

## Digital Humanities and Storytelling in Latina/o/x Communities

Fall 2024 | SPAN 4320 ENGL 4388 | Mondays and Wednesdays | 5:30-6:45

**Class Location:** Classroom Hall 307

**Instructor:** Elena Foulis, Ph.D.

**Student Hrs:** Miércoles 1-3 pm y por cita    **Oficina:** Classroom Hall 314-J

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### Course Description

This course introduces students to the field of digital humanities with a focus on US Latina/o/e communities. Student will learn to critically read and analyze US Latina/o/e digital archival material. Students will understand the value of counter-stories and create spaces individually or collectively to produce and share their own knowledge about physical, geopolitical, identity, as connected to their personal histories. This course will provide students with the fundamentals for designing and completing a digital oral history research project using the [Oral Narratives of Latin@s In Ohio archive](#). Students will review literature on the theory and methods of oral history, and will be trained to use digital platforms such as Storymaps, TimelinesJS, OHMS, and OMEKA to highlight different ways to engage with oral histories. They will also learn to use transcriptions and catalog interviews.

Students will develop skills to be digital storytellers by learning how to access, analyze and build data/records/archives and digital resources/components from Latina/o/e communities' perspectives in the throughout the US, with politically, ethically, and social justice-minded approaches. This course introduces theory and praxis with a background in Latina/o/x oral histories and Migration Studies, Women's, and Gender Studies, Language, Indigenous Studies and/or Ethnic Studies overall.

This course will adapt a bilingual structure (English and Spanish) and we will have 2-3 online Zoom classes for guest lectures. In the spirit of fostering a multilingual approach, however, we will not discourage the use of Spanish among students and instructors; mutual respect and cooperation are paramount to the success of this course. Students enrolled in this course will have the opportunity to work collaboratively with their peers.

This class also includes hands-on creative making workshops where students will engage with data, digital technologies, and humanistic inquiry to produce original digital work.

### **Learning Goals**

During this course, the student will:

1. Evaluate best practices for digital storytelling projects on or with Latina/o/x communities through their engagement with course readings and their participation in in-class discussions and hand-on workshop sessions.
2. Become familiar with use of oral histories and learn to use them as a methodological tool.
3. Critically and creatively think about how technologies reproduce and can challenge conditions of inequality.
4. Collaborate effectively in interdisciplinary and multilingual teams.

5. Learn how to create, publish, and maintain a digital resource/component with data, visual, audio and/or archival material using commercial and or minimal computing techniques.
6. Develop fundamental skills and ethical values in managing a project as a student in collaboration with peers, professor, other scholars/communities locally, nationally or transnationally.
7. Learn how to do research, analyze, write, and present about DH scholarship contemplating various audience perspectives.
8. Continue understanding and adding to the definition of Latina/o/e Digital Humanities by finalizing the course with DH research by working on an oral history archive.

Embedded Literacy: Technology		
Goals	Expected Learning Outcomes	Related Course Content ELOs
<b>GOAL 1:</b> Successful students develop a critical appreciation of the relations between technologies and their contexts (social, cultural, historical) and of the range of effects and consequences (legal, ethical, political) produced or enabled by particular technologies.	<b>Successful students are able to ...</b>	<b>In this course, students will ...</b>
	<b>1.1</b> Critically describe the relationships between technology and society in historical and cultural contexts.	Create a digital product—such as digital video story, podcast, oral history, etc.—that considers a fair, just, and ethical representation of the Latinx community. ELO # 4, 5 and 7
	<b>1.2</b> Recognize how technologies emerge and change.	Evaluate the role of digital humanities archives as a tool that must change and adapt, as we consider gaps in representations of different communities. ELO # 6
	<b>1.3</b> Evaluate the social and ethical implications of technology.	Produce a digital product using DH research best practices and contribute to an already existing archive or a pedagogical idea to implement in the future. ELO # 3 and 7

### Course Requirements, Materials and Readings

Course readings are outlined in the semester calendar. Most readings will generally be accessed in two ways: by direct links found on the syllabus or via the Blackboard files. If you have trouble accessing a particular reading, or if you have questions or comments about the amount of reading for a particular day or week, please be in touch!

- **Books**

All readings will be available in Blackboard

Some resources that are essential for this course, will be:

- **Reliable web access:** Given the nature of this course, it’s essential that you be able to get on the web on a regular basis. Please contact me if you have any questions about this requirement or if you’d like to talk about resources at this institution.
- **Classroom technology:** This course requires the use of laptops, tablets, and/or smartphones to view and complete course work. There may be days when a laptop is preferable to a tablet, given the need to work with a particular tool. I will let you know in advance should these needs arise if you require additional resources.

- **Zoom:** During our synchronous sessions, the class will use Zoom to meet.
- **Blackboard:** We will use Blackboard to share announcements, links related to our themes and official reading, materials and activities' guidelines for the course. Here is also where you check in for any inquiries and on the progress on assignments.
- **Gmail account:** There will be some tools that require an account in gmail. It will be important to create one in case you do not have one. Gmail is free for a particular limit of space. We will also use Google Drive (Excel, Microsoft and PowerPoint) for data entry, reflections, feedback and presentations.
- **Additional digital tools to explore:**
  - Miro: <https://miro.com/>
  - Graph Commons <https://graphcommons.com>
  - Omeka: <https://omeka.org>
  - Wax: <https://minicomp.github.io/wax/>
  - Timeline JS: <https://timeline.knightlab.com>
  - Storymap JS: <https://storymap.knightlab.com>
  - Kepler <https://kepler.gl/>
  - Carto: <https://carto.com>

### Course Policies

I expect that students will attend the in-person and virtual class sessions and workshops, keep up with readings, submit graded work on time and organize your time and duties with the students you will be working with. I also assume that students will participate in class discussions and workshops and be respectful of their peers in said discussions. Excessive absences or missing assignments / contributions can negatively impact your grade. Because of the fast-paced nature of this course, your presence in class is essential. If you aren't in class, you will be unable to complete the required assignments at a competent level and risk failing the class. Therefore, you may miss only two classes without any penalty. If you have concerns about your ability to meet a class, particular course requirements or assignment due dates, please email me or talk to me.

### Interaction rules / reglas de convivencia

- **Screen names and pronouns:** Please share respectful screen names, and I invite you to use pronouns. If participants do not include pronouns, please refer to those participants by their name.
- **Online video participation:** I strongly prefer that you use video for the synchronous sessions, and if video is used, care should be taken with screen backgrounds to ensure they do not include flashing lights or other visuals that can make it hard for some people to participate. Participants should be mindful as well of the background that appears behind them, keeping privacy considerations in mind.
- **Student interventions:** Please mute your microphones during video sessions, unmuting when it's your time to speak. During the discussions, please use the raised hand feature in Zoom if you want to speak. As Zoom chat participation goes, please remember interventions will have to relate to course content (mostly).

- **Violations of virtual norms:** All participants should be responsible for creating a safe, healthy, inclusive, and belonging space for all. Just like in a physical classroom, misconduct in a virtual space may be subject to campus disciplinary action.

\*Please refer to official University Policies. Any other issue you need to be included in, do not hesitate to reach out to me to incorporate it in the syllabus.

### Major Assignments and Grading Breakdown

- **Class Assignments and Workshop participation:** Throughout the semester, we'll experiment with different forms of digital storytelling, efforts designed to get you thinking about your larger project and to the various factors informing approaches to storytelling in US Latina/o/x digital humanities. These exercises will take place in class, and as weekly homework assignments: you'll find additional information on our course calendar, and you'll be updated via Blackboard with more specific prompts.
  - **Team Activities and Feedback:** For the workshops, which some of them will be instructed in class and others will be offered by Digital Humanities guest lectures, there will be cases when students will have to work in teams (of 2) and work together to build a digital component (exhibit, timeline, map). Throughout these activities each team will provide constructive feedback to another team and vice versa. Then the team will work on the suggestions given and will submit the final work to the professor.
  - **Invited speakers:** Students will have the opportunity to listen and interact with some invited speakers that will present some particular topics about Oral History, Archives, Storytelling and Digital Humanities. Before these presentations, some of them in-class and others as public events, students will research the presenter's scholarship and prepare some questions for the speaker.
- **Reading/video presentation:** Students will **select 2 readings, or 1 reading & 1 video** and provide a brief summary of it, as well as some questions (3) or major points to discuss during the class. Each student has to keep their discussion from 10 to 15 minutes maximum and are invited to have a different format to present, the form they feel more comfortable, having an activity, showing some visual material, etc. (the readings **highlighted** are the ones to select).
- **Video reflections** Students will be creating some short video clips of their reactions to the various invited speakers' presentations-interviews. Once they record it, they will post it on Blackboard. Everyone in the class will view and comment on the video thread.
- **Weekly reflections on BLACKBOARD:** Students will write a 250-300 words reflection (in English or Spanish) about the topic/s discussed each week using as a reference the material provided that week. Every reflection is due Sunday before 11:59 pm.
- **DH Project Review:** Students will select a DH project of their interest (some digital directories will be shared) and present a brief review in the class. ([See guidelines in Blackboard](#))

- **DH Oral History/Storytelling Project:** Over the course of the semester, you'll discuss and learn how to develop and create a public-facing digital oral history/storytelling project. The course is structured so that several project development benchmarks throughout the semester will allow you to brainstorm, research, draft, and refine these efforts over time. You will choose one oral history from the [Oral Narratives of Latin@s In Ohio archive](#) listen and create a transcript, and upload the video on OHMS to provide brief time-stamped summaries. Based on the narrator's story you will:
  - Develop a Storymaps that highlight key moments of that person's life.
  - Develop a Timeline that will include at least 10 significant moments in relation to events significant to the dates on the narrator's timeline.
  - Create a "controlled vocabulary" or keywords

If you ever have any questions about assignments, learning goals, or forms and measures of evaluation, please talk to me!

### Rubric

Participation	150
Weekly Reflection (8) 25pts each	200
Short Video clips (5) 20 pts each	100
Project Review and short presentation	150
Presentation	100
Final Project -OHMS (summaries and keywords) 100 pts -Digital Timeline 75pts -Digital Storymap 75pts	250
<b><u>Total</u></b>	1000 points

\*All your grades will be posted in BLACKBOARD and will also be emailed to the student after the assignment is graded with some comments and constructive feedback.

### **Final Grade Scale**

Percentage	Letter Grade
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
0-59	F

**Important Notes:**

- This course requires you to complete a significant number of assignments throughout the interim. As such, it requires students to be organized and focused.
- Readings and assignments are listed on the day they will be discussed in class or turned in, but please note that some assignments may be due on dates when class does not meet.
- Assignments and policies are subject to change with appropriate notice.

**Research Help**

Students can always get help with research at the library. Reference librarians will help find information on a topic, develop search strategies for papers and projects, search library catalogs and databases, and provide assistance at every step. Virtual appointments are both welcome. [Welcome - About the Library - A&M-SA Research Guides at Texas A&M University-San Antonio University Library \(tamusa.edu\)](#)