



The University of Western Ontario

**HISTORY 9808B**

**Digital Public History**

**Winter 2026**

**Professor Mike Dove**

**Office Hours: TBA**

**Department of History, Lawson Hall 1207**

**mdove2@uwo.ca**

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**NOTE: This is a draft syllabus. The final version will be made available on OWL Brightspace prior to the start of classes in January.**

### **Course Description:**

Digital public history is the use of computers, digital media, and other tools for historical research, analysis, presentation and practice. This course focuses on how the use of digital technology affects the production and communication of history within the public sphere. HIS9808B supplements the other two mandatory courses (9800A; 9801B) for students enrolled in the public history field of the History MA. It is a combined seminar and project-based course, examining history as it is communicated to, and understood by, the public. Students will explore the theory, history and practice of digital public history, and learn the digital methods and skills used by public historians through site visits, workshops and projects.

### **Learning Objectives:**

At the end of this course, students should have:

- examined the theory and history of digital public history;
- an understanding of the ethical and practical problems in digital public history;
- explored how historical communities, identities, and consciousness are formed online;
- some familiarity with many of the digital technologies used by public historians;
- experience using a variety of digital platforms;
- developed skills to research, evaluate, and apply new media for public history;
- practiced non-traditional historical skills such as project management, teamwork, promotion, and working with community stakeholders;
- established contacts with practicing public historians at various heritage sites.

### **Enrollment Restrictions:**

This course is restricted to MA History students in the Public History field.

### **Course Materials:**

All readings are available through the OWL Brightspace course website, either as links or pdfs.

**Methods of Evaluation\*:**

Blogging (individual mark)	January – April	10%
Participation (individual mark)	January – April	20%
Podcast (individual mark)	February 13	20%
TikTok Assignment (individual mark)	February 27	10%
Group Project Midterm Report (group mark)	March 06	10%
Group Project Final (group mark)	April 08	30%

**\*More details will be included in the final version of the syllabus.**

**Course Schedule\*\*:**

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	NOTES
1	January 09	Introduction: Digital Public History & The Group Project	LwH 2270c
2	January 16	Digital Storytelling: Podcasts & TikToks	LwH 2270c
3	January 23	The Group Project I: Research	<b>Site Visit: TBA</b>
4	January 30	The Group Project II: The Partner Site <b>Group Contract Due</b>	<b>Site Visit: TBA</b>
5	February 06	Crowdsourcing - Documentary Editing	LwH 2270c
6	February 13	Material Culture & Digital Reproduction <b>Podcast Due</b>	<b>Site Visit: TBA</b>
	<b>February 16-20</b>	<b>WINTER STUDY BREAK!</b>	<b>NO CLASSES!</b>
7	February 27	Digital Mapping with ArcGIS <b>TikTok Due</b>	<b>Site Visit: TBA</b>
8	March 06	Games & Simulations <b>Group Project Midterm Report</b>	LwH 2270c
9	March 13	Place-Based History: Walking Tours	<b>Site Visit: TBA</b>
10	March 20	Promise & Perils of Digital Public History	LwH 2270c
11	March 27	Group Project Showcase	LwH 2270c
	<b>April 03</b>	<b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>	<b>NO CLASSES!</b>

**\*\*More details will be included in the final version of the syllabus.**

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## **Additional Statements**

### Health/Wellness Services:

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health Support at: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at: [http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental\\_health/resources.html](http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/resources.html)

### Accessibility Options:

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program. Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

### Request for Accommodations/Medical Issues:

Students are entitled to their privacy and consequently they do not need to disclose personal information to their course professors. In the event that students feel the need to discuss personal information, they should see the graduate chair. Unlike undergraduate students, graduate students cannot be referred to Social Science Academic Counselling to have their medical or non-medical circumstances evaluated and to receive a recommendation for accommodation. Those facilities are for undergraduates only, and there is no process beyond the department to secure recommendations for accommodation. Our process is that faculty should deal with routine requests for extensions. However, a student's request for accommodation (on medical, non-medical, compassionate grounds) should go to the graduate chair, Prof. Francine McKenzie ([historygradchair@uwo.ca](mailto:historygradchair@uwo.ca)) who will consult and communicate with faculty. Additionally, faculty and students should communicate with the grad chair about any case in which work is not submitted before grades are due. In the event that the

graduate chair is also the course professor, then a request for accommodation can be taken to the department chair.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Students in this course may use generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, for activities such as researching and refining their ideas, or drafting an outline to organize their thoughts—but not for generating prose. All writing submitted in this course must be their own. If in doubt, please ask me for clarification and advice.

Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf).

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact: [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca)

**NOTE:** See Policies and Statements on the Graduate section of the History Department website:

[https://history.uwo.ca/graduate/program\\_information/graduate\\_policies\\_and\\_statements.html](https://history.uwo.ca/graduate/program_information/graduate_policies_and_statements.html)

This includes additional information on academic support services for health and wellness and on other academic policies, including copyright, plagiarism, and accessibility.