
DIGITAL TOOLKIT: COMMUNICATION DESIGN PRACTICUM in Fall 2020 (CM1500A)

Course Code	CM1500A	Professor(s)	Charles Talcott, Georgi Stojanov
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	PL107
Class Schedule	M: 14:30-16:05 in Q-509 R: 09:00-10:35 in Q-509	Office Hours	by appointment
Credits	4	Email	ctalcott@aup.edu, gstojanov@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2020	Office Tel. Ext.	NA

Course Description

Digital toolkit provides students with practical and conceptual tools in digital communications, regarding digital media culture and digital work environments. In the digital tools training course, students will learn skills and gain hands-on experience with a range of digital applications and platforms, to build and curate a web platform. In the conceptual part of the course, the students will learn to familiarize with the issues, concepts, and research areas linked to the digital revolution and understand the different ways in which it affects us as networked users, citizens, and consumers. Together, we will analyze key readings and discuss them through contemporary case studies focusing on geo-localization, big data, methods of data collection online, algorithms, algorithm culture and software culture. Student will look at the impact of algorithms on access and diversity of news on social media; they will understand what Big Data means and investigate its influence on business, scientific research and public decision-making; they will address the impact of self-tracking devices on and analyze them in relation to issues of privacy, health and government control. The course prepares students to work with digital media while critically and responsibly engaging with it.

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

Week & Dates

Topic

Week 1

Introduction to the Course

Mon Sept 2 (Stojanov)

Introductions of people and topics, scheduling.

Thurs Sept 5 (Stojanov)

- Intro to Digital Technology
- Using AUP data storage
- Publishing web pages on AUP server
- Basic HTML

Week 2

Computer Languages, Programs, Algorithms

Mon Sept 9 (Stojanov)

- Algorithms: a step by step procedure, how to do something (i.e. cake)
- Computer programs ("code")
- Examples of program/code

- HTML

Thurs Sept 12

Data versus Information; Data-fied life; Life codes

Quantitative versus qualitative methods: how we extract meaning from kinds of "data." What can and can't be measured?

Week 3

Making knowledge; Methods and Theories of Epistemology

Mon Sept 16 (Stojanov)

Structuring Data in HTML;

- Tables

- Data acquisition
- Data formats: unformatted text, numerical data

	• Data analysis and visualization • Excel, Google spreadsheets • Big Data
Thurs Sept 19	Learning by Hacking; examining and playing with code
Week 4	Data everywhere
Mon Sept 23 (Stojanov)	Introduction to CSS ; html & css Stylesheets
Thurs Sept 26	Are we radiating data? Data & the quantified self
Week 5	Big Data, Small Data, Processing
Mon Sept 30 (Stojanov)	Data scraping
	• Geo-localization • Embedding Google maps on your webpage • Hands-on exercise: introduce a google map on your page via latitude and longitude
Thurs Oct 3	Tracking & Surveillance
Week 6	Algorithmic Thinking
Mon Oct 7	Data mining, algorithms, and electoral politics
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Thurs Oct 10	No class ; Professors on AUP Study Trips
Week 7	
Mon Oct 14	Who can see your data? How can you protect it?
Thurs Oct 17	Midterm Review Exam
Week 8	Big data and privacy
Mon Oct 21	A taste of Python
Thurs Oct 24	Privacy debates & ethics
Week 9	Algorithms and governance/moral judgement
Mon Oct 28	Algorithmic decision making, algorithmic policing Where does the bias in Algorithms come?
Thurs Oct 31	No class – AUP Fall Break
Week 10	Algorithms and public spheres/discourse/echo chambers
Mon Nov 4	Working on projects in class
Thurs Nov 7	Facebook, Cambridge Analytica, problems of homophily, 2016 US Election
Week 11	[holiday & working week]
Mon Nov 11	No class – AUP Armistice Day Break
Thurs Nov 14	Working on projects in class
Week 12	Software & Everyday Life

Mon Nov 18	Working on projects in class
Thurs Nov 21	Ubiquity, IOT, Smart(?)homes
Week 13	Artificial Intelligence
Mon Nov 25	Working on projects in class
Thurs Nov 29	AI & Labor, What is AI good for & when is it harmful?
Week 14	
Mon Dec 2	Work on final projects
Thurs Dec 5	Last Day of classes
Final: Thurs Dec 12	FINAL EXAM – Presentations of papers & projects

Note: The schedule is flexible and can be revisited as the course progresses

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.

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 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.

Grading Policy

Course requirements and grading:

Participation-Attendance Reading Assignments/– 20 % For Thursday class:

- Students will give one short (about 10 mins) presentation on a reading of their choosing.
- Two Reading Responses or Write-Ups of Discussion (200-400 words)

Mid-term review exam – 20 %

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In-class exam on the readings and the case studies explored in class.

Dry Run Paper & Project – 20%

This dry run project will prepare you to your final project. In this paper, you will actually use the digital tools learnt in class to explore a subject of your choice linked to the issues discussed in class, as well as publish your work on the web – geo-localization, self-tracking, big data, algorithms, software.

Final Research Paper and accompanying web site (40%)

Undertake a detailed analysis (1800 words max) of a case study of your choice by using and extending your previous research. You will build a website including your research question, qualitative and quantitative data, analysis, and conclusion.

Other
