This course seeks to study the digital humanities as an intersection of interdisciplinary work providing the opportunity for collaboration between scholars from traditionally separate disciplines. Traditionally, the humanities finds itself defined by disciplines dedicated toward the study and representation of “the human condition,” such as literature, the arts, philosophy, religion, languages and history. On the other “side” of campus, so to speak, are the sciences, traditionally described as pursuing a positivist approach to the discovery of “facts” using strictly formulated methodologies. Between the two sides stands social sciences, a conglomeration of fields such as anthropology, sociology, economics and political science, studying aspects of society and humanity utilizing methodologies adapted from science and developed within the field. Divisions among these three major areas of academic pursuit are both artificially constructed and very real. Within the academy, funding opportunities and administrators reward interdisciplinary work blurring set boundaries, while simultaneously reinforcing structural divisions between disciplines through inequalities in funding, hiring and curriculum requirements.

The increasing importance of digital communication and media and the recognition of the rising importance of transnational flows increase the urgency of real and meaningful integration of disciplines traditionally divided. Digital humanities provides an apt entry point to these issues, with provocative questions around access and distribution of knowledge, possibilities for new knowledge production, intersections of race, gender, ability, sexuality and class, issues of authorship, complexities of databases and archives, and power relations among nations, government, corporations and militaries. This class seeks to use digital humanities as an entry point to these issues, while confronting the systems of knowledge production within humanities, science and their intersection.

Assignments:

1. **Defining the Terms of Debate:** On the class website, there is a wiki with a list of terms relevant to our discussions. Each of you will take primary responsibility for the authorship of one term, while also contributing to the definition of at least three other terms of your choice. Definitions can include your own summaries, quotes from readings, links to other websites, histories, definitions from other sources (cited properly), references, synonyms, antonyms, and any other knowledge you find relevant. These definitions are not meant to be purely “factual,” but an exploration of the multiple (and possibly contradictory) ways these terms arise in the course. You are also welcome to add terms you feel relevant to the class. Preliminary list of terms: humanities, science, Internet, database, networks, author, archive, race, gender, digital, ability, sexuality, class, biometrics, GIS, new media, objectivity/subjectivity. You will be graded as a class on the overall thoroughness and complexity of the final wiki, as well as individually on the term you oversee.

2. **Interrogating Systems of Knowledge Management:** This assignment asks you to consider how the theories and ideas presented in the class texts play out in the
ways knowledge is managed, accessed and organized. How do we as scholars, citizens and subject manage the vast amounts of information available through the Internet, and how is our interaction with that information mediated? For this assignment, you must choose one specific mechanism or system that organizes, disseminates, manages or provides access to information. This could include a specific search engine, database, website, social network, or any other media utilizing interactive searching, databases and archival information. You will then analyze the management, ownership, assumptions, audience, visual and textual components, limitations and interface of that specific mechanism utilizing at least two texts from the class. Your goal is to explore how these systems of knowledge management are not innocent, neutral or “objective.” You will present the results of your investigation through a one-page précis posted on the class website directed at a public audience along with a 5-7 page essay for me.

3. Exploring Possibilities of Knowledge Creation: This assignment asks you to consider what new possibilities for knowledge production occur through digital humanities and the intersection of humanities and science. This project can build from your interrogation of systems of knowledge management, or interact with a new media/topic. The goal is to create a piece that attempts to explore a topic or engage in a debate in a way that would be impossible, unimaginable (or very difficult) without digital humanities. You are invited, but not required to work in groups and explore with different and creative modes of expression via new media. Possibilities include website creation, utilization of online media/programs/blogs/etc., traditional essays, videos, audio productions… The point is to do a project that engages with knowledge in a new way; this could include new concepts, new modes of dissemination, new uses of text or visual tools, new modes of interaction…

Schedule
Week 1: Digital Humanities: What is it?
- Readings:
- Goals: Begin list of definitions for digital humanities, determine possible components, discuss why certain parties might create certain definitions, discuss agendas of those parties, determine who are stakeholders in DH

Week 2: Science/Humanities relationships
- Readings:
  - Snow, C. P. Two Cultures
  - Garber, Marjorie Academic Instincts
- Goal: Historicize divide between sciences & humanities. Discuss role of academy in public culture
Week 3: Questioning Objectivity

- **Readings**
  - Latour, Bruno “Drawing Things Gogether” & intro to *Reassembling the Social*
  - Haraway, Donna. “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective”
  - Harding, Sandra. Intro to *Sciences from Below: Feminisms, Postcolonialities and Modernities.*
- **Goal:** Use science & technology studies literature to discuss the implications of sociocultural formations of scientific discourse. Create a space for moving away from relativism that blurs distinctions between humanitites and science.

Week 4: History of the Internet

- **Readings:**
  - Intro to *Companion to the Digital Humanities*
  - Reading on role of military/HEP physics on formation/proliferation of Internet
- **Goal:** Cultural history of digital humanities, Internet, new media as cultural objects and academic discourses

Week 5: Issues of the Database

- **Readings:**
  - Poster, Mark. “Database as Discourse”
  - Article on uses of databases in scientific research?
- **Goal:** Understand the multiple uses of database as a cultural practice, object and metaphor. Discuss as a tool of marketing, government surveillance, scientific fact-formation. Differences/distinctions between database and networks.

Week 6: Questions of Authorship

- **Readings:**
  - Foucault, Michel. “What is the Author?”
  - Selected *Vectors* projects
- **Goals:** Address questions of authorship in relation to database creation, website creation, digital projects, design, visual/textual interface.

Week 7: Race formation and Digital Humanities

- **Readings:**
- **Goals:** Reveal issues of race embedded in new media/Internet spaces and interfaces.

Week 8 & 9: Biometrics & GIS

- **Readings:**
• Kaplan, Caren. “Precision Targets: GPS and the Militarization of U.S. Consumer Identity”
• Reading on biometrics
  ▪ Goals: Discuss issues of embodiment and space in digital humanities via biometrics and GIS

Week 10: Issue of publication
  ▪ Readings:
    • Article on movement to online publications in sciences; issues of authorship.
    • Editorial from Social Studies of Science journal by David Lynch issues 35:4 (Aug 2005)
  ▪ Goals: Address issues of changing publication standards in sciences and humanities.