![University of Wisconsin-Madison logo]

WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

HIST 401 Public History Workshop (3 Credits)

Digital History and the Black Atlantic

University of Wisconsin-Madison
Department of History, Spring 2022

Instructor: Dr. Justine Walden
Email: jwalden@wisc.edu
Modality: In Person
Time: Thursday, 3:30-5:25pm
Location: 2251 Mosse Humanities
Office Hours: By appointment and online (Fridays and eves are best)

Course Description and Prerequisites

This course introduces students to the practice of public history. Public historians ground their work in rigorous, academic research with the goal of presenting history in a collaborative and publicly focused manner. Prerequisites: History 201, two courses in History or History of Science. Course Level: Advanced; Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S.

What is digital history? What is the Black Atlantic? How do we combine these two forms of intellectual inquiry? In this course, we will ask and answer these questions through an exploration of historical concepts and digital tools. There are no course prerequisites other than curiosity and a willingness to read, learn, discuss, tinker with spreadsheets, conduct research, and collaborate with your peers.

Taking as our point of departure Paul Gilroy's observation that the diaspora set in motion by the Transatlantic slave trade presented an alternate narrative to the story of EuroAmerican progress, we will consider that claim through a variety of thematic lenses, examining the people, histories, frameworks, and migrations that knit together Europe, Atlantic Africa, and the Americas across four centuries.

Our course will survey the migrations and identities that shaped the Atlantic during the period of early modernity through the modern period. We will consider the rise of plantation economies and slave societies in places like Brazil and the Caribbean. Reading seminal works of Atlantic and diasporic history, we will ruminate on how the dynamics of forced migration and displacement underwrote cultural and political developments across the greater Atlantic. We will look at ways in which African culture survived and continued in the New World, and will reflect on problems of historical analysis and representation.

Our course will follow two tracks simultaneously: the exploration of digital history and an exploration of the space referred to as the Black Atlantic. Thus while learning about Transatlantic migrations, you will learn key methods and approaches in how to apply digital methods in historical analysis. As in any history course, you will be expected, to ask, answer, and engage in historical questions, and you will be exposed to diverse resources, in particular primary sources, that are used to create cogent and relevant history.

Questions we will consider in this course will include:

- How does one research and write history on the basis of primary and secondary sources? What are the requirements, methods, and limits of historical analysis?
- What conceptual themes, concepts, and approaches inform Atlantic, Colonial, and Diasporic History (e.g., Early Modern Global History, Transnational and Connected History, Gender and Family History, Social and Micro-History)?
- How were New World slave societies settled and structured? How did the actors within them (i.e., indigenous people/missionaries/women/ plantation owners/slaves) interact with each other?
- How did Catholicism, European culture, and African culture shape new world colonies? What social structures did Europeans bring with them and which did they create anew? Which aspects of African culture arrived at and were reshaped in New World settings ?
- How were racial ideologies constructed and implemented in early modern Atlantic slave societies?
- How do the histories of enslavement and colonization continue to inform Atlantic societies and the lives of those of African descent today?

Course Objectives

In this course, you will learn about national, political, economic, intellectual and religious factors relating to the Black Atlantic and about key agents, actors and loci (geographies) of diasporic development. You will learn about the beginnings and progress of the Transatlantic slave trade, ways in which black Africans responded to enslavement and resisted enslavement, and theories about the transmission of African religion and culture throughout the Atlantic.

You will build two sets of skills, namely those of historical analysis and writing—including the ability to ask historical questions, critically analyze primary and secondary sources, develop a persuasive argument, conduct research on primary sources, and present your findings in written, verbal, and online format—and also the ability to manipulate digital formats and utilize digital methods to process information. All of these skills, whether technical-digital or of the more traditional humanities-history variety, will behoove you in realms far beyond the classroom, for the ability to parse arguments, read sources closely and critically, observe key points of interest, articulate your thoughts and observations, organize and visualize information using digital tools, and develop and present arguments accurately and persuasively whether orally or in writing are all skills that attend the development of mature and productive human beings everywhere.

Upon completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Define and discuss the geographic, historical, and theoretical parameters of the Atlantic World and the Black Atlantic.
- Summarize debates about Africa and Atlantic diasporas in the West.
- Understand how gender intersected with black Atlantic labor and cultural production
- Compare, contrast, and explain various intellectual, political, and social movements in the Black Atlantic world
- Understand the role of "race" and ethnicity in shaping the Black Atlantic World.
- Explain the dynamics of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and its ongoing cultural impacts.

You will also

- Enlarge your conceptual and technical vocabulary
- Learn how to conduct research using both primary and secondary materials on key thematic topics in Black Atlantic history
- Learn how to research and write a history paper using primary materials
- Develop a digital project that makes your academic research intelligible to the public

Course Structure and Rhythm

Each week, you must arrive in class having read, digested, and reflected upon the assigned primary and secondary readings. We will begin each class attending to 'housekeeping', or administrative matters. We will then discuss the readings; in particular their main themes and arguments; what they tell us about the Black Atlantic; the specific ways in which our sources use and present evidence; and how we might build or advance arguments on their basis. After this roughly 45-minute discussion of course readings, we will have a lecture upon that week's themes. Most weeks, you will have a tutorial introducing you to a digital skill. One some weeks, the order of these segments will be slightly different. We will also devote some course time to discussing how to conduct historical research and write a historical research paper, how to build a digital project, how to develop a cogent narrative using text and images, and how to conduct image research. We will also devote some course time to 'lab work' where you work on technical skills, to 'workshopping' projects and critiquing each other's work.

Weekly Reading Posts

Every week, so as to prepare you for our course discussion, you will submit a 500-word reflection on the key themes in that week's readings in Canvas. Depending on that week's themes, you may be assigned a guiding question. These submissions will be assessed on a check, check-plus or check-minus scale. However it is worth reading carefully, taking notes on the readings, and crafting reflective and thoughtful responses for several reasons: a) this is a good way to learn, b), the material covered in the readings will alert you to research themes and topics, c) reading materials can be used as fodder for your research projects, and d) your participation in discussions forms part of your participation grade, which in turn forms a large component of your overall course grade.

Assessment and Grade Breakdown

Final course grades are broken down as follows:

Academic Paper draft 1 (8 pages)	10%
Final Academic Paper	20%
Oral Presentation (20 min)	15%
Digital Project (StoryMap)	25%
Course participation and homework	30%*

Course participation and homework consists of a combination of attendance; in-class discussion—including responding to the comments of fellow students and the depth of your engagement with the material—weekly written responses, and your digital homework assignments.

Assignments and How to Succeed in this Course

To succeed in this course, you will need to

- Complete weekly readings, write weekly discussion posts; actively discuss and debate readings in class
- Conduct substantive research on a primary source or sources to gain historical insight into a topic relevant to this course
- On the basis of this research, develop a cogent and coherent academic paper with an identifiable argument
- Using your academic research paper, create an online project
- Complete a few short assignments using specific digital methods
- Collect and utilize images appropriately in your online project
- Provide appropriate citations for images
- Provide an appropriate research bibliography which references at least six officially published sources (i.e., as against being website links, these are sources which appear in WorldCat as officially published sources).

Larger Assignments

You will receive detailed guidelines for all longer assignments, including your oral presentation and research project. In general, the longer assignment will consist of developing an argument based upon a primary historical source or document and developing a way to represent that research online. This will most likely be in StoryMap format. You are free to use other formats and modalities, though these should be cleared with me prior to embarking. I will supply you an array of primary and secondary documents from which you can draw to craft your research. Successful execution of the longer research project will consist of using these materials to research a topic of your own devising which must be approved by me in advance. Your project must develop a cogent and elegant argument that engages with course themes.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Papers are due no later than 5 pm on their due date. It is possible to request an extension *four days before* a particular assignment is due. However you cannot request extensions three, two, or a single day before a project is due. For each day an assignment is late, it will lose third of a letter grade. This means that you **must** structure your time to successfully complete assignments by date they are due.

Credit Hours, Work Expectations

This is a 3-credit course, meaning that you are expected to engage in the course's primary learning activities for a minimum of 135 hours. This translates to about 9 hours per week. Thus

in addition to the 115-minutes (or almost 2 hours) of weekly meeting, you can expect to devote an additional 7 hours to other course activities such as reading, writing, completing the short assignments and researching, writing, and designing the presentation of your longer assignment.

Course credit standards are met through a total of 135 hours of student engagement with course learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit). Students and instructor interact regularly and substantively through weekly course meetings [Th 3:30-5:25] which include lectures, discussion of readings and course content, lab tutorials, and critiques, as described in this syllabus.

Attendance and Study Groups

Course attendance is mandatory. You may miss class up to two times without an excuse and without it directly affecting your grade. Beyond these two absences, you must provide documentation for missed class, whether for illness, emergency, or religious holidays. If you will miss a seminar for religious reasons, please clear this with myself in advance. For the university's religious observance policy, consult the Academic Calendar at https://secfac.wisc.edu/academic-calendar/.

You will be randomly assigned to peer groups of roughly four people each. If you must be absent for a course meeting, you can turn to this group of fellow students to reconstitute missed work. This means that you should consult among yourselves and develop strategies to ensure that all or at the very least some of you are taking good notes (and at bare minimum, rotate this responsibility between yourselves weekly) so that there is always a safety net of assistance should one or more or you be indisposed.

Additional Prerequisites

A computer or access to one; a stable internet connection or access to one; a willingness to learn, experiment, and make mistakes; curiosity, creativity, and perseverance. An ability to read, learn and track down things on the internet. The willingness to engage in multiple drafts so as to craft a cogent research project. The ability to speak French, Spanish, Portuguese or Italian is a definite plus, as this will enable you to locate an original, primary historical document and use it as the basis for your project.

Writing Resources

Even though this is a course about digital history, it is still about history, and therefore there are still writing requirements. A resource center specific to the History Department in which experts (current Ph.D. students) are trained to help you with your research papers is the History Lab. Regardless of what stage your work is in—whether you are deciding on a topic, formulating a thesis, outlining or sharpening your argument, or revising a draft –the staff at the History Lab

will work with you to improve as a writer. To schedule an individual consultation, visit http://go.wisc.edu/hlab.

Academic Integrity

University policies on academic integrity are outlined here https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/. We will discuss   some questions that relate to academic integrity in class, such as correct citation and how to paraphrase an argument. Still, you must still inform yourself as to what constitutes plagiarism and when and how to cite works both visual and verbal. The rules of thumb for properly citing, however, are relatively straightforward. First, when in doubt, cite. Second, you must cite not only specific language, but ideas which you rely upon. Finally third, when you paraphrase an idea, you must change the language.

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation at 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 are commited to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. UW-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background.

Disability Accommodations

If you need disability accommodations in this course, please contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center as soon as possible in order to register. The University's policy on disabilities is that it "supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility." Therefore, students should inform me of any needs for instructional accommodations as soon as possible or by the end of the third week of the semester, so that we can collaborate with McBurney to meet these needs. All disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Emails and Communication

In most cases, you can expect email responses from me within a few hours of receipt. However, given my competing teaching demands, there are times when email responses will arrive with greater delays. Such delays will rarely, if ever, exceed 24 hours from receipt of your initial email

Mental Health and Wellness

College is stressful no matter what. During Covid, stressors have multiplied. If your academic or personal life feel overwhelming or unmanageable, know that there are always people to turn to, strategies for coping, and institutional resources to help you. No matter how strong, smart, competent, independent and self-reliant you are, everyone at some point or another faces periods of struggle or crisis in which they need extra emotional support, assistance in making sense of their situation, or help sorting out and managing life. There is no shame seeking out extra help or guidance in times of crisis, and I hope you will think of me as a resource to turn to if you feel the need of such help or assistance. I am not a licensed professional psychiatrist, but I am a good sounding board and may be able to help fast-track you to the type of support you need. In general, Campus Mental Health offers various services: individual and group counseling, psychiatry for prescribing and managing medications, and a round-the-clock hotline manned by someone to speak with if you feel you are in serious crisis. That number is: 608-265-5600 (option 9)

Use of Recorded Lectures and Course Notes

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are the intellectual property of UW-Madison. This means that students can use the materials and recordings of this course for personal use as related to class participation and can take notes solely for personal use, they cannot record lectures, copy or distribute lecture materials or recordings outside of class (including posting online or selling to commercial entities), or provide or sell course notes. Exceptions to this policy may be made in cases of disability and approved accommodation requiring recording and in cases of appointed McBurney Disability Center notetakers. Any use of course materials requires express written permission from instructor and unauthorized use of such materials constitutes copyright infringement. University policies on this matter can be found in UWS Chapters 14 and 17 (on student academic and non-academic misconduct).

Course Evaluations

UW-Madison uses a digital course evaluation survey tool. You will receive an email two weeks before semester's end letting you know that evaluations are available and giving you a link to log in and complete them. Evaluations are anonymous and can be completed in just a few minutes. Your feedback is important to me, so I strongly encourage you to complete these evaluations.

Privacy Rights

For university policies on privacy rights, view **information about FERPA here.**

Digital Devices

You are free to use a laptop or tablet to take notes upon lectures. However if I observe that too many of you are absorbed in your screens during class, I may ask that all digital devices be put away out of sight. In relation to the readings we will discuss, you are expected to arrive in class each week **with a printed out and marked- up a hard copy of that week's text**. Referring to these texts will form the basis of classroom discussion, and reading and marking up text is part of learning how to conduct analysis. Again, you are expected to print out weekly readings, to read and underline or annotate them, and to bring them to class.

Weekly Themes, Readings, Due Dates

DIGITAL HISTORY AND THE BLACK ATLANTIC

1   **27-Jan**   **Course Introduction, Themes; Theoretical Background**
                                     Heart of Blackness (Film)

                                     (Watch remainder of film for homework)

2   **3-Feb**   **Origins of the Transatlantic Slave Trade; Infographics**

Thornton, John. "The Portuguese in Africa", in Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto, Ed. *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400-1800* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 138-160

Burnard, Trevor. "The Atlantic Slave Trade". *The Routledge History of Slavery*, Ed. Gad Heuman, and Trevor Burnard, Taylor & Francis Group, 2010, pp. 80-97.

Primary sources on the Transatlantic Slave Trade, pp. 1-7*

3   **10-Feb**   **VIA ZOOM -How and Why of the Slave Trade; Excel**

Thornton, John. "Africans and Afro-Americans in the Atlantic World: Life and Labor", in *Africa and Africans in the making of the Atlantic world, 1400-1800*. Cambridge University Press 1998, Ch 6.

Recommended:

Mintz, Steven, Ed. *African American voices: a documentary reader, 1619-1877*. Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, pp. 48-50.

4   **17-Feb**   **Atlantic Creoles; Digital Mapping (ArcGIS Online)**

Berlin, Ira. "From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America." *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (Apr, 1996), pp. 251-288.

Mahoney, F. "Mulattoes of Gambia", *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana* , Vol. VIII, 1965.

Recommended:

Smallwood, Stephanie. *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009. Chs 1-4.

5   **24-Feb**   **Lusophone Atlantic; Developing Research Papers and Presentations**

Schwartz, Stuart. *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550 - 1835* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Ferreira, Roquinaldo. *Cross-cultural exchange in the Atlantic world: Angola and Brazil during the era of the slave trade*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Ch. 1

6   **3-Mar**   **African Traditional Religion; ESRI Storymaps**

Thompson, Robert Farris. *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy*. New York: Random House US, 2010, Chs. 1 and 2 (ca. 150 pp)

Recommended:

Jansen, John and Wyatt MacGaffrey, Ed. *An anthology of Kongo religion primary texts from Lower Zaïre*. Lawrence, Kan., 1974. (Selections)*

7   **10-Mar**   **African Religion in Diaspora; ESRI Storymaps 2**

Kiddy, Elizabeth. *Blacks of the Rosary: Memory and History in Minas Gerais, Braz*il. Penn State University Press, [2005], Ch. 1

Mulvey, Patricia, "Black Brothers and Sisters: Membership in the Black Lay Brotherhoods of Colonial Brazil", *Luso-Brazilian Review*, Vol 17, No. 2 (1980): 253-279.

DeWulf, Jeroen. "Black Brotherhoods in North America: Afro-Iberian and West-Central African Influences". *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol 15/3, 19-38

8   **17 - Mar-SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS – SPREAD YOUR WINGS**

9   **24-Mar**   **Women, Gender and Slavery; Image Research**

Morgan, Jennifer. *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*. University of Penn Press, 2004, Ch. 1 and 2

Prince, Mary. The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave, Related by Herself...London: Westley, 1831.*

Image-Gathering, Citing, Optimization; Thesis Workshopping

10   **31-Mar**   **VIA ZOOM - Resistance and Revolt; Digital Timelines**

Geggus, David. "The Haitian Revolution", Franklin Knight and Colin Palmer, *The Modern Caribbean* (University of North Carolina Press, 1989), pp. 21-50

Gomez, Michael. *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South*. University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

PAPER PROPOSAL DUE

11	7-Apr	**The British Caribbean; Topic Modeling**

Ligon, Richard. *A true & exact history of the island of Barbados*. London: Peter Parker and Thomas Guy. 1673 [1657]*

Slave codes from Barbados and Jamaica*

PAPER BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

11	14-Apr	**North America, Freedom Narratives and Network Diagrams**

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa the African. Oxford: Heinemann, 1996 (1745)*

PAPER ROUGH DRAFT DUE

12	21-Apr	**Antislavery**

Brown, Christopher. "The Abolition of the Slave Trade", in Burnard and Heuman.

Garrigus, John. "Free Coloureds", in Burnard and Heuman

PEER REVIEWS DUE (BEFORE CLASS)

13	28-Apr	**Present and Critique Storymap Projects**

Present projects; give and receive critiques

14	5-May	**Final Meeting: Course Wrap-Up**

Final Project Due; Edits and Critiques Implemented