

**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
CREATING DIGITAL HISTORY**

**Purpose**

This course is designed to introduce students to the skills, tools, and approaches necessary to participate in and create digital history projects. The class will have an historical component that focuses on New York City in the 1970s. We will explore the history of the city – its neighborhoods, people, events, and institutions – through a variety of methodological lenses during a particularly tempestuous and critical period in its development. Students will contribute to an online resource that documents and interprets the City. Their final projects will use the tools and methods of digital history in order to examine some particular aspect of New York City’s development during the 1970s. They will be contributing to a collaborative online resource that will live on the Archives/Public History web site, and will also gain a greater understanding of issues involving web design, digital technology, digital archiving, and a variety of specific technical skills. Each class will combine an approach to studying the history of New York City in the 1970s with “new media” instruction that provides students with instruction in various digital history technologies.

**Assignments**

During the first week of class, each student will choose a person, event, place, or movement that achieved some prominence within New York City in the 1970s. Throughout the semester, students will use various digital research tools to research and present information about their topic. In particular, students will learn how

**Requirements**

- Students will need to purchase web hosting services from a company such as Dreamhost.com, GoDaddy.com, or any of the companies listed at [http://reviews.cnet.com/7026-6541\\_7-0-1.html?tag=rb\\_shell;rb\\_mtx](http://reviews.cnet.com/7026-6541_7-0-1.html?tag=rb_shell;rb_mtx) This will cost about \$5 - \$10 per month, and you'll want to make sure that you aren't locked in to a contract for any longer than you want to be.
- Students will need to register a domain name with a company such as NameCheap.com; many of the same companies that offer web hosting also offer domain registry. This should cost about \$2-\$10 per year.
- Students will also need to register for a number of free services on the web and to maintain an account with these services for at least the duration of the course.

**WEEK I --**

**Digital Skills Assignment: Bibliographic software**

Download EndNote, download and install Zotero, and sign up for a RefWorks account, a CiteULike account, an EndNote Web account. Join the CiteULike and EndNote groups for Archives and Public History. In any one of these programs, create a bibliography of at least 10 secondary sources (books or articles) on a topic related to New York in the 1970s (e.g., David Bowie). Use the resources you would ordinarily use to do this research (e.g., the library catalog). Export your bibliography to all the other programs and be ready to talk about the experience in the next class session.

**WEEK II –**

### **Digital Skills Assignment: Research on the web**

Sign up for del.icio.us, StumbleUpon, Google Reader, and Bloglines.com. Send your del.icio.us username to the class e-mail list; add all your classmates to your del.icio.us and StumbleUpon networks. Subscribe to at least five (5) blogs related to your research topic using both RSS readers. Search del.icio.us, StumbleUpon, Technorati.com (a blog search engine), Wikipedia, YouTube, Flickr, and the Internet Archive for information on your topic, save the results using whatever tool you like, and be ready to talk about the experience in the next class.

### **WEEK III –**

#### **Digital Skills Assignment: Blogging, Part I**

Sign up for a blog using any of the following services: <http://blogs.nyu.edu/>, <http://wordpress.com>, <http://blogger.com>, <http://livejournal.com>, or any other that you know of. Link to the blogs related to your topic in your blogroll. Write a blog post about your research topic (you can begin by saying why you chose the topic and why you find it interesting, or you can get right into writing history about your topic). After you have written the post, go comment on another site that allows comments, and put the address of your blog in the "Website" field when they ask for it. Be ready to talk about the experience in the next class.

### **WEEK IV –**

#### **Digital Skills Assignment: Research**

Take a week and find some archival collections and any other primary sources related to your topic. Keep good track of the collections and materials you find using your preferred bibliographic software.

### **WEEK V –**

#### **Digital Skills Assignment: Blogging, Part II**

Embed a multimedia digital primary source in your blog post -- an image of a document, a picture, an audio file, or a video file -- and write about that source. Make sure that you have the legal right to use the resource, and make sure to cite and to link back to the place where you found the source. (For this assignment, do not digitize anything yourself; use digital material that is already online.)

### **WEEK VI –**

#### **Digital Skills Assignment: Editing Wikipedia**

Go to a Wikipedia article related to your topic and insert links in the references to important primary and secondary sources related to your topic. Sign up for an account at <http://pbwiki.com> and recreate the blog post you did last week on the class's wiki.

### **WEEK VII –**

#### **Digital Skills Assignment: Creating a web site I**

### **WEEK VIII –**

#### **Digital Skills Assignment: Creating a web site II**

### **WEEK IX –**

#### **Digital Skills Assignment: Creating a web site III**

**WEEK X –**

**Digital Skills Assignment:**

**WEEK XI –**

**Digital Skills Assignment:**

**WEEK XII –**

**Digital Skills Assignment: Installing server software**

Install Omeka, Kora, Wordpress, Drupal, Joomla!, or any other server software package that you choose on your web server.

**WEEK XIII –**

**Digital Skills Assignment:**

**WEEK XIV -- Presentations**

**WEEK XV -- Presentations**