

DIGITAL GEO-HUMANITIES

Geography 4970 / 5970

DETAILS

Professor Nicholas Bauch

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Office: 534 Sarkeys tower

Office hours: T&Th 12:30-1:30, and by appointment

Class meets: T&Th 1:30-2:45 / 543 Sarkeys tower [0207 Sarkeys is assigned classroom]

DESCRIPTION

This is a project and discussion-based class—part studio, part seminar—in which students learn how to identify, critique, and make works in the *digital geo-humanities*. Our class is framed around a seemingly simple, yet surprisingly complex paradox. On the one hand, digital representations of space (e.g. online maps) have grown to document and reveal a large number of new geographies. And yet on the other hand, the intellectual foundation for thinking about new spaces eschews the very idea of utilizing a grid-picture system. So the paradox is: how can the latitude/longitude system of thinking spatially be the tool that reveals all kinds of new spaces? We need new types of visual geographies that do not rely on the data-to-grid model of representing and thinking through space.

Upon successful review, students' culminating projects will be exhibited at The Showroom, a satellite site of the Oklahoma Contemporary Art Center in Oklahoma City from May to July, 2018. This is a special opportunity, as our class was specifically commissioned by the museum to do this work as part of a growing partnership between them and the University of Oklahoma's Geo-Humanities program. The theme of our exhibit centers on visualizing alternative types of spaces indicative of the imaginative and evocative language found in human geography. As such, this class is as much a geography class as it is a studio in visual art.

To best prepare you to exhibit your finest work (whether you are novice or experienced), the course triangulates three fields of scholarship with which you must become familiar. They are: **1) human geography, 2) digital humanities, and 3) visual arts and design**. Throughout the course we will study examples of how these fields intersect with one another in various ways (e.g. web-based cartography, and analog geographical art). This will prepare you to comprehend the rise of the "Geo-Humanities" in the past five-to-ten years, and will then help you understand what exactly the *digital geo-humanities* can uniquely contribute to longstanding conversations about human geography's research themes, spatial representation, and digital technologies.

Remember this class is a focus on project design. Imagine what you want first, then seek out the digital tools to make it happen. Let the tools guide you. The "digital" in this course is broadly construed, suggesting that the digital technologies you use, and how you use them to meet the aims of your project, is flexible. As a corollary, this means that the course is not about technical training at its root. Students are expected to lean on whatever digital technology skills they already have, and are expected to use those existing skills to build new ones through self-guided tutorials and consultation with the University's Digital Scholarship Lab. As individual

projects develop, the professor and other students will suggest digital tools, and some class time is devoted to learning the existence and capabilities of specific technologies.

ASSESSMENT

- 10% -- Logging hours in the studio
- 10% -- Attendance & participation
- 15% -- 3 Digital project reviews (5% each)
- 30% -- 3 small midterm projects (10% each)
- 20% -- 4 final project benchmark assignments (5% each)
- 15% -- Final project in museum

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 70-79
- D = 60-69
- F = 59 and below

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Organize and lead a Geo-Humanities Tea Hour. Can be anything related to GH, in any format or medium. Can invite guests, formal, informal, or can be you doing a reading aloud with discussion. Can be your own work in another discipline, or someone else's work that you're curious about. The key is that it has to be relevant to concerns in GH. Must be an afternoon (between noon and 4:00pm), and not during our class time. This is graded on a pass/fail basis, and it must be successfully completed to pass the class.

SCHEDULE

Week 1

Tues Jan 16

Introductions

Thurs Jan 18

Read before class: Wood, Denis. 1987. "Pleasure in the Idea: The atlas as narrative form."

Cartographica 24 (1):24-46.

Week 2

Tues Jan 23

- Visit from Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center curator Jennifer Scanlon
- Review tools <http://dirtdirectory.org/>

Thurs Jan 25

Lefebvre, Henri. 1991 [1974]. *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell.

Project review #1 due

Week 3

Tues Jan 30

Project 1 due -- critique in class

Thurs Feb 1

Lopez, Barry. 2000. "The Mappist." In *Light Action in the Caribbean*. New York: Vintage Books.
Guldi, Jo. *What is the Spatial turn?* <http://spatial.scholarslab.org/spatial-turn/what-is-the-spatial-turn/>

Week 4

Tues Feb 6

Final benchmark #1 – critiques in class

Thurs Feb 8

Murdoch, Jonathan. 2006. *Post-Structuralist Geography: A guide to relational space*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Week 5

Tues Feb 13

Review #2 due – discuss in class

Thurs Feb 15

* Premiere tutorial *

McNiff, Shaun. 2013. *Art as Research: Opportunities and challenges*. Bristol, U.K.: Intellect.

Week 6

Tues Feb 20

Class cancelled – ice storm

Thurs Feb 22

Class cancelled – ice storm

Week 7

Tues Feb 27

Project 2 due: video of Relational Space – critique in class

Thurs Mar 1

Cooper, Muriel. 2016 [1989]. "Computers and Design." In *Digital Design Theory: Readings from the field*, edited by Helen Armstrong, 64-71. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
Biemann, Ursula. 2011. "Counter-Geographies in the Sahara." In *Geohumanities: Art, history, text at the edge of place*, edited by Michael Dear, Jim Ketchum, Sarah Luria and Douglas Richardson, 162-172. New York: Routledge.

Week 8

Tues Mar 6

Curnow, Wytan. 1999. "Mapping and the Expanded Field of Contemporary Art." In *Mappings*, edited by Denis E. Cosgrove, 253-268. London: Reaktion Books.

Storr, Robert. 1994. *Mapping*. New York: Museum of Modern Art.

Thurs Mar 8

Final benchmark #2 – critique in class

Week 9

Tues Mar 13

Work on project #3 in class

Thurs Mar 15

Project 3 due – critique in class

**** SPRING BREAK – March 17-25 ****

Week 10

Tues Mar 27

Hawkins, Harriet. 2014. *For Creative Geographies: Geography, visual arts and the making of worlds*. New York: Routledge.

Thurs Mar 29

Final benchmark #3 – Guest critic Jennifer Scanlon from Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center

Week 11

Tues Apr 3

Caine, Ian. 2017. "Inhabiting the Line: Towards a Digital Chronology Of Suburban Expansion for San Antonio, Texas." *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing* 11 (1):20-38.

Thurs Apr 5

Review #3 due – discuss in class

Week 12

Tues Apr 10

Work on final projects

Thurs Apr 12

Work on final projects

Week 13

Tues Apr 17

Drucker, Johanna. 2014. *Graphesis: Visual forms of knowledge production, metaLABprojects*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Thurs Apr 19

Final benchmark #4 – critique in class

Week 14

Tues Apr 24

Marenko, Betti, and Philip van Allen. 2016. "Animistic Design: How to reimagine digital interaction between the human and the nonhuman." *Digital Creativity* 27 (1):52-70.

Guest discussant from OU DSL and/or skype with one of authors

Thurs Apr 26

Manovich, Lev. 2001. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press.

Week 15

Tues May 1

Final Project presentations in class

Thurs May 3

Final Project presentations in class

FINAL PROJECT delivered to the museum for exhibition on **May 8**.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is required at every meeting, for the entire time. There are no make-ups for in-class activities. If you do miss class for any reason, it remains your responsibility to obtain what you missed from your classmates in case that material appears on a subsequent exam or quiz.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

A reputation of integrity is priceless. Since the establishment of the University in 1890, OU has worked to build a reputation that students, faculty & staff, the administration, and alumni can be proud of. It is the value of the OU degree that provides OU students the best internships, jobs and graduate school opportunities. It takes only one act of academic dishonesty by one student to deteriorate the value of everyone's degree, and the reputation of integrity for everyone at OU.

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades must result from the student's own understanding and effort.

DISABILITY POLICY

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from religious observances and to reschedule examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays, without penalty.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT / TITLE IX

For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, or stalking, the University offers a variety of resources. To learn more or to report an incident, please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office at 405/325-2215 (8 to 5, M-F) or smo@ou.edu. Incidents can also be reported confidentially to OU Advocates at 405/615-0013 (phones are answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Also, please be advised that a professor/GA/TA is required to report instances of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or discrimination to the Sexual Misconduct Office. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to: Bobby J. Mason, University Equal Opportunity Officer and Title IX Coordinator at 405/325-3546 or bjm@ou.edu. For more information, visit <http://www.ou.edu/eoo.html>.

PREGNANCY

Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact your professor or the Disability Resource Center at 405/325-3852 as soon as possible.

FINAL EXAM PREP PERIOD

Pre-finals week will be defined as the seven calendar days before the first day of finals. Faculty may cover new course material throughout this week.