

Nan Kim
History 700 Introduction to Public History

Digital Humanities tools/methods: StoryMap JS / ArcGIS StoryMap / Timeline JS; digital archives; visual storytelling

Description of assignment:

Working in teams of two, each pair of students chose their own topic for creating a Wisconsin Humanities Council grant proposal, whether real or hypothetical. They completed primary and secondary research in order to prepare the proposal for a local public history project. Though the projects represented a range of research interests, they shared an objective based on the assignment: to connect a present-day community, institution, neighborhood, or place, with either a significant period of change or a meaningful set of events in the past.

Each team member then used Story Maps to create a digital humanities project for presenting their independent research with the intention of reaching a wider public audience. Their Story Map projects could do one or more of the following: (1) compare maps from different historical eras; (2) present a series of maps in a tabbed format with commentary; (3) construct a narrative cascade that integrates a variety of visual, textual, or audiovisual elements; and/or convey their research findings through another Story Map format, such as Timeline JS.

Outcomes:

Students wrote reflections on the DH project at the end of the term, and they described a number of positive outcomes. Among the things they appreciated most were:

- the experience of working directly with members of the community to create a project of lasting value which filled an existing need, such as outreach or public education;
- the opportunity to do primary research (e.g. using archival photographs, maps, & documents), which involved analyzing and arranging their data in order to create an accessible narrative;
- the benefit of having a finished DH project, which could help them while working at a current job and/or promised to be an asset when searching for future employment.
- In some cases, this project was a chance to revisit a familiar topic the students felt passionate about, while they also were able to how to present that history in a new way.

Students described a sense of confidence after having completed a polished DH project, and nearly all of them expected to apply these newly acquired skills to other projects in the future.

Sample assignments:

NB: Teams submitted either two single-authored DH projects or one joint DH project.

“Archiving Craft Brewing in the U.S.” by Samantha Dickson | bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_dickson

“Milwaukee and the Craft Beer Movement: The Rebirth of Brew City” by John Harry
bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_harry

“Freedom House and The Early Movements of Milwaukee’s NAACP Youth Council”

by Greg Lutz | bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_lutz

“Milwaukee Open Housing Marches, 1967-1968” by Jarrod Showalter

bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_showalter

“Milwaukee Environmental Justice” by Nicholas Lee | bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_lee

“Reflecting on Industry in Suburbia: Impact and Legacy of Pleasant Prairie's Power Plant”

by Kate Bennett | bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_bennett

“German-American Culture in Milwaukee” by Roman Lulloff | bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_lulloff

“The Disappearance of German Culture in Milwaukee, 1916-1919” by Brennan Christianson

bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_christianson

“Remembering the Old Third Ward” by Jamee Pritchard | bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_pritchard

“Changes in the Third Ward’s Ethnic Communities” by Claire Svehla

bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_svehla

“Milwaukee’s LGBTQ History Timeline” by Goncalo Borges and Taytum Markee

bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_borges_markee

“This is It!: The Gay Cheers,” by Krisenda Henderson and Matthew Torres

bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_henderson_torres

“Women in the Civil Rights Movement” by Rachel Lange and Erica Shrader

http://bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_lange_shrader

“The Russian-Speaking Community of Milwaukee” by Nick Olson and Rebecca Schnabel

bit.ly/uwm-hist-700_olson_schnabel