

Course Reflection - Digital Humanities

In all my time at UNC, I'm not sure I've ever taken a class quite like Digital Humanities. It coincided with my final semester, with the pressure of capstone projects, graduation, job-searching, and so many other endeavors looming over my head. I was weighing which classes would take up most of my time and brainpower (like Operating Systems), and worried that the rest would take up much-needed free time to pursue my other obligations. My fears were almost immediately alleviated, as the very first activity we ended up doing as a class was deciding our own semester's schedule. Each group designed an assignment (as there were only a few main ones sporadically placed throughout the semester), and the professor was okay with us making these plans as flexible as we could. Many enrolled in Digital Humanities are likewise in their final semester, and as there are only around ten students in the course, leniency was a much-welcome surprise. I saw it initially as a blessing—the sign of an easy write-off class to end my college career, but from the vague and ambiguous project requirements we designed came a certain uniqueness I haven't yet experienced at UNC. For presentation projects, some students made games like Jeopardy, others prepared basic lectures on topics they were individually passionate about, and even more led class discussion on a topic instead of giving a presentation at all.

This kind of academic freedom allowed for the free pursuit of virtually any topic we desired, as long as we could compare it to what we came to learn was a truly vast Digital Humanities field. It all eventually culminated in the final “project”, in which we spent class time just preparing characters for and playing Dungeons & Dragons. It was a testament (and a test)

regarding the breadth of representation in digital media, as well as a means through which the class got to better know one another in a stress-free environment during the final weeks of class.

The structure of this course never made me feel immensely pressured, but all the while I felt like I was learning valuable information through class discussion. Never has quality education been so flexible while attending UNC, so I want to commend Dr. Brownlee on her understanding of the student condition.