Lessons from History 101: Teaching Digital Humanities at the Community College

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Challenges to teaching DH at the intro level in a community college:

Fadumo, Joe, Lisa

Open access
High proportion of developmental students
Uneven access to high speed internet or computers
Varied life experiences
Varied expectations
Wildly varied skill levels

Lesson #1: Know your students

40% of Normandale Students live in poverty.

3 year average Success Rate in my courses: 57.8%

3 year average Success Rate of Pell-eligible students in my course: 57.2%

3 year average Success rate of Online only students: 53%

Lesson #2: Create course-design principles first.

Anti-poverty course design principles:

It is local.
It is universal
It's not theory dependent
It is student centered
It is transparent to students
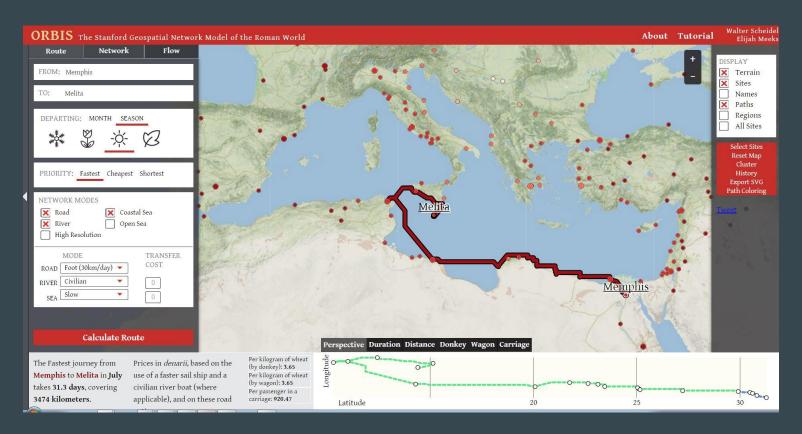It improves student outcomes
It addresses known problems
It is informed but not dependent on data

Lesson #2: (cont)

What is an anti-poverty course design looks like for a DH course:

1. All course materials are free
2. Half of class time is in a computer lab
3. All lessons have written objectives, step-by-step instructions with screen grabs, and exact grading criteria.
4. Preference given to DH tools with better UI and single sign in for multiple lessons (such as Omeka.)
5. Metacognitive work and support services baked into the course
6. Build lessons on an ICAP framework (Chi, Wylie, 2014)

Orbis Lesson Plan

Maps II Lesson

Due: Friday at 8 p.m.

Big question: How does historical GIS help us answer questions about the ancient Roman world?

Learning objectives. By the end of this lesson you will:

1. be familiar with robust historical GIS interfaces.
2. be able to calculate distance and speed using historical GIS.
3. be able to analyze information you learn from historical GIS.
4. be able to evaluate the usefulness of GIS metadata on historical GIS maps.
5. be able to define a self-directed learning goal for this this.

Background Information and Step 1

For this lesson you are going to be using, rather than building, GIS maps. You will use the Orbis map and the Augustan Rome map. Please note that these are interactive maps, so if a map doesn't work at first, please try your secondary browser. The lesson is in two parts. The first part asks you to use Orbis to answer questions about travel from Memphis (Egypt) to Melita (Malta) to Argentorate (France). The second part asks you to evaluate the Augustan Rome map for its use of metadata (information attached to map points).

Please write your answers in a document that you can upload to the D2L dropbox called **Maps II Assignment.**

For this exercise, you are a male merchant, carrying a valuable package of silk from Memphis to Argentorate (current-day Strasbourg, France). You have promised your sister-in-law to stop in Melita (current day Malta) to deliver a letter to her husband. You are have enough money to travel by foot or by oxcart. Although you are willing to sail on a boat, your can only afford a slow boat or a boat that only travels during daylight. It is currently fall, and you must reach Argentorate by Spring in order to sell your silk.

Instructions and questions

Zones of influence

1. Click on the "Network" tab.
2. Center on Argentorate and then Memphis.
3. Click "Calculate Network"
4. Click on "Zones"

Questions:

What are the differences between the Argentorate zones and the Memphis zones? What do these differences tell you about the Roman world?

As a silk merchant, which city do you think is best as your home shop, based on your reading of this Network map? Why do you think this city is best?

Rubric

Grading Rubric:

1. Student demonstrated competence using Orbis and Augustan Rome maps.
2. Student accurately calculated speed using GIS.
3. Student accurately calculated distance using GIS.
4. Student answered all the questions, fully explaining her or his thinking.
5. Student demonstrated evidence-based analysis in their responses to questions.
6. Student evaluated the usefulness of GIS metadata on historical GIS maps using specific evidence.
7. Evaluation of metadata makes use of standard English usage.

Lesson #3: Advocate and prepare

- Advocate for resources for students: on-campus computer time, laptop carts, bandwidth in classrooms, advocacy for low-cost internet in local communities, access to third-party authenticated resources (such as Gale Virtual Reference Library), LMS integration.
- Prepare for apathy, derision, and pushback, from students and colleagues.
- Look for support from above and away from your campus. # is powerful.
- Focus on DH for all and DH from below.

Lesson #4: Workflow and Reproducibility are Paramount

1.0 Workflow	2.0 Workflow
1. Screen shot	1. Draft lesson plan in Clarify, inserting images and composing at once.
2. Edit screen shot in previewer.	2. Export as Markdown.
3. Save screen shot as jpg.	3. Edit in Sublime and preview in Marked.
4. Insert into Word document.	4. Save as txt and HTML.
5. Create lesson in Word.	5. Upload HTML to LMS.
6. Format word document.	
7. Format word document.	
8. Format word document.	
9. Save as .docx and pdf.	
10. Post both files to LMS.	

Lesson #4: (cont)

Workflow 1.0	Workflow 2.0
• Google Maps or Arc GIS • Voyant • Knightlab Timeline • Wordpress • Omeka.net	• Omeka (self hosted) with Neatline, Waypoints, and Text • Voyant

Lesson #5: Cheerleading matters.

GIS

Statistics

Web publishing

Content management

Digital exhibit creation

Text mining (distant reading)

Audio podcasting

Social media networks

And the entirety of human history from 1 million years ago to the Mongols.