7

Tangible, Embedded and Multi-Touch Interaction

Week 8

Midterm Due

Week 9

Games for Action and Thought

Week 10

Structure and Method

Week 11

Design Strategy

Week 12

Paper Prototype I

Week 13

Paper Prototype II

Week 14

Rough draft of digital prototype due

Week 15

Prototype Workshop

FINAL EXAMINATION

Digital Prototype Presentation