





Master of Arts Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS) 623

Introduction to Trends in New Media: Digital Humanities (Revision 2)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode:

Grouped study 

Credits:

3

Area of study:

Arts

Prerequisites:

None

Precluded:

None

Faculty:

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences 

Notes:

Students in Group Study courses are advised that this syllabus may vary in key details in each instance of the course. Always refer to the course site for the most up-to-date details on texts, assignment structure, and grading.

Overview

MAIS 623: Introduction to Trends in New Media: Digital Humanities explores theoretical approaches to the important social transformations taking place in connection with digital technologies. Digital Humanities is an emergent academic field that studies the tensions and issues arising from new ways we express ourselves and how we make sense of human experience using digital networks, computational abilities, and data. The influx of digital resources (including images, social media, text, video and audio streaming, digital analytics, visualization of data, and gaming) are changing the ways we think about production, circulation, and consumption. In response, this course examines the network society and how algorithms “think,” i.e., the growing importance of AI (artificial intelligence) and its potentials, limitations, and algorithmic ethics. It addresses ways networks, databases, open archives, and digital tools are changing research methods across platforms. Students will then consider how digital technologies are shaping approaches to education and pedagogy, information design, and the growing importance of gamification. By the end of the course, students will be familiar with key issues arising in the digital humanities and, more broadly, ethical issues and epistemic tensions facing society as a whole in the wake of emerging new media technologies and practices.

Outline

MAIS 623 is organized into 13 units, based on theoretical and methodological approaches to new media, especially as they apply to the emergent field of Digital Humanities.

- Unit 1: What Is Digital Humanities?
- Unit 2: Introduction to the Internet
- Unit 3: Making Sense of Digital Networks
- Unit 4: What are Digital Ethics?
- Unit 5: Critical Approaches in the Digital Humanities
- Unit 6: Encountering the Computational “Other” – Algorithms, AI, and the Humanities
- Unit 7: Reading Week

- Unit 8: Digital Pedagogies
- Unit 9: Thinking with Machines – The Dark Side
- Unit 10: Thinking with Machines – Computational Methods, Digital Design, & Research Through Design (RtD) in the Digital Humanities
- Unit 11: Electronic Research Inside and Outside the Library System
- Unit 12: Attention, Gamification, and New Digital Literacies
- Unit 13: The Future of Digital Humanities

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- situate digital humanities in historical context with traditional humanities scholarship.
- deepen your understanding of ethical implications of computational analysis.
- help you to understand epistemic underpinnings of digital humanities research, including network societies, algorithmic thinking, and digital design.
- explore pros and cons of emerging digital cultures from a humanities perspective.
- explore the important dynamics of gamification in knowledge production.
- identify emerging pedagogical issues and debates in new digital literacies.

Evaluation

The following table summarizes the evaluation activities and the credit weights associated with them:

Activity	Weight
Weekly Participation	15%
Assignment 1 – Short Essay	15%

Activity	Weight
Assignment 2 – Digital Analysis	25%
Assignment 3 – Final Research Paper	45%
Total	100%

Materials

Mitchell, W., & Hansen, M. (Eds.). (2010). *Critical terms for media studies*.





Chicago: Chicago UP.  (Print)

Lanier, J. (2010). *You are not a gadget: A manifesto*. New York: Knopf.  (Print)

Other Resources

All other learning resources will be available online.

Important links

- › [Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies](#) 
- › [Focus Areas](#) 
- › [Courses](#) 
- › [Fees and Funding](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Updated September 12, 2024

View **previous revision** 
