

## Digital Classics in the Classroom

In the world of digital humanities (DH) and digital classics, there are many research projects, many of which involve undergrads and grad students as members of project teams, but fewer adopters who are sharing ideas about how to introduce digital tools into their classes and how to make the process of teaching with these tools more transparent. As Brett Hirsch notes, despite the growing number of scholarly publications on DH, “teaching” has been “bracketed,” systematically relegated “to the status of an afterthought, tacked –on to a statement about the digital humanities after the word ‘research’” (5). Therefore, this panel and discussion is meant to fill a gap. Each paper will discuss the process of introducing undergrads to different arenas of DH (textual analysis, digital mapping, databases, podcasting, and 3-D modeling), the benefits of using DH in the classroom, and an introduction to some successful assignments and approaches to integrating digital classics into our teaching. Throughout each presentation, student voices commenting on the experience of using digital technologies will be shared. Furthermore, paper length has been deliberately kept short to provide time for those attending to share their own projects, ask questions, and explore the theoretical considerations posed by the presenters.

The panel consists of a brief introduction and five papers along with time for discussion. The introduction ( 5 minutes) sets digital classics into the broader educational landscape of multiple literacies, students as producers, not just consumers, project based learning, and intercultural literacy.

Paper 1, “’Modern, Ancient, Awesome’: Academic Classics in the Early 21st Century” (10 minutes) addresses the ubiquity of social media, the variety of digital tools, and the expectation that we should use them all the time. This paper explores how challenging this expectation could lead to fruitful awareness how ancient technologies work and worked. In

other words, what are the strengths and limitations of digital tools compared to traditional and ancient tools and how are these technologies “entangled” in our teaching?

Paper 2, “Using Virtual Globes in the Classics Classroom,” (10 minutes) offers an approach to help students develop spatial literacy through two mapping projects using virtual globes. These geographic tools are open access and offer many of the features of propriety software, such as layering a map with historical, cultural, and chronological data.

Papers 3, “Digital Pedagogy in the Latin Classroom: The Case of Fronto Online,” and 4, “Making a Collaborative Digital Commentary on Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3,” (10 minutes each) offer two approaches to creating student-generated commentaries. Each one emphasizes a slightly different set of tools that can be used to create these commentaries. Each one scaffolds the assignments in such a way that students can develop more expertise with the technology as the course unfolds over a semester. In the end, each paper suggests that asking students to participate in the process of generating a commentary helps make the process more transparent and makes them into collaborators and owners of the text in ways that simply reading does not.

Paper 5, “The value of embedding digital humanities in the undergraduate curriculum” (12 minutes), rather than focusing on specific projects, takes a step back to reflect on the value of digital projects in general. Like the first paper, paper 5 surveys a range of various tools and projects that the author has used in the classroom. Yet the primary focus in surveying these projects is to examine how the learning outcomes of these projects are attractive to employers, grad schools, and foundations.

There are several themes that tie this panel together and offer a model for humanities pedagogy in general: collaboration, becoming part of a public conversation, scaffolding assignments and the skills needed to accomplish them, and reflecting on the value of specific

technologies. First and foremost is the idea of collaboration. Many DH projects cannot be accomplished by single individuals, but require teams who can share different types of expertise, test hypotheses, and come up with solutions. Each paper also stresses the public nature of these projects as ways for students to recognize audiences for their work that stretch beyond the teacher and their colleagues in the classroom. Each paper, furthermore, recognizes that projects must be staged so that students gradually develop expertise in the subject matter as well as proficiency in the tools to accomplish the project. Finally, each paper does not blindly adopt digital tools to keep up with the latest technology, but carefully interrogates their value for particular projects under particular circumstances.

#### Bibliography

Hirsch, Brett, ed. *Digital Humanities Pedagogy: Practices, Principles, and Politics*. Open Book Publishers, 2012.