
DIGITAL TOOLKIT I in Spring 2021 (CM1500)

Course Code	CM1500	Professor(s)	Charles Talcott, Georgi Stojanov
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-402
Class Schedule	M: 13:45-15:05 in Q-509 R: 09:00-10:20 in Q-509	Office Hours	Tuesday 3-5pm Friday 9-11am and by appointment
Credits	4	Email	ctalcott@aup.edu, gstojanov@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	x575

Course Description

Digital Toolkit introduces students to a range of creative, practical and conceptual tools in digital communications. Not only will you be creating many kinds of digital media 'objects' and visualizations, but you will also be learning about digital workflows, digital media cultures and digital work environments. At the heart of our digital media-making, we will explore what it means to 'see, think, experience and shape' the world 'digitally.' What is 'computational thinking'? How can we expand our liberal arts thinking to 'think' 'the digital 'creatively' and 'critically'? In the digital tools training dimensions of the course, students will learn practical and professional skills and gain hands-on experience with a range of digital applications and platforms, from building and curating a web platform to working with data, information and digital communications. The hands-on digital-making is, at the same time, linked intimately to the 'conceptual' part of the course where we will investigate contemporary issues, problems, concepts and research areas linked to our digital creations and how they fit into the larger 'digital revolution.' We will 'make our way' into interrogating the different ways in which digitization and datafication affect us as networked users, citizens, and consumers. Together, we will analyze key ideas, concepts and topics through a range of documents, articles and readings. Contemporary case studies will focus on data gathering, data visualization, data 'crunching' and data correlation, surveillance, tracking, geo-localization, big data, methods of data mining, algorithms, algorithmic culture and software culture. We will look at the impact of algorithms on access and diversity of news on social media and we will explore what Big Data means and how it influences communications, journalism, business, scientific research and public decision-making, all the while we are making 'digital stuff.' The course prepares students to work with digital media while critically and responsibly engaging with it.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students completing Digital Toolkit will:

- Know how to create a variety of digital media using a range of digital tools & platforms
- Critically engage with and understand digital tools, digital platforms and digital architectures
- Know how to conduct basic data research and develop digital research workflows & visualizations
- Know how to gather, structure, store, manipulate, visualize and communicate with data
- Know how to build a webpage from scratch using HTML and CSS as well as using dedicated software
- Be able to engage with contemporary issues, concepts, and research areas of digital media studies
- Apply terms and concepts in critically engaging with digital media, their uses, and audiences, particularly in the fields of digital communications, digital media and digital journalism.

Course Learning Outcomes

Familiarize with the main tools for creation of webpages.

Critically engage with and understand the digital tools used in class

Know the modern digital computer architecture

Know how to store and manipulate local and network file systems

Know how to build a webpage from scratch using HTML and CSS as well as using dedicated software.

Become familiar with the issues, concepts, and research areas of digital media studies.

Application of terms and concepts in critically engaging with digital media, their uses, and audiences.

General Education

Course Outline

Dates	Digital Tools	Contexts	Reading & Making
PLATFORMS Introduction to the fundamental tools, platforms, interfaces: websites, html,			

spreadsheets, visualizers, coding & text editors

Week 1	The 'Digital'...	Peeking under a website	
	Languages, Layers, Command & Control Environments	Mark-up languages	https://www.w3schools.com/
18 Jan		Working with a mark-up language	
21 Jan	Introduction:		Storage.aup.edu
	What is a webpage?	Setting up server storage	
	Seeing the layers		
	Identifying HTML	Setting up collaborative work spaces	
	'Hacking' a webpage		
	Command + Control		
	Creating a scratch webpage	Setting up your personal MyCM5018Journa.html page which you will be updating constantly by publishing each in-class exercise as well as homework assignments submitted	
Week 2	Manipulating DATA	<u>Datafication</u>	Gregg and Nafus, "Data annotation exercise")
25 Jan	The 'handwork' of the digital	Thinking 'digitally'	Spreadsheets(EXCEL, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/)
28 Jan		Data as an 'isolatable'	
	Data sources and data formats (text, numerical, pictures, videos...); geo data; Our bodies as data sources;	What can be measured by digital data, and what kinds of knowledge do they produce? How compatible are quantitative data and qualitative representations of people, feelings and experiences?	Data & Digital Storytelling Building Timelines in Timeline Itinerary https://timeline.knightlab.com/
	Using Google sheets to visualize data		
Week 3	<HTML>	How is data gathered, scraped, mined?	Explore w3schools
	MARK-UP LANGUAGE	How are large data sets collected	Build a scratch website

1 Feb	HTML, CSS, and the w3schools.com resource;	and analysed by institutions for political purposes and by corporations for financial purposes? What are the implications of these practices?	Deploying external CSS
4 Feb	Collecting and organizing data;		
	Gathering data;		
	Imagining Workflows.		
	Introduction to Scraping		
8 Feb	No classes on Monday University mini-break February 8-10		
Week 4	<CODE>		
11 Feb	Introducing 'code'	What is coding?	Anita Joseph. So You D
	Visual v. Acoustic coding	What is an algorithm?	Read "What is Code?" .
	Programming	How does code operate?	[The Long Version!]
	Sequences	Where does one 'code' and to what end?	Paul Ford. " What is Co
	A taste of Python		https://repl.it/
Week 5	<CODING>	<u>Coding in Context</u>	
15 Feb	Coding with Python	What is the relationship between the practice of coding and 'communication'?	Sam Williams "Underst
18 Feb	Digital Communication & 'Conversation Agents'	How does one design and develop digital communications?	Coding in Python, deve screening ChatBot for A
	Designing & mapping Communication and Computational workflows		Repl.it Diagram.net

Week 6	<CODING>	Perceiving communication and 'natural language' digitally.	Embedding your ChatBot into your
22 Feb	More Python	Language as <script>	
	Sharing our Chatbot prototypes	What does the process of 'coding' language reveal about communication? What does it mean to reconceive language digitally?	
25 Feb	No classes on Thursday University mini-break February 24-26		
PROCESSES & Projects Workflows, Data, Data Gathering, Digital Methods, Digital Problem-solving			
Digital Visualization			
Week 7	Data Research	What is correlation?	Importing data &
	Data Visualizations	How does it differ from	conducting data c
1 Mar		causation? What is 'correlative thinking'? Why is data correlation so powerful & pervasive?	
4 Mar	Understanding and working with 'Correlation'	What are the consequences of 'correlative thinking'?	Reading: Excerpt from SuperFreakonomics
	<DATA> Mapping		Communicating & Maps
	Data Visualizations		Building data visu
			Google maps
			DataWrapper
			Maps.google.com
			https://www.datawrapper.de/
Week 8	Mapping Tracking, Tracing, Triangulation, GPS	Location, Location, Location!	Neff and Nafus, S

8 Mar	Augmenting Reality	Self-Tracking with Digital Devices	Chp 1
11 Mar	An intro to AR		PokemonGo
		Layers: Vectors, Rasters	
	Doing Digital Research		
	Civic Media Projects		

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

COVID-19 TEMPORARY AMENDMENTS: Students studying at The American University of Paris are STILL EXPECTED TO ATTEND ALL scheduled classes. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. For example, when students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms of Covid-19 and are directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, Students attending remotely from distant Time Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory. In all cases of missed course meetings, the responsibility for communication with the professor, and for arranging to make up missed work, rests solely with the student. Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may also recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level. Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT: As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

Grading Policy

1. Active, informed participation in class sessions. This includes being prepared to present homework and to engage in classroom discussions, based on our readings.
2. Digital Projects & Hands-on creations: you will be making many forms of digital media, from scratch websites to data visualizations.
3. One 3-minute video/audio recordings summarizing/discussing course material within FlipGrid
4. One short (1000 word) "**Thought Paper**" critically engaging with aspects, themes, or concepts discussed within the readings and/or one of our case studies. This paper will be submitted online within the TEAMS platform.
5. **Final digital research project**

Your final 'Digital Toolkit' project will involve you conducting data research around a topic that your professors will help you select. The final project will consist of a digital portfolio, an essay and a digital visualization and presentation. You will receive more information about this project in the first weeks of the semester.

GRADING

Participation, Class Contributions & Attendance	10%
Scratch Website & Course Journal with digital projects & creations	40%
Reflection video response	10%
Thought paper	10%
Final Digital Research Project	30%

Other
