UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH AND THEATRE STUDIES

WINTER 2019

COURSE CODE: ENGL*6691 (01)

COURSE TITLE: Interdisciplinary Studies

COURSE TOPIC (W2019): Digital Humanities, Feminisms, and Diversity

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

Designed to provide the opportunity to explore alternative fields and modes of critical inquiry, this variable-content course will study the relationship between literary study and other forms of intellectual inquiry such as the relationship between literature and sociology, between critical theory and psychology, between literary history and historical fact.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the relatively new field of digital humanities and the way its formation is being shaped in relation to gender and other related aspects of cultural diversity such as race, sexuality, and indigeneity. In so doing it will consider tensions between methodology and content, the debate over theory in relation to digital humanities, and the politics of self-definition in relation to professional and intellectual self-positioning. We will consider some of the ways in which gender has been mobilized as a concept within digital humanities debates and practices within a range of contexts, considering particular areas of controversy within and at the edges of the field including the question of how to encode sex within the guidelines of Text Encoding Initiative, the approaches taken by a range of feminist critical and creative projects (including e-literature), text mining and stylistic analyses related to gender, the politics of tools and algorithms, community engagement and intimate publics, and debates over gender and games, including the Gamergate controversy. Within these contexts, we will seek to understand how gender intersects with other identity categories including race, sexuality, class, and geography in the production and consumption of networked knowledge. The course will serve as an introduction to the growing and contested field of digital humanities, and deepen students' understanding of feminisms, intersecting social justice movements, and critical modes of engagement with diversity. Our discursive contexts will also engage with other fields including media studies, human-computer interaction, design, critical theory, and science and technology studies. Participation in the course will involve engagement both with readings and with the hands-on methods of digital humanities, for which we will have dedicated workshop sessions. Participants will apply digital humanities methods in their work for the course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

When you have successfully completed this course you should have:
- developed or deepened your understanding of the digital humanities and intersectional feminisms as interdisciplinary fields of inquiry, developing critical awareness of their complexity, context, central terms, debates, and methodologies, and familiarity with key journals and publications;
- deepened your understanding of cultural diversity and complexity, particularly as they relate to digital culture;
- applied critical and creative thinking to developing your own research question, an applicable methodology, and an analytical argument which will be transmitted through a research artifact equivalent in substance to a major article or small digital project, of which a portion will be discursive content of 4000-8000 words;
- demonstrated your ability to organize and advance a sophisticated argument that situates your project in terms of the critical or theoretical issues it addresses and the form in which you have chosen to produce it;
- demonstrated your ability to employ and properly attribute evidence from a range of sources and integrate a minimum of 20 sources into your project;
- acquired additional digital literacy and proficiency through the hands-on use of a number of different tools, and in-depth application of and critical reflection on one or more of them in your capstone project;
- exercised your professional responsibility and ethical standards in your participation in the course, timely completion of your assignments, and collaboration with other members of the class.