ML 103 | Historical GIS
Modern Literacies
Monday / Wednesdays 11:50 – 1:10
Henderson 106 (Mac Lab)

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Office hours:
    Wednesdays 9:30 – 11:30 am
    Or, by appointment (please email)
EH Open Labs in 106 Henderson Annex:
    Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:00

Course Description:
The application of geographic information system (GIS) technology to historical analyses provides an interactive tool to graphically represent and geographically locate a large amount of historic data. Unlike conventional two-dimensional maps, a GIS project can be thick. Layers of information are compiled to offer the unique opportunity in the study of history to analyze time and space as simultaneous factors. In this class, you will engage with both kinds of mapping practices, overlaying collected data onto a historic map using open-sourced GIS software, QGIS. Paired with the digital exercises are critical discussions and readings that investigate the role of digital mapping in the service of constructing and writing historical arguments.

This course does not presume any prior knowledge of GIS. The tutorials will cover basic skills for working with historic data, images, and maps in QGIS. In this class, we will be working closely with the collections at Historic Red Hook and Rhinebeck Historical Society to develop a project that focuses on the 18th- and 19th-century landscape of Dutchess County, specifically the area surrounding Bard’s campus.

Course Text:

All additional readings will be posted on the course website.

Course Website:
The primary site for this class is our course blog. The course calendar, GIS data resources, links to other resources, and tutorials will be posted on this site as well as the final projects. To login, click on “Log in” under the “Meta” menu at right and use your Bard credentials.

https://courseblogs.bard.edu/ml103s16
Responsibilities and Etiquette:

*Ideally, you should be present (in mind and body) for every class and on time.* If you have to miss, please let me know in advance by email. I will reserve the right to judge whether an absence should be excused. Any unexcused absences will directly affect your in-class participation grade (which in total is worth two letter grades) and may affect your project/writing grades because you will miss time devoted in class to complete these assignments. Three unexcused absences will result in a deduction of 15% of the participation grade, with every subsequent absence resulting in an additional 5% of the participation grade. Unless the absence is legitimately excused, no make-up tutorials are offered. No in-class assignments can be made up. More than five minutes late to class is considered an unexcused absence.

It is important that you arrive to class on time and prepared for the day’s activities. If you use a laptop for taking notes or referring to the tutorials, refrain from surfing the web. This is a digitally-focused course, but it is not the time to shop, check email, social media, or find other distractions from class activities.

In keeping up with class assignments, it is your responsibility to track the due dates and plan your time as it works best for you. The dates and assignments are listed in the Course Calendar on our course website.

The best way to stay in contact with me outside of class is by email. I will respond as promptly as possible, but please note that I do not respond to emails after 7:00 pm and before 9:00 am Monday-Friday, and you may not receive a response from me on the weekends until Monday morning. Please plan your correspondence accordingly. When writing emails to you, I strive to maintain a level of courtesy and respect by beginning the email with a proper salutation such as “Dear Name” or “Hi Name.” I ask that you return the favor and not address emails with “Hey Professor” or simply “Hey.”

Digital Platforms:

**QGIS:**

We will be using the open-source software, QGIS, in this class. It is loaded on the computers in our lab classroom for our use. All tutorials and required work in this program will be completed in class. You are not required to download the software to your own computer, but if you would like to do so, you can visit: [http://www.qgis.org/en/site/forusers/download.html](http://www.qgis.org/en/site/forusers/download.html) Please see me before you install, and I will be happy to help you with the installation.

**Google Drive:**

A Google account has been created for the class. All spreadsheets will be saved here as well as your working documents for the spatial analysis. Links to the spreadsheets will be made available to you, but you are also encouraged to log in to the account to use the Google Drive. You will have to log in to this account in order to upload your writing assignments.

username: hgis.bard@gmail.com

pw: [Redacted]
Assignments:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Component</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Class Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This includes attendance, blog posts, and participation in class discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Quizzes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two quizzes will cover key ideas and components of using QGIS</td>
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<td>Mapping Project</td>
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<td>Data component: Assignments will be completed as homework</td>
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<td>Mapping Project</td>
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<td>Visualization component: Assignments will be completed in class tutorials</td>
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<td>Spatial Analysis</td>
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<td>Writing component: Assignment prompt will be distributed</td>
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Extra-credit: EH Share Event on May 11 in RKC

Every semester Experimental Humanities hosts a college-wide share event, in which students in EH classes can present their work to a larger EH community of students and faculty. More information will be provided at a later date.

***Note on Assignments***

All due dates for assignments will be posted on the course blog under the tab, Course Calendar. Unexcused late submission of assignments will result in a reduced grade, 5% each day it is late.

***Note on Plagiarism***

With the incredible accessibility of information at our fingertips, it is extremely important to remain vigilant against instances of plagiarism. To quote from the Bard handbook: “To plagiarize is to ‘steal and pass off as one’s own the ideas, words, or writings of another’ (Merriam-Webster). This dictionary definition is quite straightforward, but it is possible for students to plagiarize inadvertently if they do not carefully distinguish between their own ideas or paper topics and those of others. The Bard faculty regards acts of plagiarism very seriously.” Likewise, plagiarism is treated very seriously in this class. Any act of plagiarism will result in an F (zero) for the assignment. To read more on guidelines to avoid plagiarizing someone else’s work, see: http://inside.bard.edu/doso/handbook/index.php?aid=1201&sid=705

What will we study?

In this class we will focus on the history of Red Hook and Rhinebeck (the towns were both considered "Rhinebeck" until 1812) in the last decade of the eighteenth century. We will be using four copies of the surveys completed by Alexander Thompson in 1797 as our beginning points. These are incredible documents that show the roads, the Hudson River, and a number of structures. We will be "thickening" these maps over the next few weeks with historic data, including census data and tax records. Once this base information is established, we will work together as a class to begin constructing a question about this historic landscape. We will then embark on the final portion of the work, a spatial analysis of late-eighteenth-century Rhinebeck.
Course Calendar

Week 1 | What is GIS and HGIS
M | Mar 28
Tutorial:
Introduction to the Course

W | Mar 30
Reading:
- Ian N. Gregory and Alistair Geddes, “From Historical GIS to Spatial Humanities: Deepening Scholarship and Broadening Technology,” in *Towards Spatial Humanities*, ix-xviii.

Tutorial:
- HGIS Projects

Week 2 | Introduction to QGIS
M | Apr 4
Reading:

Assignment (due by class time):
- Post a review of your assigned HGIS project on the course blog (approximately 300-350 words); be sure to use the category: Responses

Tutorial:
- Shape files, tools, and layers in QGIS

W | Apr 6
Reading:

Assignment (due by class time):
- Quiz 1

Tutorial:
- Project Introduction and Google Sheets

Week 3 | Vectors
M | Apr 11
Reading:

Assignment (due by class time):
- Complete transcription of your assigned page in the 1790 Census
Tutorial:
- Historical data

W | Apr 13
Assignment:
- Complete assigned portion of tax records

Tutorial:
- Building data

Week 4 | Rasters
M | Apr 18
Reading:

Assignment:
- Complete assigned portion of tax records

Tutorial:
- Georeferencing a historic map

W | Apr 20
Assignment:
Quiz 2

Tutorial:
- Creating tiles from geotiffs

Week 5 | Historic Collections
M | Apr 25
Reading:
- Julia Hallam and Les Roberts, “Mapping the City in Film,” in *Towards Spatial Humanities*, 143-169.

Assignment:
- Add assigned data from historic collection

Tutorial:
- Joining data from multiple tables

W | Apr 27
Assignment:
- Add assigned data from historic collection

Tutorial:
- Tidying our maps and data
Week 6 | Map Production
M | May 2 *** Advising Day: NO CLASS ***

W | May 4
Reading:

Tutorial:
❖ Publishing the maps

Week 7 | Spatial Analysis
M | May 9
Tutorial:
❖ Adding your spatial analysis to the website

W | May 11
Tutorial:
❖ Work Day

Week 8 | Project Completion
M | May 16
Tutorial:
❖ Work Day

W | May 18 *** Completion Day ***

Week 9
M | May 23 *** Completion Day ***