



Digital History and the American City
History 201 - The Historian's Craft
Professor Paige Glotzer
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Location: Humanities 5245
Time: Wednesdays, 3:30-5:25 PM

Email: pglotzer@wisc.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1:00 PM-3:00 PM
Office: Humanities 4116
Mailbox: Humanities 4024

Description

Urban historians use digital tools to understand how the past shapes the places around them. In this course, students will gain hands-on experience with these technologies while learning about the central roles cities, large and small, have played in American politics, society, and culture. We will handle primary sources, learn to interpret data, and “read” the built environment itself. Using these skills, among others, students will complete a digital urban history project based on original research over the course of the semester and present it to their classmates. No programming knowledge is required.

Credits

This class is three (3) credits.

Credit Hour Policy Standards

The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week), dedicated online time, reading, writing, field trips, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

Instructional Mode

This class is conducted face-to-face.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate knowledge in a wide range of topics in U.S. urban history
- Discover a topic of interest to explore in-depth
- Design a research project with digital and written components
- Identify and utilize historical research methods
- Demonstrate proficiency in library resources for research, including through hands-on activities in library archives.
- Communicate historical concepts to the public
- Practice modes of discussing and writing about the past
- Develop speaking and listening skills through presentations, debates, and small group activities

Comm-B Requirement

This class fulfills Part B of the General Education Communication requirement. As such, there will be an emphasis on speaking, listening, writing, and research throughout the semester. All assignments are structured in accordance with fulfilling the goals of Comm-B.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/.

Office Hours

The purpose of office hours is to provide a regular time where you can talk about any topic related to class. This may include questions about the reading or assignments, concerns about your grades, or chatting about a topic that sparked your interest during lecture. No appointment is necessary. I can also help with techniques for better succeeding in class. For example, do not be embarrassed if you would like tips for how to take notes or study for an exam.

Accessibility and Accommodations

I am committed to creating a classroom where everyone can feel welcomed, included, and fully able to learn. If you have or think you may have a disability (e.g. mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical) I encourage you to speak with me directly and contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center to ensure your needs are being met. Possible things to consider include, but are not limited to:

Can you see and hear the professor and fellow classmates? Can you easily enter, leave, sit and stand with the current classroom seating arrangements? Are you able to take notes in a way that helps you learn? Do you need assistance with writing, typing, or note-taking? Can you focus? Has your ability to focus changed? Do you need extra time on exams? Would you benefit from assistive technology?

The McBurney Disability Resource Center
Phone: (608) 263-2741 Address: 702 W. Johnson Street, Suite 2104
Email: mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>

The History Lab

The History Lab is a resource center where experts (PhD students) will assist you with your history papers. No matter your stage in the writing process—choosing a topic, conducting research, composing a thesis, outlining your argument, revising your drafts—the History Lab staff can help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Drop by Humanities 4255 or schedule a one-on-one consultation at <http://go.wisc.edu/hlab>

Grades:

Attendance and Participation 15%

Blog Post 10%

Group Videos 15%

Group Video Presentations 5%

Digital Project 15%

Digital Project Presentation 5%

Short Writing Assignments 10%

8-10 Page Essay 25%

Blog and Video Assignments:

Blog Post - Each week one student will email Professor Glotzer a 500-word blog post on a topic related to urban or digital history. Assume your audience is the general public.

Videos – You will work in pairs to produce a video that teaches a topic from class to the general public. Videos must be at least five minutes in duration and can be done in any style you want. You can use graphics, props, and animation, to name a few examples. The tone can be humorous or serious, but it must be professional and educational. Pairs will present the video in class at the end of the semester. Videos will be accompanied by a short write-up and explaining your creative process. Videos can be shot on a phone or other equipment, but must look presentable to the public. It is very important for each group member to put an equal amount of effort. Members of the group both receive the same grade, however Professor Glotzer reserves the right to award different grades to group members if effort is unequal.

Short Writing Assignments

Madison Question Practice/Google Maps 1 page

Practice Database Search Writeup 1 page

Essay Topic Selection and Bibliography 1 page

Secondary Source Analysis 2-3 pages

Digital Project Description 1-2 pages

Essay

You will hand in one 8-10-page essay on December 15, after the end of the semester. We will spend the semester building this essay gradually. Note the dates below for when essay components are due. Essay components *not* graded for content, but will be penalized if handed in late.

Digital Project and Essay Process Presentation

You will complete a companion to your essay as a web page hosted by Google Sites. At the end of this semester you will present your project to the class and write up the process by which you created it. Questions to consider include: why did some content lend itself better to the web page than to the essay? How do the essay and web page complement each other?

Required Textbooks – There are no required textbooks for this class.

Extra credit opportunity: Flex your historian muscles by tweeting about the class, readings, relevant links and media. Use the hashtag #UWhist201. Each tweet can add .3 points to your final grade. There is a five-tweet cap per student. Simple retweets do not count. You must add your own voice.

Conferences

There is no class the week of Thanksgiving. Instead, you will each meet individually with Professor Glotzer on the Saturday-Tuesday beforehand. A sign-up sheet will be circulated in class at the beginning of the semester. The weekend is being offered to accommodate everyone who might have family and travel needs. Plan Thanksgiving travel accordingly. These conferences are mandatory.

Meeting Outside the Usual Classroom

On these dates class will be held at alternate locations. Meet there here at 3:30.

September 26 – Wisconsin Historical Society, 816 State Street, Fourth Floor

October 24 – Science Hall, Room 188.

November 7 – Science Hall, Room 188

Due Dates – Below is a list of due dates for assignments and essay components. If you have concerns about handing in an assignment on time, it is best to contact Professor Glotzer *before* the due date via email, in class, or during office hours. It is understood that unforeseen circumstances occur.

September 12 – Madison Question Practice/Google Maps

September 26 – Practice Database Search Writeup

October 3 – Essay Topic Selection and Bibliography

October 17 – Secondary Source Analysis

October 31 – Essay Introduction, which includes thesis and scholarly contribution.

November 7 – Digital Project Description

November 14 – Essay draft due in Class

November 16 – Original and revised drafts due in Professor Glotzer's mailbox

December 5 – Digital Projects

December 12 – Videos

December 15 – Final Essays

Schedule

Readings, assignment description, weekly aims, due dates.

Weeks 1

September 5

Subject Content: Introduction and Overview

Methods Content: Asking questions and reading landscape.

Week 2

September 12

Subject Content: Public Space and Public Presence

Methods Content: Primary sources, questions. Evidence interpretation

Read:

- Mary P. Ryan, “Democracy Rising: The Monuments of Baltimore, 1809-1842,” *Journal of Urban History* Vol. 36 No. 2 (2010):127-150.
- Michel Rolph-Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995,) 1-30.

Assignment Due: Madison Question Practice/Google Maps

Week 3

September 19

Subject Content: Degrees of Freedom

Methods Content: Searching for sources: databases and digital tools

Read:

- Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009,) 45-74, 100-131
- Library Guide on Conducting Historical Research

Week 4

September 26

Methods Content: Archival research – Meet at the Wisconsin Historical Society Archives, 816 State Street, 4th Floor

Assignment Due: Practice database search. Select a database of interest we have discussed. Write up how you performed a search, tweaked that search in two ways, and how the results changed.

Week 5

October 3

Subject Content: Work and Wealth

Methods Content: Evaluating secondary sources. Anatomy of an article. More practice questions. Evidence interpretation. Basics of argumentation.

Read:

- Carl Smith, *Urban Disorder and the Shape of Belief: The Great Fire, The Haymarket Bomb, and the Model Town of Pullman* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007.) 101-126
- Sven Beckert, *The Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850-1896* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001,) 1-14, 98-107, 196-204

Assignment Due: Select a topic, list two archives and describe how the contents of the archive are relevant to your topic. Write a bibliography with three scholarly sources

Week 6

October 10

Subject Content: Progressive Era and City Planning

Methods Content: Constructing narrative, summary, scholarly interventions

Read:

- Carl Smith, *The Plan of Chicago: Daniel Burnham and the Remaking of the American City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006,) 71-110
- Martin Melosi, *The Sanitary City: Urban Infrastructure in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000,) 149-174

Week 7

October 17

Subject Content: Movement and Migration

Methods Content: Anatomy of a Digital Projects

Read:

- Davarian Baldwin, *Chicago's New Negroes: Modernity, The Great Black Migration, and Urban Life* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007,) 21-52
- Nayan Shah, *Contagious Divides: Epidemics and Race in San Francisco's Chinatown* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001,) 17-44.

Assignment Due: Secondary Source analysis. Summarize the arguments of those three scholarly sources. What is each claiming to be their intervention in scholarship? What do you think is missing that you want to make your central question? Explain how this question would be its own unique intervention.

Week 8

October 24

Methods Content: GIS workshop. Meet at Science Hall Room 188.

Read:

- The Five Principles of Effective Storytelling with Digital Projects
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/en/five-principles/>

Week 9

October 31

Subject Content: Suburbs and Prosperity

Methods Content: Intro to Google Sites

Read:

- Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985,) 190-218
- Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1999,) 143-162.

Essay Component Due: Essay introduction with your thesis bolded. Introductions should include a clear thesis statement about the argument. They should also include a clear statement about how the argument is a contribution to scholarship. Build this from your secondary source analysis.

Week 10

November 7

Subject Content: The Urban Crisis

Methods Content: Open Lab Time. Meet at Science Hall Room 188.

Read:

- Kim Phillips-Fein, *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2017,) Introduction.
- Louis Hyman, "Ending Discrimination, Legitimizing Debt: The Political Economy of Race, Gender, and Credit Access in the 1960s and 1970s." *Enterprise and Society* Vol. 12 No.1 (March, 2010): 200-232.

Assignment: Write a one paragraph description of your plans for your digital project. What content will you include? What will it look like? What do you want your audience to learn?

Week 11

November 14

Subject Content: Utopias and Dystopias

Methods Content: Draft Workshop

Read:

- Brentin Mock "In Search of the 'Just City'" *City Lab*, June 1, 2018
<https://www.citylab.com/equity/2018/06/in-search-of-the-just-city/561296/>

Watch:

- *Escape from New York* (1981)

Essay Component Due: Essay draft for workshop

Friday, November 16:

Essay Component Due: Original Draft and Revised Essay Draft due to Professor Glotzer. Place in mailbox Humanities 4024. Mailboxes are located on the fourth floor.

Saturday-Tuesday, November 17-20

Individual Conferences

Week 12

November 21 - No class.

Week 13

November 28

Subject Content: Gentrification

Methods Content: Podcasts with guest speaker, Dr. Amira Rose Davis

Read:

- Marisela Gomez, *Race, Class, Power, and Organizing in East Baltimore: Rebuilding Abandoned Communities* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2013,) 167-194.
- Joe Cortwright, "In Defense of Gentrification," *The Atlantic* October 31, 2015
<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/10/in-defense-of-gentrification/413425/>

Listen:

- Any episode of the sports history podcast *Burn it All Down*
<https://burnitalldownpod.com/>

Week 14

December 5

Methods Content: Digital Project Presentation

Assignments Due: Digital projects with accompanying write-up of the process of creating the project and writing the essay. Student participation graded on asking at least one question during their classmates' presentations.

Week 15

December 12

Subject: Concluding Discussion

Methods Content: Video Presentations

Assignments Due: Videos with accompanying write-up of the process of creating them. Student participation graded on asking at least one question during their classmates' presentations.

December 15 – Final essay due. (Submit with a copy of revised draft)