White Paper Report

Report ID: 98490

Application Number: HD5053708

Project Director: Matthew Gold (mgold@citytech.cuny.edu)

Institution: CUNY Research Foundation, NYC College of Technology

Reporting Period: 9/1/2008-12/31/2009

Report Due: 3/31/2010

Date Submitted: 7/9/2010

LOOKING FOR

WHITMAN

The Poetry of Place in the Life and Work of Walt Whitman

A multi-campus experiment in digital pedagogy sponsored by the NEH Office of Digital Humanities

"Looking for Whitman: The Poetry of Place in the Life and Work of Walt Whitman"

Final Performance Report

July 7, 2010

Matthew K. Gold, Project Director
Assistant Professor of English, New York City College of Technology
Interactive Technology and Pedagogy Certificate Program, CUNY Graduate Center

Table of Contents

Introduction and Contexts

"Looking for Whitman: The Poetry of Place in the Life and Work of Walt Whitman" received a $24,912 Level 1 Start-Up Grant from the NEH Office of Digital Humanities to support planning activities between September 2008 and August 2009.

The goal of the project was to create a series of linked courses that would be offered concurrently at four universities located in places central to Whitman's life and writing. In each course, students would explore the work Whitman had written in that location and would examine connections between place and text. In New York City, students at New York City College of Technology and New York University would explore Whitman's early career as a journalist, novelist, and poet. The course at University of Mary Washington would concentrate on the middle phases of Whitman's career that centered on the years he spent in Fredericksburg and Washington, D.C., tending to soldiers wounded in the Civil War. Two classes at Rutgers – Camden would explore Whitman's late-period reflective writing that he completed while living in Camden, New Jersey during the last decade of his life.

All classes would converge on a central website that had been customized to allow for rich interactions both within and between classes. Student work would be centered around individual blogs, but other kinds of group interactions would also be encouraged, as would the creation and sharing of media through third-party social-media services such as Flickr, Twitter, and YouTube.

Project Participants

Brier, Steve. CUNY Graduate Center.

Earnhart, Brady. University of Mary Washington.

Gold, Matthew K. New York City College of Technology, CUNY.

Groom, James. University of Mary Washington.

Hoffman, Tyler. Rutgers University.

Karbiener, Karen. New York University.

Kelly, T. Mills. George Mason University.

Reynolds, David S. CUNY Graduate Center.

Scanlon, Mara. University of Mary Washington.

Singley, Carol. Rutgers University.

Project Activities

Plan of the Work

As described in the grant application, the work for this planning grant centered around five major activities: Course Development, Website Development, Faculty Technology Training, Resource Identification and Development, and Faculty Workshops and Training Seminars. The collective goal of these interconnected activities was to arrive at the beginning of the Fall 2009 semester, when the linked courses were to be offered, with the following outcomes:

Course Development:
- Arrangements made with departments and registrars at each college to ensure courses would run in the Fall 2009 semester
- Completed course syllabi for Fall 2009 courses

- Design of coordinated assignments that could be shared among all courses in the project

- Coordination between course schedules so that texts would be covered at roughly synchronous times

- Outreach to potential students at each college

Website Development

- Secure server space and install project platform (WordPress Multi-User with BuddyPress)

- Customize platform for project objectives

- Set up blogging and group spaces for each course

- Assemble support documentation for students

Faculty Technology Training

- Assess skill levels of all lead faculty members

- Train faculty members in platforms and services to be used in the project

- Support faculty members between training meetings and encourage active use of project site between meetings

Resource Identification and Development

- Identify relevant archival resources at each project location

- Meet with representatives of local cultural institutions to plan participation in project

- Design learning activities around local resources

- Construct resource lists for students

Faculty Workshops and Training Seminars

- Plan three gatherings for faculty participants that would combine technology

  training, course planning, and lectures from experts in the field.

In sum, we aimed to arrive at the beginning of the Fall 2009 semester fully prepared to offer concurrent courses at each college with coordinated learning activities that would take place on a website that had been customized to foster cross-campus collaboration.

Implementation

Fall 2008

After notification of the award was made in August 2008, work on the grant began in September. Early efforts centered on organizational and technological groundwork, with planning meetings for the project set to take place during the spring and summer of 2009. Project Director Matthew Gold and Technology Director James Groom worked together to map out an initial design and implementation plan for the project website, to secure hosting and domain names, and to begin customizing the site to foster cross-course sharing. Groom, one of the primary forces behind the University of Mary Washington's highly praised UMWBlogs installation (http://umwblogs.org/), installed and configured WordPress Multi-User and BuddyPress on the project website (http://lookingforwhitman.org). Gold and Groom discussed various ways in which

students in the four courses involved in the project might connect with one another, deciding eventually to embrace a feed-based system for propagating content across the site that will be described in greater detail later in this document.

Faculty members at each project location began working with their departments and administrations to get their courses on the books for the Fall 2009 semester. Given the widely divergent types of institutions involved in the project – a public school of technology, a public liberal arts college, a public research university, and a private research university – the courses that wound up being part of the project differed in marked ways. At New York City College of Technology, Gold proposed an elective literature class on Whitman offered through the English Department's "One Major Author" course. At University of Mary Washington, Scanlon and Earnhart were able to negotiate a co-teaching arrangement for a senior-level capstone course for English majors. At Rutgers - Camden, Hoffman would offer a course on "Walt Whitman in Camden" that would include both graduate students and undergraduates, while Singley decided to structure a course nominally titled "Introduction to Graduate Studies in English" around Whitman's work so that it might be included in the project.

This diverse range of courses meant that the project would involve students with a varied set of skills in a deeply collaborative project. Graduate students and senior English majors, who had honed close reading skills and research practices over years of study, would be placed in a deeply collaborative learning environment with undergraduates at an open-admissions university who majored not in English, but in Architecture, Engineering, Graphic Arts, and Computer Science. This kind of

intellectual, social, and economic diversity was modeled on Whitman's own practices and beliefs; in his long poetic catalogues, he celebrated the radically democratic mix of citizens he found on the streets of New York, Washington, and Camden. And as "Looking for Whitman" began to take shape, it became obvious that it would present the same kind of challenge to educational practices that all too often segregate students by rank, ability, knowledge, and skills, missing what Whitman might have seen as a chance to find commonalities between them. As Gold has argued, this kind of breaking down of institutional barriers is one of the radical possibilities opened up by Digital Humanities pedagogies.[1]

Early in the project, a challenge arose when one of the lead faculty members, Karen Karbiener of New York University, learned that she would have the opportunity to spend the 2008-2009 academic year teaching at NYU's London campus. This circumstance would make it prohibitively expensive for her to attend the Spring 2009 planning meetings, jeopardizing her participation in the project. Given Karbiener's value to the project as an expert on Whitman's life in New York, and given the fact that a 2007 lecture she had delivered as part of an NEH-sponsored faculty development project ("Water and Work: The History and Ecology of Downtown Brooklyn") had helped inspire "Looking for Whitman," Gold and Karbiener made a series of arrangements that would allow her to stay involved in the project. Before Karbiener left for London in the Fall 2008 semester, she and Gold met several times for intensive training sessions on WordPress and related project technologies, which Karbiener had not used before. Karbiener committed to participating in group activities during the 2008-2009 year via

---

[1] Gold, Matthew. "Hacking Together Egalitarian Educational Communities; Some Notes on the Looking for Whitman Project." *The Lapland Chronicles*. 28 May 2010. Web.

email, skype, and phone.

We made another small change to the structure of the grant during the Fall 2008 semester. In the grant proposal, we had identified two faculty members at both Rutgers-Camden and University of Mary Washington; in each location, we had specified one participant as a lead faculty member and the other as a supporting faculty member, with accordingly sized stipends attached to each position. During our early discussions, however, it quickly became apparent that all faculty members involved in the project would be devoting equally large amounts of time and energy to the project, and so the Project Director decided to even out the stipends and to consider all faculty members as equal participants.

By the end of the Fall 2008 semester, the project had a working website and a strategy of digital pedagogy in place. Faculty members had made necessary arrangements to have their courses run in Fall 2009, and they had contacted local archival institutions involved in the project to begin sketching out possible classroom interactions. Groundwork was also laid for the first planning meeting, which would take place early in the Spring 2009 semester.

Spring 2009

First Planning Meeting: March 6-7, 2009 at New York City College of Technology

Meeting Summary

Participants: Brady Earnhart (University of Mary Washington), Matthew K. Gold (New York City College of Technology), James Groom (University of Mary Washington), Tyler Hoffman (Rutgers University), Jesse Merandy (CUNY Graduate Center), David S. Reynolds (CUNY Graduate Center), Mara Scanlon (University of Mary Washington), Carol Singley (Rutgers University).

       The first planning meeting for the project took place over two days in Brooklyn, New York at New York City College of Technology. Located next to the entrance of the Brooklyn Bridge, just a few blocks away from the site on which the first edition of *Leaves of Grass* was printed, and only a short walk away from the Fulton Ferry pier, which Whitman wrote about in "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," the location of the College amply demonstrated the power of place-based education, which the project itself had been built upon.

       The planning meeting had several important goals: faculty technology training, course planning, and digital pedagogy discussions. An important secondary goal was to begin building close working relationships between faculty members that would strengthen this collaborative pedagogical project.

       After all participants arrived in Brooklyn on Friday night, the planning meeting began the next morning. Gold gave a short welcome and introduction to the project and then handed the meeting over to Technology Director Groom, who, in his trademark manner, began an intensive training session that was part Intro to Blogging, part radical digital pedagogy, and part Edupunk primer.

Groom's presentation electrified the faculty participants and helped foster a sense of expanded possibilities within the virtual space of the project, but it also highlighted one of the difficulties of the project that would remain present throughout the grant period: the varying levels of comfort and experience that faculty members had with WordPress specifically, and digital technology more generally. In searching for participants in the project while putting together the grant application, Gold had decided to emphasize, along with the location of the scholar's institution, expertise in Whitman's work as the prime factor in choosing faculty members; as long as the faculty members felt comfortable experimenting with digital technologies, he surmised the they could be brought up to speed on technology training sessions. While this proved to be largely true, some faculty members picked up the technical details of the project platform more quickly than others, with the result that they were to move on to the course planning session before others felt that they had mastered the tools that would be used in those courses.

Barring a perfect alignment of many factors – faculty location, faculty availability, faculty expertise, faculty tech-savviness – this kind of tension is perhaps unavoidable, especially in a project that places so much emphasis on location and on the work of a single author. While this problem would have been eased had the Project Director selected faculty members solely on the basis of technological expertise, following that route would have created other problems – namely, that most faculty members would have blanched at the prospect of teaching an entire course about a single author whose work they knew only on a superficial level.

Importantly, Groom's presentation was not merely a by-the-numbers training

session, but was instead the introduction of a particular stance, a particular approach to the use of technology in the classroom that obviously energized everyone present. Groom's emphasis on the importance of openness, independence, self-direction, and creativity fed directly into the afternoon course planning session; after having come to the session with varying levels of technological ability, faculty members could now approach the design of their courses with a better sense of the possibilities that digital technologies could bring to the classroom.

During the first session of collaborative course planning, faculty participants described the courses they would be teaching in the fall and made note of special curricular obligations and requirements, which proved more challenging in some cases than others. One of the Rutgers-Camden courses, for instance, was being offered as a straight "Introduction to Graduate Studies in English" course, and so the syllabus would have to include units on various theoretical approaches to literary criticism that would not be part of the other courses in the project.

By design, each class involved in the project would be concentrating on the specific texts that Whitman had written in that project location. Since *Leaves of Grass* had gone through six major editions in America, this meant that each class would concentrate on a particular edition of the text – at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, for example, students would focus on Whitman's Civil War experiences and would pay close attention to the 1867 edition of the text. At Rutgers-Camden, by contrast, students would study Whitman's late career and would concentrate especially on the 1881 edition. In New York, students would focus on the 1855 edition of the text, but would also explore Whitman's pre-1855 journalism and his temperance novel, *Franklin*

Evans.

The faculty group agreed that all classes would start with the landmark 1855 edition of the text and would use shared activities to connect student observations about that text on a project-wide basis (see full description of course projects below). By having all classes begin with the same text and use it as a way to have students introduce themselves to one another, we hoped that the project would be experienced as unified set of courses rather than a collection of separate classes in different locations.

Following the course brainstorming session, the group was visited by David S. Reynolds, Distinguished Professor of English and American Studies at the Ph.D. Program in English at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Reynolds, the author of the landmark *Beneath the American Renaissance* (1989) and the highly regarded *Walt Whitman: A Cultural Biography* (1996), delivered a lecture entitled "Walt Whitman, One of the B'hoys: *Leaves of Grass* and Manhattan Street Culture." Emphasizing Whitman's relationship to the New York environs in which he lived and worked, Reynolds contextualized Whitman's texts within a historically grounded account of the socio-political life of the city during the early nineteenth century. Faculty members agreed that the lecture would be extremely useful to them particularly as they taught the 1855 edition of *Leaves* in the Fall 2009 semester.

The remainder of the day was spent on continued course planning and technology training, as was the next morning. The final activity of the planning session involved a guided walking tour by Jesse Merandy, a Ph.D. candidate in English at CUNY Graduate Center and editor of "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry: An Online Critical Edition." In a practice run of a tour that he would give to City Tech students later in the Fall, Merandy led the

group through a collection of Whitman landmarks in Brooklyn Heights, including the original location of the Rome Brothers Print Shop (where the 1855 edition was printed), the Fulton Ferry landing, the Plymouth Church, and Brooklyn Eagle warehouse. The walking tour helped concretize the active learning experiences that would eventually be a hallmark of every course in the project.

Second Planning Meeting: June 17-18, 2009 at Rutgers-Camden

Meeting Summary

Participants: Brady Earnhart (University of Mary Washington), Matthew Gold (New York City College of Technology), James Groom (University of Mary Washington), Tyler Hoffman (Rutgers University), Mara Scanlon (University of Mary Washington), Carol Singley (Rutgers University).

Having used the project website between March and June to gain comfort with the platform, faculty members gathered in Camden to continue technology training and course development. Over a two-day span of planning sessions, during parts of which Karen Karbiener skyped in from London, the group came together around a unified set of shared activities that would be part of the syllabus of every class:

Frontispiece Project

Students would be asked to create a personalized digital version of Whitman's famous 1855 frontispiece as a way of introducing themselves to one another. Combining a photo of themselves with a few lines of representative text from the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, students would begin the semester with an assignment that got them to create content on their blogs at the very beginning of the course.

Image Gloss project

This assignment asked students to do some research on a word or phrase from the 1855 *Leaves of Grass* that seemed unfamiliar to them and to create short blog posts with at least one image.

The Material Culture Museum

Students would choose a material artifact described in Whitman's poetry or related to his life. They would build online museum exhibit around that object as a way of reading history through the lens of material culture. When aggregated with other exhibits, these objects would form a virtual museum.

Annotation Project

This assignment asked students to use the digress.it WordPress theme to annotate a Whitman text written in that project location. Some courses made this an individual project, while others took a collaborative, team-based approach.

Field Trips

This space would aggregate posts, images, and videos from various Whitman-inspired field trips across the campuses.

Finding Whitman Videos

At the end of the semester, students in each class would create a short video of themselves reading passages of Whitman's poetry in places that seemed especially infused with Whitman's influence. Videos would be plotted on a map and would show the fully geographic reach of the project.

Visitor's Center Scripts (Camden)

In connection with a planned renovation of the Walt Whitman House on Mickle Street in Camden that would include a new Visitor's Center, students would work with curators to create content for potential exhibitions.

Address Project (NYC)

Students at City Tech would visit the Brooklyn Historical Society to research the addresses at which Whitman was reported to have lived in his early years in Brooklyn, about which little is known. Most of these addresses were transient rooming houses that had little documentation, but the process of digging through archival materials such as Sanborn fire-insurance maps, city registries, and property liens would give students a first-hand experience with the process of creating historical narratives from primary documents.

The group of faculty members unified themselves around this series of pedagogical activities, which we hoped would help tie our classes together despite the fact that they would be taking place in separate project locations and often studying very different texts.

Taking inspiration from Groom's work on UMWBlogs, on one hand, and Gold's work on the CUNY Academic Commons (http://commons.gc.cuny.edu) on the other, Gold and Groom fleshed out the model for interactions between students on the project website. Using a feed-based aggregation system as a model, students would create all work for the course on their own customized blogs. Using tags to pull posts into various aggregation blogs, the site would aggregate content from across the system to synthesize the work of classes into a group blog, or the work of all participating students to project-based blogs. For instance, students would begin the course by creating their own blogs on lookingforwhitman.org; they would customize their blogs by choosing themes that appealed to them and plugins that gave them the functionality that they desired. As Groom himself had suggested,[2] these individual blogs would become the equivalent of a kind of modern, distributed, notebook that students could use to track their progress through the course. But through intelligent use of tags and feeds, these individual posts could then be pulled out to other locations on the site.

An example should make the method clear. Let's suppose that one of the Rutgers-Camden classes goes on a field trip to visit Walt Whitman's gravesite in the Harleigh

---

[2] Groom, James. "One Tool to Rule them All: the BLOG!." *BavaTuesdays*. 10 Feb 2007. Web.

Cemetary. During the trip, a student takes photos of the mausoleum and uploads them to the photo-sharing site Flickr afterwards (tagging them with the project hashtag, #ww20, along the way). The student later sits down to write a reflective post about his experience; he posts it to his individual course blog, where it joins posts he had written in previous weeks about various required readings.

The post written by the student now resides on his individual blog, helping form a record of his learning. But the post also gets pulled into a course aggregation blog that acts as a hub for this student's class at Rutgers-Camden; any time a post is published on a blog run by a student in that class, it gets republished on the course blog, thereby collecting the posts of all students in the course. That way, if students want to know what their classmates have written, or if a professor wants to read all posts from the class, he or she simply has to visit the course blog (or "motherblog," as it is sometimes called) to see all posts written in that class.

So far, so good . . . but also so individual and course-centric. If we wanted to foster cross-course conversations, as we hoped to do, we would have to find ways to aggregate content *across* classes and to do so in ways that weren't confusing or difficult. What we settled on was a system in which each major shared project was assigned a hashtag, such as #frontispiece or #fieldtrip. We then set up aggregating blogs that would pull in and republish certain tagged posts from across the blogging installation. For example, we created a "Field Trips" blog that would bring together all field-trip related posts across the entire project. This allowed students from different classes to see one another's posts in new ways, and to make connections between the various field trips undertaken by each of the classes.

With the technological infrastructure of our site settled and our faculty members growing more comfortable with the platform by using it to communicate during and after planning meetings, we set out on another local tour to Whitman-related sites, this time visiting the Walt Whitman House on Mickle Street and the Whitman Gravesite in the Harleigh Cemetery.

Third Planning Meeting: Summer 2009 at University of Mary Washington (Cancelled)

Faculty participants left the June Planning meeting feeling relatively confident in their skills and almost ready for the Fall semester to start. The team had planned to have an additional planning meeting in the late summer, before courses would run, but a budgetary twist cropped up: when initially applying for a Level 1 SUG Grant from the Office of Digital Humanities, he had assumed that projects funded at Level 1 would be likely to receive Level 2 funding, and that this was the way in which the grant program had been designed. And so, the budget for the Level 1 grant covered the 2008-2009 year of planning activities, but not the Fall 2009 semester, when the courses themselves would run. In the process of applying for a Level 2 grant, the Project Director became aware of just how difficult it was to receive a second round of funding, and that no previous project had received both Level 1 and Level 2 funding. With Level 2 funding uncertain, the Level 1 award might represent all of the funding that the project would receive. And so, in an effort to stretch the budget into the Fall 2009 semester in case the second grant application was unsuccessful, the project team decided to cancel the third planning

meeting, but to communicate extensively online and on the phone to continue preparations for the Fall semester. The effects of this decision were not wholly deleterious; by continuing to engage the project website for project communications, faculty members became increasingly comfortable with it. And so, when we did, in fact, hear the great news that the project had received a second round of funding, faculty members were primed to begin using the site in their teaching.

A final change in plans did affect the project: after a year in London, Karen Karbiener learned that she had received a Fulbright Scholarship to the University of Novi Sad, Serbia during the Fall 2009 semester. There was a possibility that she could teach a course that could be part of the "Looking for Whitman" project, but including a course on another continent, in a country and a locale that played no discernable role in Whitman's writing, disturbed the neat symmetry of places and texts that had defined the structure of the project from the beginning. But as an important Whitman scholar associated with the project whose enthusiasm for the poet's work was known to be infectious and inspiring, Karbiener was too valuable to lose, and so the class at Novi Sad was added to the project. While Novi Sad might have seemed to be an incongruous fit, this turned out to be one of the best things to happen to the grant project for reasons that will be detailed in the forthcoming whitepaper for the Level 2 grant. Thankfully, Karbiener spent the 2009 summer in New York, so she and Gold were about to convene again for additional technology training and course planning sessions.

Publicity

"Looking for Whitman" received positive publicity at both the local and national levels. Locally, several New York Brooklyn and Queens publications ran stories about the project; in Viriginia, the *Richmond Times Dispatch* covered the grant.

Media coverage of the grant was highlighted by two major stories: Jennifer Howard's "Whitman Takes Manhattan," which appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*'s "Wired Campus" blog, and "Walt Whitman Goes 2.0," which was published in the April 2009 print edition of *Converge Magazine*.

Additionally, two faculty members from the University of Mary Washington appeared on "With Good Reason," a syndicated public radio program that airs in Virginia and Washington D.C., in an episode titled "Whitman at War."

A full list of relevant publications related to the 2008-2009 year of the grant appears below:

"CUNY Matters: Teaching Online in Real Time." http://web.cuny.edu/news/cm-archive/may09.pdf.

"Education Update - City Tech Professor Captures Walt Whitman Spirit in Digital Teaching." *Education Update*, 4, 2009. http://www.educationupdate.com/archives/2009/APR/html/col-citytech.html.

Earnhart, Brady and Scanlon, Mara. Interview with Sarah McConnell. *With Good Reason*. Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. Charlottesville, VA. 4 July 2009.

Forsten, Michelle. "Walt Whitman's democratic spirit lives on in City Tech professor's foray into digital learning | Exchange | Ode Magazine." *ODE Magazine*, 3, 2009. http://www.odemagazine.com/exchange/5329/walt_whitman_s_democratic_spirit _lives_on_in_city_tech_professor_s_foray_into_digital_learning.

Harris, Chandler. "Walt Whitman Goes 2.0." *Converge*, April 2009. http://www.convergemag.com/artsandhumanities/Walt-Whitman-Goes-20.html.

Howard, Jennifer. "Wired Campus: Whitman Takes Manhattan - Chronicle.com." Blog. *The Chronicle of Higher Education: The Wired Campus*, April 8, 2009. http://chronicle.com/wiredcampus/article/3704/whitman-takes-manhattan.

"Mary Washington joins in on Whitman course." *Richmond Times Dispatch*, 1, 2009. http://www.timesdispatch.com/rtd/news/local/education/article/CAMP01_200904 30-220609/264980/.

"Queens Ledger - On the Record," March 31, 2009. http://www.queensledger.com/view/full_story/2217196/article-On-the-Record?instance=lead_story_left_column.

"UMW Faculty Collaborate on Digital Project." *University of Mary Washington*. http://www.umw.edu/news/?a=1699.

"Walt Whitman's Democratic Spirit Lives on in Professor Gold's Multi-Campus Digital Humanities Experiment." http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/aboutus/newsevents/gold_whitman/index.shtml.

Additionally, many blogs and twitter users wrote about the project. Notably, Jim

Groom's "Looking for Whitman: A Grand, Aggregated Experiment"

(http://bavatuesdays.com/looking-for-whitman-a-grand-aggregated-experiment/) captured

the spirit of the project.

Here is a representative tweet about the project from David Silver, a Professor of Media

Studies at the University of San Francisco:

Finally, the Project Director and faculty proposed a Special Session on the project that

was accepted for the 2009 MLA Convention. The panel, titled "Looking for Whitman: A Cross-Campus Experiment in Digital Pedagogy," was held in December 2009 at the Philadlephia, PA convention; a full description of the panel will be part of the Level 2 Grant report.

Audience

While the planning work on the grant was intended primarily for faculty participants in the project who were developing a set of linked courses that would later be offered to students, the project clearly sought to reach several distinct audiences. Most importantly, of course, were the students who would be taking these classes in the Fall 2009 semester. Beyond the immediate audience, however, was a secondary audience of colleagues in the field of Digital Humanities, perhaps exemplified by the David Silver tweet above, for whom the project itself could serve as instigation to start similar projects. Finally, by creating a project website premised on openness and transparency, the project set the stage for a pedagogical experiment that would be accessible to the public both within and outside of academe.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the Level 1 Grant was conducted informally by assessing the degree to which the project achieved its stated goals during the planning year. Having achieved all major objectives and having generated a great deal of media interest along the way, the

planning grant can be considered a success. A more robust assessment tool will be included in the Level 2 Grant report.

Continuation and Long-Term Impact

The project received funding from a Level 2 Start-Up Grant from the Office of the Digital Humanities. This meant that it would have increased support as it headed into the important Fall 2009 semester, when the classes planned during the 2008-2009 semester would actually run.

The long-term impact of the grant was felt especially strongly at New York City College of Technology, the institution at which the Project Director teaches. There, it became the latest in a series of grants from funding agencies such as the NEH and NSF that focused on explorations of the immediate vicinity of the College and of the Brooklyn Waterfront. Subsequent funded projects, such as the NEH-funded "Along the Shore" Humanities Summer Institute, have continued to broaden this productive line of inquiry and have helped foster an increasingly vibrant intellectual culture at the College.

Appendix A: Planning Meeting Itineraries

Looking for Whitman
March 2009 Planning Meetings
New York City College of Technology, CUNY
March 6-8, 2009

Itinerary

Friday, March 6
Participants arrive at NuHotel, Brooklyn, check in.
6pm — Meet in the NuHotel Lobby for optional dinner in Brooklyn

Saturday, March 7
Location: City Tech, Namm Building Room 601B
9am-9:30am — Welcome/Opening Remarks/Introductions
9:30am-12pm — Presentation/Technology Workshop
            Jim Groom, Instructional Technologist, University of Mary Washington
12pm -1pm — Lunch — Brooklyn pizza delivered from Fascati's Pizza
1pm-2pm — Course Content/Planning Discussion
2pm-4pm — Lecture/Discussion: "Walt Whitman, One of the B'hoys: *Leaves of Grass*
        and Manhattan Street Culture." David Reynolds, Distinguished Professor of
        English and American Studies at Baruch College and the Graduate Center of the
        City University of New York.
        Location: City Tech, Atrium Building Room 632
4pm-5pm— Course Content/Planning Discussion
~7pm— Optional dinner

Sunday, March 8
Location: City Tech, Namm Building Room 601B
9am-10am— Technology and Pedagogy Discussion/Workshop; Future Meetings
Discussions
10am-11am — Resource Planning Discussion
11am-1pm — "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" walking tour led by Jesse Merandy, Ph.D.
        Candidate in English, CUNY Graduate Center. **Please visit**
        http://micklestreet.rutgers.edu/CBF/walking%20tour/index.html and
        download the audio files to a mobile music device if you have one
1pm-1:30pm— Closing Ceremonies

Looking for Whitman
June 2009 Planning Meeting
Rutgers University - Camden
June 17-18, 2009

Itinerary

Wednesday, June 17
Location: Rutgers Camden
Business and Science Building 107

11am — Meet in First Floor Computer Lab
11am-1pm — Technology Workshop
1pm-2pm — Lunch
2pm-5pm — Technology Workshop and Curriculum Planning
6-8pm — Dinner

Thursday, June 18
9am-9:30am — Welcome/Breakfast
9:30-10:30am — Technology Training
10:30-12:30pm — Curriculum Planning
12:30-1:30 — Lunch
1:30-2:30 Whitman Gravesite Tour
2:30-4 Tour of Walt Whitman House
4-5 Regroup and Final Planning Meeting/Closing Ceremonies

ENGL 455H: Digital Whitman
Fall 2009

Dr. Mara Scanlon, Dr. Brady Earnhart, and Jim "The Reverend" Groom
Tuesdays 6:00-8:45 p.m.
Combs 322 and 349
University of Mary Washington

Scanlon:	Earnhart:	Groom:
Combs 331	Combs 355	DuPont 310
654-1544	654-1525	654-1997
mscanlon@umw.edu	dearnhar@umw.edu	jgroom@umw.edu
MW 11-1; F 11-12	MW 1-2:30	
and by appt.	or (preferably) by appt.	

Course Description: This seminar is a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in the work of one of America's most brilliant poets and in a collaborative project with students from three other universities under a National Endowment for the Humanities grant called "Looking for Whitman."   We will analyze Walt Whitman's poetic and prose work deeply, focusing most specifically on the writings related to the geographic space in which we study—in our case, Fredericksburg and Washington, DC, where Whitman spent time in the Civil War years. The class, which will include visitation to appropriate local sites and archives, will situate Whitman historically, geographically, culturally, biographically--AND digitally. In collaboration with our partner classes, we will build a rich digital network of our thoughts, discoveries, and (critical, informative, interrogative, creative, reflective) writing. Come travel with us and Whitman on one more open road: that of distributed, collective learning.

Texts: *Walt Whitman: Complete Poetry and Collected Prose* (Library of America).
        Selected Readings on blog or Simpson Reserve.

Course Requirements (additional details may be posted on course blog for some assignments):

a) **Participation—Oral and Blog (25%).**
    Like most seminars, this one relies on your deep engagement with the course material and active participation in several fora. The most obvious of these is oral participation in the discussion during our meetings each week. Come with your reading done carefully and your thoughts organized (or productively disorganized). Be ready to talk and to listen. You will not miss class.

Your writing on the blog, whether as original posts or in meaningful comments on other people's posts (whether from our class or our affiliated classes) will comprise part of this grade. Some of the writing you do on your blog will be required or prompted (more just below), but the blog is also fundamentally a place for you to reflect semi- or informally on our coursework through writing, pose questions, incorporate links and outside materials related to the course, etc. It is one place that you can make Digital Whitman your own. It is fluid and nearly limitless. Use it.

A bit of the writing you do for the blog will be in focused preparation for the week's class. Each week you will post a short piece of writing (about 500 words) *no later than Sunday at midnight* with the title "**[Your Name] for [coming Tuesday's date]**" (e.g., "Matt for Sept. 22") so we can easily distinguish it from other posts. You will see that each week on the course schedule includes one or two possible prompting questions that identify issues we are likely to raise in class. These may often provide your focus for the week's short writing, but they are not meant to be limiting, so if your interest takes you in a different direction, that's okay. Before class on Tuesday, you will also make a minimum of *three* comments on other people's posts (of any kind, not necessarily short writing). When the work from other courses becomes available on the Looking for Whitman home blog (for instance, under the projects tab), at least one of your comments should be for a non-UMW student from an affiliated course as a way to make sure our work is weaving together in meaningful ways.

Participation also includes reflection on and (audio, video, photo, or other) documentation of our shared field trips.

b) **Oral Report/Study Guide (10%).**
These projects represent a major way, in addition to class/blog discussion, that we will build a communal knowledge base. The oral reports will be handled in partners or groups and are designed to broaden our social and historical contexts for reading Whitman. Each report will involve doing outside reading on which you will be the class experts. You will have some flexibility with topic and due date, as the course schedule shows. Your findings will be distributed in two ways. First, on the assigned date you will present an overview of your information to the class in fifteen minutes, sharing the task equally with your partner(s). Second, you will produce a study guide of your information in a word document that will be posted on our website. It will be 1-2 pages (single-spaced) plus a bibliography of your sources and should be designed as a resource for your classmates that also shows your ability to step back from your research, identify its major points, and summarize them gracefully and accurately. It should not be a replica of your oral presentation. Within 24 hours of your presentation, the study

guide must be emailed to Dr. Scanlon as an attachment. Our website will be used to gather this collective knowledge as we go.

c) **Image Gloss (5%, due Tuesday, September 8).**
This assignment on the 1855 version of "Song" will be shared by affiliated courses. You will simultaneously practice your technological skills and add to our communal understanding of the poem. Rather than focusing on your personal relationship to Whitman as you will for the first frontispiece digital project (see below), you will focus here on what is unfamiliar or historically distant. During your reading, you will choose one image or reference in the poem about which you think it would be helpful to know more (e.g., The Alamo). Then you will do some research on that term and will write an annotation or context or gloss for it. Your gloss should include image, audio, or video support, so choose something for which that is possible. What is the significance of your image or what does your research add to our knowledge base? **Your post must be tagged "imagegloss" to get to the right part of the Whitman network**.

d) **Material Culture Museum Entry (10%, due Tuesday, October 20).**
This assignment will be shared by affiliated courses. Building on the Image Gloss, this will be a more substantial historical research project and will relate specifically to the material context of Whitman's years in Fredericksburg or DC. We will provide some suggestions and examples when the assignment is made in class. **Your post must be tagged "digitalmuseum" to get to the right part of the Whitman network**.

e) *Leaves* **Group Annotations (15%, due Tuesday, November 3).**
This assignment will be shared by affiliated courses; each will focus on text added to *Leaves of Grass* during the years that a university specializes in—in our case, the 1867 version of *Leaves*. It will also build on the Image Gloss and will involve close reading and historical or critical research. You will work in small groups on this over several weeks, during which your progress might be subject to review during class. More information will be given when the assignment is made in class.

f) **Digital Projects (each 5%=10%): Frontispiece and "Song" introductions (due Tuesday, September 1) and "Where I Found Whitman" video readings (due Tuesday, November 17).**
Both of these projects, which will be shared by affiliated courses, are about your own relationship to Whitman, whether early or late in the semester. In the first, an introduction of sorts, you will think about Whitman's careful visual presentation of himself in the anonymous publication of the 1855 *Leaves*. What does he mean to convey by his stance, his clothing, his facial expression or eyes? Choose or make an image of yourself, attending to the same variables, that you would use for your own "frontispiece." Now choose about 6-10 lines from "Song of Myself" that speak most deeply to you or that

you identify with for whatever reason. Post all of these to the blog to introduce yourself to the world and to our Looking for Whitman community more specifically; you might title that post "**Song of [Your Name].**" **Your post must be tagged "frontispiece" to get to the right part of the Whitman network**. We'd suggest thinking about using your frontispiece also for your avatar on the blog.

In the second project, due much later in the semester, you will produce a video that captures what you are coming to understand as the relationship between Whitman and the geographic space in which we study him (probably DC or Fredericksburg, but possibly elsewhere). Rather than explicate this relationship, you will demonstrate it by reading a (somewhat substantial) excerpt from Whitman's prose or poetry out loud in a specific place that shows where *you* found Whitman. Some partner in crime will need to record this with one of our flipcams, and you will mount the video to the blog. You may use any props or other external supports that you wish. You will not read in a monotone; Whitman deserves better and so do all of us who will watch it. **Your post must be tagged "findingwhitman" to get to the right part of the Whitman network**.

g) **Final Project (25%): "My Walt Whitman" (12-15 page essay or digital equivalent like cinepoem or mashup, due Thursday December 10). All projects must be approved by instructors no later than November 10.**

Provisional Course Schedule

All work should be completed before class on the day listed.
Page numbers refer to the Library of America paperback edition unless otherwise noted.
"Blog" readings will be linked or scanned on Readings page of Digital Whitman blog. For class, you should bring a hard copy or a laptop so these readings are accessible.
Each week's questions provide only one or two of the *many* possible issues for reflection and discussion each week.

Tuesday, Aug. 25: Walt Whitman, A Kosmos
Introductions. Why Whitman?   Overview of course and syllabus. Tech training with The Reverend.

Tuesday, Sept. 1: What I Give I Give Out of Myself
Due (post before class): Frontispiece photo and "My 'Song'" lines
Readings: Brief biography of Whitman (blog); Preface to 1855 *Leaves of Grass* and 1855 version of poem that will be "Song of Myself" (5-88); selected early reviews of *LoG* (blog)
What relationship does Whitman construct with the reader? Who is the speaker of Leaves of Grass*, and how much does he have in common with Whitman the man?*

Tuesday, Sept. 8: Whoever You Are Come Travel With Me!
Due (post before class): Image Gloss
Readings: 1855 "Song of Myself" cont., excerpt from *Democratic Vistas* (1016-1018); "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" (307-313), "Song of the Open Road" (297-307), "Song of the Broad-Axe" (330-341), "A Song for Occupations" (355-368); all the following on the blog: Whitman's self reviews; Charvat, "James T. Fields and the Beginnings of Book Promotion, 1840-1855"; Reynolds, "Manahatta: The Literary Marketplace and Urban Reality"; Emerson's "The Poet"; Melville's "Hawthorne and His Mosses"; and Margaret Fuller's "American Literature"
What idea of the nation begins to emerge in Whitman's poetry, and how does it relate to a national "American Literature"?

Tuesday, Sept. 15: I Proceed for All Who Are or Have Been Young Men
Readings: "Children of Adam" and "Calamus" (248-287); Reynolds, "'Calamus' Love" (391-407, blog); Emerson letters appendix (1350-1361); and Gailey, "Publishing History of *Leaves of Grass*" (blog)
Material Culture Museum Entry assignment introduced.
Oral Reports: Fanny Fern; Ralph Waldo Emerson
What models for union (of selves/souls, of the nation, of hetero- and homosexuals) can we trace in Whitman's poetry, and how do they intersect with one another?

<u>Tuesday, Sept. 22: I Speak the Word of the Modern, the Word EN-MASSE</u>
Readings: "About" 1867 *Leaves* and 1867 e-text (blog)
Annotation project introduced.
Oral Reports: Matthew Brady and photography; publishing technologies
What interests you about the changes to the 1867 edition of Leaves *when you compare it to the 1855 edition? How does the 1867 edition show—in form* or *in content—the influence of Whitman's Civil War experience?*

<u>Tuesday, Sept. 29: The Real War Will Never Get in the Books</u>
Readings: Morris, "A Sight in Camp" (48-74, blog); Whitman's intro to *Memoranda During the War* (blog); *Speciman Days* excerpts (730-803); Clara Barton, "The Women Who Went to the Field" (blog); and Erkkila, "The Union War" (190-225, blog)
Oral Reports: Civil War medicine and hospitals; legal and ideological context for slavery 1820-1865
Consider the lament of Whitman's that gives this week its syllabus title. How does Whitman meet the challenge he sets out in his own work, if at all? And how does the "real war" as it is represented in Whitman's writing compare with your own prior sense of the Civil War and/or of Fredericksburg?

<u>*Saturday, Oct. 3*</u> *- Tours of Fredericksburg Battlefield and Chatham Manor.*
Document!
Watch excerpts from *Gods and Generals* (link on blog).

<u>Tuesday, Oct. 6: My Book and the War Are One</u>
Readings: "Drum-Taps" (416-458); selected letters of Whitman 1861-1865 (blog); and Reynolds, "'My Book and the War Are One'" (413-447, blog)
Oral Reports: Lincoln; other Civil War poetry
Whitman asks in one poem, "Must I change my triumphant songs?" Comparing his Civil War poems with his earlier work, what answer do you find?

<u>Tuesday, Oct. 13</u> (Fall Break. Admit it—you miss us.)

<u>Tuesday, Oct. 20: Straight and Swift to My Wounded I Go</u>
Due (post before class): Material Culture Museum Entries
Readings: "Drum-Taps" cont.; selected letters of Whitman 1866-1872 (blog); Morris, "The Great Army of the Sick" (75-123, blog); Calder, "Personal Recollections of Walt Whitman" (blog); and "Whitman's *Drum Taps* and Washington's Civil War Hospitals" (blog)

How do Whitman's interactions with the wounded resemble his relationship to the reader? How do both connect to his dreams for the nation?

<u>Saturday, Oct. 24</u> *– Field Trip to Washington, DC.* **Document!**

<u>Tuesday, Oct. 27: And Thought of Him I Love</u>
Readings: "Memories of President Lincoln" poems (459-468); "Death of Abraham Lincoln" from *Collect* (1060-1071); Erkkila, "Burying President Lincoln" (226-239, blog); and excerpts from Epstein, *Lincoln and Whitman: Parallel Lives in Civil War Washington* (blog)
In what way can we understand Whitman's "love" for Lincoln, a man he did not know personally? Does it compare in any meaningful way with earlier models of love we've seen (e.g., Calamus love, patriotic love, or the nurse's love)? What does Lincoln represent or provide for Whitman?

<u>Tuesday, Nov. 3: A Backward Glance O'er Travel'd Roads</u>
Due: Group annotations of 1867 *Leaves*
Readings: 1879 interview with Whitman (blog); "Walt Whitman's Last" (1369) and 1891-92 "Song of Myself" (188-247)
How does the speaker you encounter in this week's readings compare with 1855 in tone, self-fashioning, purpose, language/diction, vision of the nation, philosophy, or other ways?

<u>Tuesday, Nov. 10: I Bequeath Myself to the Dirt to Grow from the Grass I Love</u>
You should have your final project plan approved by today!
Readings: 1891-92 *Leaves* cont. (choose one piece we have not seen in an earlier edition and prepare to comment on its significance, interest, or lack thereof); Longaker, "The Last Sickness and the Death of Walt Whitman" and Whitman's tomb design/funeral photo (blog)
How should we read Leaves of Grass *as it exists across the years*? *Is there a definitive edition (and, if so, who or what decides it)?*

<u>Tuesday, Nov. 17: Look for Me Under Your Boot-soles</u>
Due (post before class): "Where I Found Whitman" video readings
Readings: Higgins, "The Poet's Reception and Legacy" (blog); Pound, "How I Feel About Walt Whitman" (blog); selected readings of 20th-21st-century poets (blog)
What aspects of Whitman's legacy seem evident to you in the later poets? Does it de-radicalize and enervate Whitman to see him as a canonical poetic elder statesman or fulfill his wildest dreams?

<u>Tuesday, Nov. 24: Sound Your Yawp I</u>
Presentation of final projects.

<u>Tuesday, Dec. 1: Sound Your Yawp II</u>
Presentation of final projects.

<u>Thursday, Dec. 10 (Final Exam): We Celebrate Ourselves</u>
Due: "My Walt Whitman" projects. Celebration!

ENG 3403: ONE MAJOR AUTHOR:
WALT WHITMAN

Dr. Matthew K. Gold   Time T 1-3:30pm
Email: mgold@citytech.cuny.edu   Section 5555
Phone: (718) 260-4972   Room: N601B
Office: Namm 520   Fall 2009
Office Hours: T 11:30am-1pm
                     and by appointment
Course Website: http://lookingforwhitman.org

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
          In the 1855 edition of the poem that he later titled "Song of Myself," Walt Whitman advised readers to "look for me under your bootsoles." This course, "Looking for Whitman: the Poetry of Place in the Life and Work of Walt Whitman," will help us find Whitman's continuing presence in the landscape that surrounds us. Utilizing open-source tools to connect classrooms across the country, we will participate in a collaborative, online website in which you can research Whitman's connections to New York and share that research with students at other schools in a dynamic, social, web-based learning environment.
          We will be joining classes at three other institutions—New York University; the University of Mary Washington; and Rutgers University, Camden—in a simultaneous, connected, semester-long inquiry into the relationship of Whitman's poetry to local geography and history. Each class will explore Whitman's poetry at the same time as it begins to research Whitman's relationship to specific locales. In the New York location, students from City Tech and NYU will explore Whitman's connections to the Brooklyn Waterfront, Lower Manhattan, and Long Island, and will focus particularly on Whitman's early work, such as the landmark 1855 first edition of Leaves of Grass. At the University of Mary Washington, students will consider Whitman's mid-career experience as a nurse in the Civil War, and will focus on his war-related writing of the 1860s. Students at Rutgers-Camden will explore Whitman's late career as they explore the city in which Whitman spent the final decades of his long life.
          At its core, the online components of this class are consonant with the major themes of Whitman's poetry: attachment to the people and places that make the American nation strong; openness to new technology and new experiences; dedication to the diversity of the American people; and celebration and promotion of America's valuable intellectual resources.

Prerequisite: ENG 1121/EG 121

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
*   Explore the poetry, journalism, and prose of Walt Whitman in the context of mid-nineteenth century Brooklyn
*   Use new-media applications to respond actively and creatively to course texts

- Interact with students at other universities in linked, collaborative projects that will take place on our course website
- Get out of the classroom and into the streets and archives in a semester-long search to find traces of Whitman under our bootsoles

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:
- Walt Whitman, *Walt Whitman: Poetry and Prose* (Library of America)
- Walt Whitman, *Franklin Evans, or The Inebriate: A Tale of the Times* (Duke U.P.)
- Fanny Fern, *Ruth Hall and Other Writings* (Rutgers U.P.)
- Various Handouts and PDF files
- A reliable computer/internet connection at home or school

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES:
- Formal essays and projects (20%)
- Midterm project (15%)
- Final project (25%)
- Online assignments (30%)
- Regular attendance and active classroom participation (10%)

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES/SITES WE WILL USE:
Blogs (WordPress), Wikis (PBWiki), del.icio.us, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter, Facebook, Seesmic, Pageflakes and others. Please begin exploring our course website as soon as possible.

COURSE POLICIES:
Attendance: Attendance is mandatory in this discussion-based course. <u>Students who miss more than three classes for any reason other than a documented emergency will lose one-third of their final grade for each additional absence</u>. Students who miss more than five classes are likely to fail the course.

If you miss class, you must contact your classmates to find out what you've missed. In-class writing assignments cannot be made up.

Please make every effort to arrive on time and to shut off your cell phone before entering the classroom. Arriving after roll has been taken will count as a lateness and one-third of an absence. Please do not read or write text messages in class unless asked to do so by Professor Gold, as this activity is distracting and disrespectful.

Participation: The success of this course depends upon your regular and active participation in class discussions. To receive full credit for participation, you

must make constructive contributions to our classroom discussions. This includes the completion of all reading and writing assignments.

Deadlines: You must adhere to your assigned dates and times. All assignments must be prepared prior to the class meeting, according to the due date and time, and fully complete. Late work will not be graded. Period. All assignments are due by the start of class on the due date. After this time, they will be accepted with a "0" grade and are <u>required</u> to pass the course. Period.

If you need an extension, you must contact me <u>at least 24 hours</u> before the assignment is due to explain why an extension is necessary. If the assignment is due in less than 24 hours, do not waste your time or mine by asking for an extension.

You will be responsible for all assignments and deadlines regardless of absences. Hence, I strongly recommend that you have a contact person in the class from whom you can get assignments and notes in the event of an absence.

Paper Format: All papers must be typed and double-spaced. Use a legible 12-point font such as Times New Roman, and format your papers with 1" margins on all sides. Give your paper a creative title that sums up your argument. Citations and title formatting should conform to the MLA guidelines that we will discuss in class.

Revisions: Revision is an essential part of the writing process. Real revision involves a re-visioning and re-fashioning of the original paper, not just the completion of superficial corrections. Hand in revisions with the original essay and the original grading sheet. On the heading, indicate "Revision of Essay #" and the date on which you are handing it in.

Personal Conferences: Meeting with me during office hours is one of the most important things you can do to improve your work. If you cannot make it to my office hours, we can set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time. <u>Email is the best way to reach me</u>; I will attempt to respond to all messages within 24 hours.

Email Etiquette: In your email messages to me, please observe the rules of formal letter-writing etiquette: begin each message with a greeting ("Dear Professor Gold") and end each message with a closing ("Sincerely, Model Student"). Avoid texting language ("yo whattup prof. g? How r u?"). Use standard punctuation and capitalization. Messages that that do not comply with this etiquette will be deleted.

Incompletes: Incomplete grades will not be given except under extraordinary circumstances, and even then, the student must have completed course work

at a passing level and must complete a written agreement with me regarding the completion of the work.

New York City College of Technology Policy on Academic Integrity: Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and
citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog.

Plagiarism: DON'T DO IT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES!!!! Know that the penalties for plagiarism in this course include failure of the course and additional academic sanctions. I will report all incidences of plagiarism to City Tech's Academic Integrity Officer. If you are confused about what plagiarism is or have questions about how you should avoid it, please contact me before your paper is due. Do not, under any circumstances, hand in plagiarized work.

Students With Disabilities: Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. I will work with the Student Support Services Program (Atrium 237 – 718-260-5143) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Syllabus Disclaimer: Any part of this syllabus may be revised during in the semester at the sole discretion of the instructor.

COURSE RESOURCES:

City Tech Learning Center: Atrium G-18, (718) 260-5874
The Atrium Learning Center provides a wide range of free academic support services to City Tech students, including computer facilities, tutoring assistance, and workshops. Tutors in the Learning Center can help you focus and develop your papers; please visit the center as often as possible this semester.

The Ursula C. Sherwin Library: Atrium Fourth Floor, (718) 260-5485

It is my hope that you will become intimately familiar with the library this semester. During the semester, we will meet with a librarian for a session on the effective use of online resources and literary databases.

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change):
Week 1 - Intro to the course, to each other, to the course website

Week 2 - 1855 *Leaves of Grass* Preface
        - First Shared Assignment:
Introduction of self through sections of Leaves of Grass/"Song of Myself" — find six lines from our Whitman course text that resonate with you. Explain why those lines resonate with you. Comment on at least one blog from each class in the project.

Week 3 - 1855 *Leaves of Grass*
        - Cultural Contexts/Cultural Artifacts Shared Assignment
Choose an item that you see described in *Leaves of Grass*. (possibilities: scalpel, surgical instruments, train, ferries, bucket full of feet, slippers, hospitals, hats, plumbing, lincoln lecture, laurel creek, shoemaking, printing press, penny paper/newspaper, Horace Traubel, Ford's theater, slouch hat, opera, art/realism, Eakins, daguerreotypes, Fred Gray society, phrenology, painting (someone's NY), Pfaff's beerhall, omnibus, diet food, lincoln's funeral, cemeteries, rural park/cemetery unit, carpentry tools)
Each student responsible for providing cultural context of that object
Research that material object in mid-nineteenth century New York. What did it look like? How did people use it? What did people write about it? Post a blog entry about your object and include an image that shows it or people using it. Highlight the connection you see to Whitman's writings.

Week 4 - Emerson, "The Poet," selections from *Nature*
        - Third Shared Assignment
Begin annotating online class edition of 1855 *Leaves of Grass*.
        – NYC - 1855/1856/1860 // Journalism/ Franklin Evans
        – UMW/Fredericksburg - 1865 (Drum Taps)/1867/1871-2 // Memoranda During the War
        – Camden - 1876/1881-2/1892 Deathbed // Two Rivulets

Week 5 - Whitman journalism 1 - self reviews/self promotions
        - Class trip to *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* in Brooklyn and Newspaper Row in Manhattan

Week 6 - Whitman journalism 2 - cultural topics

Week 7 - *Franklin Evans; or, The Inebriate*

Week 8 - Midterm Project Presentations

Week 9 - 1856 *Leaves of Grass*

Week 10 - 1860 *Leaves of Grass*

Week 11 - "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"

Week 12 - Cinepoem project 1

Week 13 - Cinepoem project 2

Week 14 - The Civil War

Week 15 - Final Project presentations
**   - Shared Final Video Project**
Every student in every location will be required to film herself reading a Whitman text/poem in a specific locale. Think about the relationship of place to text. But the video should just consist of you reading the poem.

NOTE: For all field trips, you will be required to do the following:

- document your experience of the trip through photos and videos
- post images/videos/blog entries about those trips on the course website
- check out trips that students from other schools/classes have taken and comment upon them
– use class maps to geo-locate experiences.

Walt Whitman:
The Global Perspective

University of Novi Sad, Fall 2009

Dr. Karen Karbiener
US Fulbright Scholar and
Master Teacher of Humanities,
New York University
kk55@nyu.edu
Office and hours:
FF 112, Fridays 2:30-4:30

Objectives

Does poetry matter? What can it do for us as 21st-century citizens of the world?

Over 150 years after the first publication of *Leaves of Grass*, Walt Whitman stands as a key representative for poetry as an agent for social, artistic, and political change. His progressive and expansive vision of humanity, experimentation with literary form and poetic voice, and raw, radical politics continue to astonish and impact his readers. "This is what you shall do," he tells his readers in the "Preface" of the 1855 edition:

> Love the earth and sun and the animals, despise riches, give alms to everyone that asks, stand up for the stupid and crazy, devote your income and labor to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, have patience and indulgence toward the people, take off your hat to nothing known or unknown or to any man or number of men, go freely with powerful uneducated persons and with the young and with the mothers of families, read these leaves in the open air every season of every year of your life, re-examine all you have been told at school or church or in any book, dismiss whatever insults your own soul, and your very flesh shall be a great poem...

From the global perspective afforded by the special circumstances of this course, we will explore and re-evaluate Whitman's boundary-breaking constructs and concepts.

Besides the unusual circumstances that enable me to offer this class to you, "Whitman: The Global Perspective" is part of a revolutionary pedagogical experiment linking five different Whitman courses this fall. "Looking for Whitman" (as the project is called) is sponsored by America's National Endowment of the Humanities and has helped us create an enhanced digital learning environment, procure and utilize Flipcams and digital cameras, and hire technical support. This also means that you will develop your computer literacy by making regular contributions to our class blog, and learning to use

our equipment and to apply it to your Whitman studies. If time allows, you will be introduced to websites and programs such as Flickr, Delicious, and Twitter. It is our hope that your knowledge of such innovation will enhance your own work, and allow you to think more innovatively about the classroom experience.

Another aim of this course is to provide you with guidance in the "professionalizing" of your nascent academic career. Your term project—a translation, close reading and commentary on one of the poems in the third edition (1860) of *Leaves of Grass*— will be submitted for consideration to the 2010 Transatlantic Whitman Symposium, a week-long conference that will be held this June at the University of Macerata, Italy. If your essay is accepted, you will be permitted to participate in the conference free of charge, and be given free housing at the university for the week. The Symposium attracts major Whitman scholars and standout graduate students from around the world; it's a remarkable opportunity in so many ways, and it is my sincere hope to reunite with you there in June!

Procedure

1. Term project: An essay of 8-10 pages plus a visual component is due at the end of the semester. You will also be required to submit your essay for consideration to this year's Transatlantic Whitman Symposium ("Paths Untrodden in the 1860 *Leaves*" University of Macerata, Italy, 14-20 June). I will provide you with instructions and coaching on how to apply.
2. "Looking for Whitman" blog responses: on the Sunday after each of our sessions, I will post an assignment. By Friday midnight before our next class, please post your response on the site. Though you're required to do this minimum, please feel free to post as often as you like; you might want to respond to your classmates' postings or extend your own comments, for example. A total of five blog posts are required.
3. Participation and effort: you're under no obligation to participate in class discussions—though I hope to create a classroom environment that will encourage you to share your ideas and opinions. Your observations and insights are more important to your classmates and myself than you think.
4. Attendance: because of this semester's late start and the duration of the Fulbright grant, our class meets only five times. No absences from these sessions without a valid and serious excuse will be permitted (and any unexcused absences will jeopardize your final grade).

Conferences and Instructor Accessibility

Please feel free to come by office hours to extend our conversations, or to discuss other issues or questions; if my hours are inconvenient, we'll try and find time in both of our schedules for a meeting. Suggestions are welcome. It is important to me that you both benefit from and enjoy this class!

Texts and Resources

Please bookmark our project website on your computer:

http://lookingforwhitman.org

Here you'll find information on "Looking for Whitman", and the blogs for all institutions participating in this digital humanities project: Rutgers University (NJ), City University of New York (NY), and Mary Washington College (VA).

To go to our class blog directly, go to:

http://unovisad.lookingforwhitman.org

This is our information board, where you will find and post your assignments, and download many of our course readings, and find links to information that will enable and enhance your studies and writing.

The following required texts will be made available to you this semester, thanks to the generosity of their publishers:

Karbiener, Karen. *Walt Whitman and the Birth of Modern American Poetry* (Modern Scholar; 14 lectures on cd with accompanying book)
Lopate, Philip, ed. *Writing New York: A Literary Anthology* (Library of America)
Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass (1860): The 150th Anniversary Facsimile Edition* (University of Iowa)
Whitman, Walt. *Leaves of Grass: First and Death-Bed Editions.* Ed. Karbiener (Barnes & Noble)

I've donated the following critical sources to the University of Novi Sad Library, where they are available for public use:

Allen, Gay Wilson, and Ed Folsom. Walt Whitman and the World [University of Iowa]
Burns, Ric, James Sanders, and Lisa Ades. *New York: An Illustrated History* (Knopf)
Kerley, Barbara, and Brian Selznick. *Walt Whitman: Words for America* [Scholastic]
Loving, Jerome. *Walt Whitman: The Song of Himself* (University of California)
Perlman, Jim and Ed Folsom, eds. *Whitman: The Measure of His Song* (Holy Cow)
Reynolds, David, ed. *A Historical Guide to Walt Whitman* (Oxford)
Reynolds, David. *Walt Whitman's America* (Knopf)

Other suggested readings on Whitman's life and writing can be found at under the "Reading" and "Specimen Days" links on the top of our web page (many of the materials are available to you immediately online). On the "Blogroll" on the right hand side of the page, you will find indispensable links for Whitman studies. These include the Walt Whitman Archive, an indispensable database that we'll be using regularly.

Tentative Schedule

31 Oct	**Walt Whitman, an American, one of the Roughs, a kosmos**
	Readings: "Song of Myself" and "Preface" to 1855 *Leaves of Grass* (Whitman text pp. 29-91, 7-27); textual introduction, "Whitman and the Promise of America" (xiii-xlv); critiques of the *Leaves* (881-890); excerpts of Longfellow's "Song of Hiawatha" (handout); NYC map (handout). Online readings: Whitman's book designs for Leaves of Grass, and Ed Folsom's essay "Whitman Making Books/Books Making Whitman": http://whitmanarchive.org/criticism/current/anc.00150.html
7 Nov	**The sexual revolution of the 1860 edition**
	Readings: From the 3rd edition, "Children of Adam" cluster (p.252-273) and "Calamus" cluster (p.274-294); "The Sleepers", "I Sing the Body Electric"; "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking." From "Poems Excluded from the Death-bed Edition": "Enfans d'Adam.11" (754), "Calamus. 16" (754), "Calamus.8" (755), "Calamus.9" (756), "Calamus.5" (769).
14 Nov	**Radical resistance to division: the wartime Whitman**
	Readings: *Specimen Days* (see the special "Specimen Days" link on our class website); "To the States." "To the States, to Identify the 16th, 17th, or 18th Presidentiad," "Give Me the Splendid Silent Sun", "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," "O Captain! My Captain!", "The Wound-Dresser", "Hush'd Be the Camps To-day," "Come Up From the Fields Father", "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors", excerpts from Civil War letters (see the "Civil War Treasure" link on the "Blogroll" of our website).
28 Nov	**Poets to Come!**
	Readings: "So Long!" and the Whitman recording of "America" (recording found at Whitman Archive). Selected works of writers in *Walt Whitman: The Measure of His Song*, including Allen Ginsberg, ("Howl", "Supermarket in California", "America"), Langston Hughes ("Theme for English B", "Old Walt", "The Negro Speaks of Rivers", "I Too Sing America"), Federico Garcia Lorca ("Ode to Walt Whitman"), Sherman Alexie ("Defending Walt Whitman"), Chou Ping ("Whispers of Heavenly Death"), Jorge Luis Borges ("Camden 1892"), Bruce Weigl on Charles Simic and Whitman, and others TBA.
12 Dec	**Absorbing, translating...**
	Readings: selections from *Walt Whitman and the World*; translations and commentary by Ljiljana Babic, Sonja Basic, Ivan Lalic, Dragan Purešić, and Mario Susko; Ed Folsom, "Whitman in Translation: A Seminar", "Song of Myself, Section 1, in Fifteen Languages", and other readings TBA.

Walt Whitman seminar
Dr. Tyler Hoffman
Fall 2009

Schedule of readings

M   Jan 24   *Song of Myself* (pp. 27-88)

M   Jan 31   *Song of Myself*; 1855 *Preface* (pp. 5-26)

M   Feb 7   *Song of Myself*; 1855 *Leaves of Grass* (pp. 89-145)

M   Feb 14   New York: Starting from Paumanok (pp. 176-88); Crossing
Brooklyn Ferry

City of Orgies; To a Stranger (p. 280); A Broadway Pageant (pp. 383-387); A Paumanok Picture (p. 574); Mannahatta (p. 613); Paumanok (p. 613); From Montauk Point (p. 613); Broadway (p. 624); *Specimen Days* (pp. 713-730, 844-848, 862-872, 931-935); The Old Bowery (pp. 1209-16)

M   Feb 21   New York /New Orleans: New Orleans in 1848 (pp. 1223-
1228); Silva Gruesz,

from *Ambassadors of Culture*

M   Feb 28   Washington, DC: *Drum-Taps* and *Memories of President Lincoln*
(pp. 416-468);

By Broad Potomac's Shore (pp. 591-92); Old War-Dreams (p. 593); Thick-Sprinkled Bunting (pp. 593-594); What Best I See in Thee (p. 594); Ashes of Soldiers (pp. 598-600); *Specimen Days* (pp. 730-803); *Death of Abraham Lincoln* (pp. 1060-71); A Lincoln Reminscence (p. 1096); An Indian Bureau Reminiscence (pp. 1194-1197); Some War Memoranda (pp. 1202-1208)

M   Mar 7   Camden/Philadelphia: *Children of Adam* (pp. 248-267) and
Calamus (pp. 268-

281; 684-688); *Specimen Days* (pp. 803-843, 848-862, 872-
874, 898-900, 908-

910, 923, 939-945)

M   Mar 14   Camden/Philadelphia cont.

M   Mar 28   Field trip to Whitman house museum and gravesite

M	Apr 4	The West: The Prairie Grass Dividing (p. 281); A Promise to California (pp. 282-283); To a Western Boy (p. 285); Song of the Red-Wood Tree (pp. 351-355); Pioneers! O Pioneers! (pp. 371-375); Others May Praise What They Like (p. 517); The Prairie States (p. 524); Night on the Prairies (p. 566); From Far Dakota's Cañons (pp. 592-593); Spirit That Form'd This Scene (pp. 594-595); *Specimen Days* (pp. 874-896; 933-35); "Custer's Last Rally" (pp. 933-35)
M	Apr 11	Canada: *Specimen Days* (pp. 901-908); *Beautiful Dreamers*
M	Apr 18	Camden/Philadelphia cont.
M	Apr 25	Camden/Philadelphia cont.
M	May 2	Retrospective

Dr. Carol J. Singley
Fall 2009

Introduction to Graduate Literary Study
56:350:503:01

Class: W 6:00-8:40, Robeson 205 and basement instructional room

Office: 479 Armitage Hall
Tel: 856-225-6629 off.   610-328-9522 hm.
Fax: 610-328-9522
E-mail: singley.camden.rutgers.edu
Office Hours: W 5-6 and by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Welcome to Introduction to Graduate Literary Study!
This course introduces you to current issues in the fields of literary theory and criticism and to the aims and methods of literary analysis. The course provides a foundation for future graduate study by reinforcing the important skills of close reading, literary interpretation, and research, and introduces you to literary studies as a possible profession. You will become familiar with past and present developments in literary studies, learn how to identify and assess critical and theoretical approaches, and select approaches that best match your interests and the texts studied.
This course has a special component. It is aligned with a "Looking for Whitman" project funded by a National Endowment for the Humanities grant. The aim is to help students at multiple universities engage in a concurrent, connected, semester-long inquiry into the relationship of Walt Whitman's poetry to local geography and history. So, students in New York City Institute of Technology are exploring the relationship of Brooklyn to Whitman's early career; students at the University of Mary Washington are exploring resources in Fredericksburg and Washington, D.C., as they consider Whitman's Civil War-era writings; and students at Rutgers-Camden are examining Camden resources as they consider Whitman's late career. The class will utilize open-source software to collaborate in an online learning environment and to produce digital media that will enlighten and inform readers beyond our own campus.
We will use the Whitman's writing, especially poems and prose produced in Camden, to explore critical and theoretical approaches to literature, and to practice research. Major assignments include an explication, a bibliographic essay, and a final critical project. These and shorter assignments will have digital components.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Whitman, Walt. *Whitman: Poetry and Prose.* Ed. Justin Kaplan. Library of America. ISBN-10: 1883011353. ISBN-13: 978-1883011352
Reynolds, David. *Walt Whitman's America: A Cultural Biography*. Vintage. ISBN-10: 0679767096. ISBN-13: 978-0679767091

Wharton, Edith. *Summer*. Bantam. ISBN-10: 0553214225. ISBN-13: 978-0553214222

Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Anniversary ed. Blackwell. ISBN-10: 0816654476, ISBN-13: 978-0816654475. (Second edition will also suffice).

Hall, Donald. *Literary and Cultural Theory*. Houghton Mifflin. ISBN: 0-39592919-9.

Abrams, M. H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 8th ed. Thomson Wadsworth. ISBN 1-4130-0218-8.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 7th ed. Modern Language Association. ISBN: 9781603290241 (if you purchase on line at www.mla.org, you also have free access to the book on-line, and can obtain permanent e-access to the book)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

Whitman biography. "Walt Whitman" by Folsom and Price; minimal "Chronology of Whitman's Life": http://www.whitmanarchive.org/biography/index.html

Fussell, Paul. *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form*. McGraw-Hill, ISBN-10: 0075536064, ISBN-13: 978-0075536062

Arp, Thomas R., and Greg Johnson. *Perrine's Sound and Sense*, 11th ed. Thomson Wadsworth. ISBN 083840746-3.

LeMaster, J. R., and Donald D. Kummings, ec. *Walt Whitman: An Encyclopedia*. New York: Garland, 1998. (Reference, Robeson Library PS3230.W35 1998)

Readings on electronic reserve (marked "e")

Books are available in the Campus Store.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Jamie Gibbs jmgibbs@camden.rutgers.edu

At the Looking for Whitman site, please join Tech Support Group to ask questions.

Also, Tutorials Blog offers tips and tricks.

ELECTRONIC SITE: Looking for Whitman http://lookingforwhitman.org/

Tag: ww2

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
1. Regular class attendance and participation.
2. Reading of assigned texts on time.
3. Completion of writing assignments, blog postings and other e-projects on time.

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Frontispiece due 9/9. Upload a photo of yourself and caption of several lines from 1855 edition of *Song of Myself*
2. Image Gloss due 9/16. Select an image from 1855 edition of *Song of Myself* to annotate in brief (50 words)
3. Explication/Annotation due 9/30. Close reading of a poem (4-5 pp. written), with on-line posting and an oral presentation (10 min.).
4. Digital Museum due 10/14. Select an image from the poem you explicated and digitally annotate it (500-600 words).

5. Bibliographic Essay due 10/28. Comprehensive review, in essay form (5-6 pp.), of the published criticism on a given text, with e-posting and oral presentation (7 min. max.).
6. Group Annotation due 11/18. Work alone or with a partner to post commentary on a passage from *Specimen Days* or lines of poetry published during the Camden years (1-3 pp.)
7. Final project. Oral Presentations due 12/2, 12/9. Critical Essay due 12/14: Critical essay (12-15 pages) with digital support: video, cine-poem, on-line museum, MP3 interpretive reading, or other project that takes a scholarly, fresh approach to your text and is informed by critical theory and criticism. With oral presentation (10 min.).

GRADING:

Attendance, class discussion, blogs	20%
Explication (incl. oral presentation)	20%
Bibliographic essay (incl. oral presentation)	30%
Final project/critical essay (incl. oral presentation)	30%

OFFICE HOURS:
As posted above. Please come by discuss the readings, class discussion, blog postings, written assignments, or any aspect of the course.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS:
UPPERCASE = topic
bold = written, oral, and e-assignments
regular type = reading assignments.

1   W 9/2   INTRODUCTION
Course goals and methods
"Looking for Whitman" ww2 NEH project: Log on and set up your
          blog
Explication introduced and poem assigned.

2   W 9/9   PHENOMENOLGY, HERMENEUTICS, RECEPTION THEORY
Eagleton, ch. 2
Hall, ch. 2
Reynolds, Prologue and read through chs. 1-9 (NY)
Whitman, *Song of Myself*
Due: Frontispiece

3   W 9/16   HISTORY OF LITERARY CRITICISM, RISE OF ENGLISH,
NEW CRITICISM
Bibliographic Essay Introduced
Eagleton, ch. 1

Hall, ch. 1
Reynolds, Read through chs. 13, 14 (Wash DC). Read carefully ch. 15
(Camden).
Due: Image Gloss
Respond to at least one blog this week and weekly

4   Th 9/23   POLITICAL CRITICISM, NEW HISTORICISM, PLURALISTIC
CULTURAL ANALYSIS
Eagleton, Conclusion
Hall, ch. 10
Reynolds, Read carefully ch. 16 (Camden)
Betsy Erkkila, fr. *Whitman the Political Poet* (e)

5   W 9/30   LIBRARY RESEARCH: TOOLS AND METHODS
Tour of Whitman House, 3 p.m. 328 Mickle St. (Martin Luther King Blvd.)
Alternative Tour: Wed. through Sat 10-12 & 1-4. Sun 1-4. Closed Mon. &

Tue.

Gibaldi, acquaint yourself with research sections, citation style
Due: Explication; Oral Presentations (15 min. max.)

6   W 10/7   FEMINISM, GAY AND LESBIAN STUDIES
Eagleton, pp. 182 ff.
Hall, chs. 7, 8
"Women as a Theme in Whitman's Writing," fr. *WW: An Encyclopedia* (e)
Explication Oral Presentations cont'd

7   W 10/14   STRUCTURALISM, SEMIOTICS
Eagleton, ch. 3
Hall, ch. 5
Explication Oral Presentations cont'd
Digital Museum Due

8   W 10/21   REVIEW, CONFERENCES

9   W 10/28   POST-STRUCTURALISM, DECONSTRUCTION
Eagleton, ch. 4
Hall, ch. 6
Final Project Introduced
Bibliographic Essay due; Oral Presentations (7 min. max.)

10   W 11/4   PSYCHOANALYTIC CRITICISM
                        INFLUENCES
                        Eagleton, ch. 5
                        Hall, ch. 4
                        Edith Wharton, Summer
                        Fr. Justin Kaplan, *WW: A Life* (e)
                        Fr. Paul Zweig, *WW: The Making of the Poet* (e)
                        Bibliographic Essay Oral Presentations cont'd

11   W 11/11   MARXIST CRITICISM
                  Eagleton, Afterword
                  Hall, ch. 3

12   W 11/18   **Group Annotation Due**

13   Thanksgiving Holiday

14   W 12/2   **Final Project Oral Presentations (10 min. max.)**

15   W 12/9   **Final Project Oral Presentations cont'd**

     M 12/14   **Essay Due (written)**

Dr. Carol J. Singley
Introduction to Graduate Literary Study

Guide to Assignments

FRONTISPIECE: Due 9/9
Take a picture of yourself using a digital or cell phone camera. Choose at least 6 lines from the 1855 edition of "Song of Myself" and post the image of yourself and the lines in your blog. Add a short personal statement about the lines. Your inspiration should be Whitman's frontispiece for the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*. This photo can also serve as your avatar on the ww2 site.

GLOSS OF AN IMAGE: Due 9/16
Choose an image from the 1855 edition of *Song of Myself* that has literary and/or cultural resonance, for example, "omnibus," "Alamo," "daguerreotype," or "b'hoy." Explore the meanings of the image in the poem and in the larger context in which Whitman wrote. Post your findings in a blog. Enrich your posting with sound, video, or images.

Respond to at least one person's blog

EXPLICATION OF A TEXT:³ Due 10/7
(Also referred to as "Annotation" in Looking for Whitman www2 project)

An explication is a commentary revealing the meaning of a text. Explication is a fundamental skill for anyone engaged in interpreting texts--whether teacher, critic, editor, historian, attorney, clergy, or any professional involved with written language. It consists of two parts: the detailed reading and analysis of the linguistic, compositional, and expressive parts of a text; and the synthesis of these parts into a coherent meaning for the whole. Performance of an explication in class will help you develop skills in verbal analysis and in the presentation of information.

You will select your text by lot from a list that I provide. Some "swapping" within a class will be allowed if both parties agree. Published explications of some of these texts are available, but they should not be used except as a last resort, and then only if the source is properly credited. The explication should be an original reading, though standard references (*The Oxford English Dictionary*, literary handbooks) should be consulted for the meaning of obscure words, phrases, or allusions.

---

³Adapted from Sylvan Barnet, *A Short Guide to Writing About Literature* (Boston: Little, 1968) and Drs. Berkey, Lutz, and Sill.

In addition to posting your explication online on Looking for Whitman site, use visual, video, or sound media to present your explication of the poem. These media can:
- explore one or more aspects of the poem,
- connect the poem to Whitman's life in Camden, or
- provide historical context for Whitmand and/or the poem

Method:
1. Read the text sensitively and carefully several times. Jot down random impressions as they occur to you. Look up words that are unfamiliar or carry more than one meaning. Consider the function of words or phrases in terms of the whole passage, as well as in a particular line or stanza. Paraphrase (reword) in order to make sure you understand the text thoroughly.

2. Arrive at an overall impression of the subject and structure of the text, the voice and tone of the speaker or narrator, the implications of any ironies or ambiguities. Justify your impressions by reference to specific linguistic signs in the text.

3. Construct a meaning for the text based on these impressions. Your meaning should not be imposed upon the text without regard for its limitations; but neither should it be restricted to a literal statement or paraphrase of the text. Remember that you are *creating* a reading that can be supported by references to the text.

4. Reconstruct this creative process in a written explication that can also be delivered in an oral presentation. The explication as a whole should move from the beginning to the end of the text, with opportunity for you to refer to words or phrases that gain additional meaning as the text develops. Begin with your impression of the text's meaning. Proceed in such a way that you discuss persona, voice, and tone, demonstrating the way specific words and phrases support your reading. The written explication should be about 5 pages. The oral presentation, prepared in outline or note form, should take 15 minutes maximum, including time for discussion.

Resources and Models for Explication:
New Critical Print:
Coffman, S. K. "'Crossing Brooklyn Ferry'": Note on the Catalog Technique in
	Whitman's Poetry," *Modern Philology* 51 (May 1954): 225-32.

Fussell, Paul. "Whitman's Curious Warbel: Reminiscence and Reconciliation," in *The Presence of Walt Whitman*, ed. R. W. B. Lewis. New York: Columbia UP, 1962. 28-51.

Lovell, John. "Appreciating Whitman: 'Passage to India,'" *Modern Language Quarterly* 21 (June 1960): 131-41.

Rountree, Thomas I. "Whitman's Indirect Expression and Its Application to 'Song of Myself,'" *PMLA* 73 (December 1958): 549-55.

Sutton, Walter. "The Analysis of Free Verse Form, Illustrated by a Reading of Whitman." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 18 (December 1959): 241-54.

Electronic:
Mickle Street Review, an http://micklestreet.rutgers.edu/

Merande, Jesse. "'Crossing Brooklyn Ferry': An Online Critical Edition," *Mickle Street Review* 19/20. http://micklestreet.rutgers.edu/CBF/closereading/closereading.html

Poems for Explication
By Whitman, Walt (1819-1892).
1. "Eidolons" fr. *Inscriptions* [1876]
2. "To Thee Old Cause" [1871, 1881]
3. "Song of the Redwood-Tree" fr. *Calamus* [1874, 1881]
4. "Song of the Universal" fr. *Birds of Passage* [1874, 1881]
5. "The Dalliance of the Eagles" fr. *By the Roadside* [1880, 1881]
6. "Out from Behind this Mask" fr. *Autumn Rivulets* [1876, 1881]
7. "The Prairie States" fr. *Autumn Rivulets* [1880, 1881]
8. "Prayer of Columbus" fr. *Autumn Rivulets* [1874, 1881]
9. "Thou Mother with Thy Equal Brood, fr. "*Whispers of Heavenly Death*" [1872, 1881]
10. "To a Locomotive in Winter" fr. *From Noon to Starry Night* [1876, 1881]
11. "As at Thy Portals Also Death" fr. *Songs of Parting* [1881]
12. "Mannahatta" fr. *First Annex: Sands at Seventy* [1888, 1888-90]
13. "With Husky-Haughty Lips, O Sea!" fr. *First Annex: Sands at Seventy* [1884, 1888-89]
14. "Yonnondio" fr. *First Annex: Sands at Seventy* [1887, 1888-89]
15. "Old Age's Lambent Peaks" fr. *First Annex: Sands at Seventy* [1888, 1889]
16. "To the Sun-set Breeze" fr. *Second Annex: Good-Bye My Fancy* [1890, 1891-92]
17. "Osceloa" fr. *Second Annex: Good-Bye My Fancy* [1890, 1891-92]
18. "Good-Bye my Fancy!" fr. *Second Annex: Good-Bye My Fancy* [1891, 1892-92]

DIGITAL MUSEUM Due 10/14
This project builds on the image gloss and involves historical and cultural research on an artifact or event that relates to Whitman's years in Camden. Your post must be tagged "digitalmuseum" to arrive at the proper place in Whitman network.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY Due 10/28
The bibliographic essay is a comprehensive review, in essay form, of the published criticism on a given text. This assignment will familiarize you with research sources and bibliographic methods.

Method:
       1. Read and/or refresh your recollection of the assigned text.

       2. Locate the most recent comprehensive bibliography of articles and books about your text or author. This bibliography might have been published as an article in a journal, or as a separate volume, or as an appendix to a recent critical biography of the author, as part of the proceedings of a conference on that author, or as part of a multi-author critical study of a period or genre. Ask a reference librarian about the advisability of searching databases (such as MLA) as a way to turn up this bibliography. Obtain a copy of the bibliography, through interlibrary loan if necessary.

       3. Use this bibliography as your baseline. Do not include critical or biographical works published before this bibliography except for those few standard works that are always mentioned when your author is discussed, or the highly significant works that have taken critical discussion of the author or text in a new direction. Locate articles and books that have appeared since the baseline bibliography was published. (If the bibliography appeared in 1993 or 1994 and there is little new material to research, see me.) Use indexes of research, review articles at the end of journals, and databases to locate these recent publications. Obtain copies, or at least reviews, of as many of these items as you can.

       4. Read, annotate, and summarize each of the items you locate. Aim not only to recapitulate each writer's argument, but comment upon it. As you read, look for some logical pattern or order according to which the items may be discussed. Identify trends in the scholarship--where it stands in relation to earlier work, where it seems to be heading. How has it prospered or suffered from new critical or theoretical approaches or from recent efforts to reconstruct the canon? What problems of philosophy, history, social meaning, or artistic value or technique are being addressed by commentators about the text? Provide your own opinion of the quality of recent work and opportunities for further research that have recently emerged because of new discoveries, new critical methods, or new historical information about your author.

       5. Write the bibliographic essay (5-6 pp.), keeping in mind two purposes: to provide factual information such as would be found in a bibliographic citation, and to provide an interpretive guide to this scholarship. It is best to begin the essay with biographical information followed by criticism, ending with future trends or developments. Follow the essay with a list of all the recent research you found (MLA style), whether discussed in the essay or not. Also e-post the information and prepare it for oral presentation (7 min. maximum).

GROUP ANNOTATION Due 11/18

This assignment will focus on text added to *Leaves of Grass* during the years that a university specializes in—in our case, the 1881 edition or 1891-92 "deathbed" edition representing the Camden years. You may work with the poem you explicated or with another poem or prose passage. Questions this assignment might address include: what happens when a test is altered? How does the order of placement affect a group of poems? What is the composition history of the poem? How does the poem relate to its group? The annotation will reflect your close reading and historical or critical research, and it can serve as a foundation for your final project.

***FINAL PROJECT   Due:* Oral Presentations 12/2, 12/9. Critical Essay due 12/14:**
Your final project will be a critical work in the form of an essay accompanied by a video, cinepoem, on-line museum, mp3 interpretive reading, or some combination of the above that makes an original contribution to the understanding of the writing and life, career, and/or times of Walt Whitman, especially as they relate to Camden.

The critical essay combines analysis and argument to present a judgment or assessment of some aspect of a literary text. This skill, like that of explication, is useful in all aspects of graduate literary study, including essays and exams in seminars and the M.A. Comprehensive Examination.

The text for the critical essay may be the same as for the explication and annotated bibliography. You will not need to summarize research in this assignment, nor should you think of the essay as a "research paper." It should be an original, largely creative indulgence of your imaginative as well as critical sensibilities, informed by the critical theories studied this semester and by the recent research on the text with which you are now familiar. Some sources should be used and cited according to MLA style, but these should relate to the specific focus of the essay. You should concentrate on taking an interesting, fresh approach to the text, one that opens up some new dimension of the critical discussion. The essay should be 10-12 pages.

Method:
1. Reacquaint yourself with the literary text. What issues or topics stand out as provocative or intriguing? Which of these have not been adequately covered in the research you discovered?

2. Consider the research on this text and identify any gaps, deficiencies, or blind spots. Decide whether you can make a contribution in any of the areas already covered, or whether you can set out in a new direction. Be conscious of the critical approach or methodology you are taking with respect to the text and its contexts.

3. Prepare a draft of the essay; set it aside; have someone whose opinion you value read and comment on it; revise; revise again; check for stylistic accuracy and MLA form. And/or prepare a digital equivalent of a critical essay. Prepare notes or an

outline for an oral presentation. Note that the presentations begin the week before the written essay is due; half of you will present then and half you will present when the essay is due.

Appendix C. Participant Biographies

MATTHEW K. GOLD, NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY, CUNY
Matt is Assistant Professor of English at New York City College of Technology and a member of the CUNY Graduate Center doctoral faculty in the Interactive Technology and Pedagogy Certificate Program. His teaching and research interests center on digital rhetoric, multimodal composition, open-source pedagogy, the digital humanities, and new-media studies. Matt's recent work includes an essay on aesthetics, linearity, and rationality in online writing environments that will appear in the collection *From A to <A>: Keywords of Markup* (Minnesota, 2010) and an interview with Bob Stein on the future of the book that is forthcoming in *Kairos* (Fall 2009). His current book project, *Cultures of Proof*, contextualizes the visual culture of mid-nineteenth century America within scientific and religious discourses of proof and objectivity.

CAROL SINGLEY, RUTGERS-CAMDEN
Carol J. Singley (Ph.D. Brown University, M.A., B.A. Pennsylvania State University) is an Associate Professor of English and a Fellow at the Center for Children and Childhood Studies at Rutgers-Camden. She directs the Graduate Program in English and the Undergraduate Liberal Studies Program. She co-directs the American Studies Program, which includes an option for interdisciplinary studies of Walt Whitman. She serves on the board of the Walt Whitman Association, which helps to support historic preservation, education, and tourism at Whitmans home in Camden. She co-organized two scholarly conferences on Whitman and American culture. She is the recipient of grants and fellowships from the New Jersey Council on the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the American Antiquarian Association, and the Center for Critical Analysis of Contemporary Culture. A scholar of Edith Wharton, Carol Singley is author of a book about religion in Whartons fiction, *Edith Wharton: Matters of Mind and Spirit* (Cambridge University Press, 1995) and editor of three volumes on Wharton: A New Riverside Edition of *The Age of Innocence* (2001), the *Oxford Historical Guide to Edith Wharton* (Oxford University Press, 2003) and *The House of Mirth Casebook* (Oxford University Press, 2003). She is past president of the Edith Wharton Society. She is co-editor of *The American Child: A Cultural Studies Reader* (Rutgers University Press, 2003) as well as co-editor of two anthologies on feminist theory and American Calvinism. She has published numerous articles on nineteenth- and twentieth-century American writers, feminist theory, composition, and childhood studies. She is currently finishing a book on the centrality of adoption in the American literary experience entitled: *Building a Nation, Building a Family: American Adoption, Literature and Culture*.

TYLER HOFFMAN, RUTGERS-CAMDEN
Tyler Hoffman is author of *Robert Frost and the Politics of Poetry* (New England, 2001). He has written articles on Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Vachel Lindsay, Elizabeth Bishop, Gary Snyder, Thom Gunn, and contemporary slam poetry. His book in progress takes up the subject of American public poetry and the performance of culture. Tyler is Editor of *The Mickle Street Review* (a peer-reviewed journal of Whitman Studies), Associate Editor of *The Robert Frost Review*, and member of the Executive Committee

of the Robert Frost Society.

MARA SCANLON, UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON
Mara Scanlon, an Associate Professor of English at UMW, received a Ph.D. (1998) in 20th-century literature and an M.A. (1992) in English language and literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, after earning a B.A. (1991) in English from the University of Virginia. Her articles on poetry and poetics have been published in *College Literature*; *LIT: Literature, Interpretation, Theory*; *Bucknell Review*; *World Literature Today*; *The Virginia Review of Asian Studies*, and *Asian American Novelists*.

BRADY EARNHART, UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON
After receiving an MFA in Poetry from the University of Iowa, Brady received a PhD in English Literature from the University of Virginia. He has published several articles on Whitman's work in journals that include *The Mickle Street Review* and *The Walt Whitman Quarterly*. He is also well-known as a singer-songwriter whose song Whitman in 1863 is an adaptation of several letters Whitman wrote while working as a nurse during the Civil War. He currently teaches Creative Writing, Composition, and American Literature at the University of Mary Washington.

JAMES GROOM, UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON
James Groom is an instructional technologist whose work at UMW has been covered by *The New York Times*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Educause Quarterly*, among others. A key figure in the growing movement towards open education who is widely credited with coining the term edupunk, Jim has presented extensively at conferences sponsored by Educause, the New Media Consortium, The Association of Collegiate Computing Services of Virginia, University of Mary Washington, and CUNY.

KAREN KARBIENER, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
A well-known Whitman scholar who is preparing a book-length treatment of Whitmans New York, Karen Karbiener has edited several Whitman texts, including *Leaves of Grass: First and Death-bed Editions and Additional Poems* (Barnes and Noble) and *Encyclopedia of 20th-Century British Writers* (DWJ Books). Her articles on Whitman have appeared in *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, *Comparative Romanticisms*, and *The Walt Whitman Encyclopedia*. Karen curated a 2005 exhibit on Whitman at the South Street Seaport Museum in New *York and wsa a narrator and editorial consultant for* Walt Whitman, Boisterous Voice of America (PBS 2008).

Appendix D. Selected Media Coverage

bavatuesdays

a "b" blog

- bavablog
- bavawiki
  - bavads

Looking for Whitman: A Grand, Aggregated Experiment

Published on September 1, 2009 in Looking for Whitman. 2 Comments Tags: devwpmued, instructional technology, Looking for Whitman, Walt Whitman, wpmu, wpued, ww20.

Last Tuesday marked the kick-off of the Digital Whitman course at UMW. This course is part of a larger NEH grant that is focused on an inter-campus approach to pedagogy that is designed around a rich and distributed infrastructure of social media. The project is titled Looking for Whitman, and it brings together five geographically distinct courses on Walt Whitman in an attempt to experiment with how series of distributed faculty and students can share, collaborate, and converse out in the open.

The premise of the course is Professor Matt Gold's brainchild (you can read his overview of the course here), and when he asked me to be a part of the project early on I jumped at the prospect because I firmly believe it's an important opportunity to illustrate how social media can re-imagine the possibilities for sharing amongst and between students of a similar topic from a wide range of institutions. It in many ways frames the importance of an open and porous ecosystem of sharing not just within a single institution, but across many. It builds upon and amplifies an experiment like UMW Blogs by bringing a number of different institutions into a larger, focused conversation around a particular theme or topic.

And while the courses all still run a face-to-face model at their respective universities, a large majority of the work will be happening online and between faculty and students from entirely different campuses. All of which presents a really fascinating opportunity for re-thinking distributed courses between universities, and opens up an exciting possibility for re-imaging the architecture of distributed learning. Something that just about any LMS on the planet couldn't even begin to address, or even imagine, given how deeply rooted they are within the logic of a single institution, not to mention how entangled they are in the restrictive logic of stringent permissions and content ownership—yet another roadblock to

truly essential innovation brought to you by the LMS!

So, as may be clear by now, I'm pretty fired up about the possibilities of this project because it marries the classroom experience to a more distributed network of learners from a variety of institutions that represent a wide-range of students from all walks-of-life and backgrounds. From the University of Mary Washington to Rutgers-Camden to CUNY's City Tech to Serbia's University of Novi Sad, the project represents a rather compelling spectrum of courses from a variety of universities that provide a unique network of students from a wide array of experiences. This is not a "country club for the wealthy," but a re-imagining of a distributed, public education that is premised on an approach/architecture that is affordable and scales with the individual. It's a grand, aggregated experiment that will hopefully demonstrate the possibilities of the new web for re-imagining the boundaries of our institutions, while at the same time empowering students and faculty through a focused and personalized learning network of peers, both local and afar.

Now, all that said, what makes it all the more exciting is that we're building this ship as it sails. We have set up an overarching site premised to some degree on the work we have been doing at UMW with blogging and aggregation, a setup cheap enough that we can direct more of the grant money to hiring people and training faculty and students than worrying about designing and programming yet another framework. The tools are already out there, what we are doing is focusing on hacking an open source application like WPMu and BuddyPress to give us as much flexibility as possible. And, that's right, we're pushing the logic of the syndication bus that much further, trying to see just how publication and syndication can create a rather simple, yet powerful framework for sharing, collaborating and conversing. So, to that end, I'm going to talk quickly about ~~two~~ three syndication based experiments we're working on right now with this project.

Frontispiece Project

The frontispiece project is just under way, and it foregrounds the power of tag-filtered syndication for a distributed series of courses. At UMW Professors Mara Scanlon and Brady Earnhart—a project the other four courses will also be doing—are having the student design their own frontispiece as a means of reflecting upon the 1855 frontispiece from Whitman's first edition of *Leaves of Grass*.

They've posted the frontispiece in their individual blog (which feeds into a course, aggregated blog you can see here) and tagged it with frontispiece. All the posts from around the Looking for Whitman site are republished in the http://tags.lookingforwhitman.org über blog (created thanks to the Sitewide Tags Pages plugin) which means we can get a single feed of all the posts from around the environent tagged with frontispiece: http://tags.lookingforwhitman.org/tag/frontispiece/feed.

Now, I created a new blog for the frontispiece project at http://frontispiece.lookingforwhitman.org and activated a cool photo theme called AutoFocus. After that I simply dropped the sitewide feed for the frontispiece tag into FeedWordPress, and every post tagged frontispiece will now republish into this

project blog creating a very cool visualization of all the students' frontispieces from all five courses. Tale a look here. It was dead simple, and the effect is not to be underestimated, this is now a space we will see almost 100 frontispieces emerge reflecting the wide-range of students and faculty traveling through this course together.

A Twitter-based RSS Reader?

There have been some rumblings since Twitter took off that it has the potential to replace RSS readers, I haven't found this to be entirely true in my experience, but there can be no doubt I spend far more time in Twitter than my RSS Reader on a daily basis. And I am pushing hard that this course experiment with Twitter (although I am getting some push back from some analog UMW professors who will feel the wrath of the Reverend, and soon) and one of the things I discovered is that it would be rather easy to have a Twitter account that basically republishes all the students distributed posts at UMW into a single twitter feed. Given we are already aggregating all the UMW-based posts into a single blog, I simply activated Tweetable (my new twitter app for WordPress Mu thanks to Shawn Miller) which allows me to include the project hashtag (#ww20) as well as tweet right from the WordPress site.

So, in short, whenever a post is re-published on the course blog, a tweet is sent out through the @whitmanumw twitter account, so you can follow this account as a kind of course RSS reader, or simply search the hashtag #ww20 to see the latest posts as well as what people are saying about it on twitter, if anyone at UMW actually tweets, which the dearth of is highly annoying to me. I mean the course is titled Digital Whitman, not Analog Whitman, get with the program hippies!

Discourse

This idea is one I have been playing with for a while, and I have never really seen it pan out, but I figure what the hell, I'm already losing the Twitter battle, might as well unload everything at the very beginning, and cry myself to sleep thereafter. I created a separate blog at http://discourse.lookingforwhitman.org that I themed with P2, which is basically a Twitter knock-off theme for WordPress. And while students can become authors on this site and use it as a quick and easy space for discussion (something better handled on Twitter in my opinion, you hear that

Mara, are ya listening?), I actually think of it as a way to integrate the Twitter conversation into the ecosystem of the Looking fro Whitman site via the feed for the #ww20 hashtag on twitter. Finding the feed for a hashtag is made easy by http://search.twitter.com—you can see the feed for the hashtag #ww20 on the wrongfully reviled Twitter here.

Once I got the feed for the hashtag, I simply activated FeedWordPress on the Discourse blog, and dropped it in there, and automagically all the tweets with #ww20 republish within this blog, and become part of the Looking for Whitman ecosystem. They are now searchable and discoverable through recent posts, sitewide search, and simple RSS feeds dropped in the sidebars of course and/or individual blogs.

So, it is just the first week, but as you can tell, the experimentation will be fast and furious, we have plans for digress.it (or what was CommentPress) as well as Google MyMaps, YouTube, FLickr, and all those other not-so-new-fangled sites. So, stay-tuned to the bava for evermore cutting edge instructional technology, your one-stop-shop for brilliance writ large 😃

Related posts

- WPMu: Sitewide Tags, Search, and Archive (7)
- WPMU Hacks for BDP RSS, Optimal, & YouTube (9)
- WPMu as eduglu? (3)
- Whitman Video Locator (6)
- Whitman the Barbarian: Poetry on Steroids (2)

2 Responses to "Looking for Whitman: A Grand, Aggregated Experiment"

Feed for this Entry Trackback Address

- Mara
  September 1, 2009 at 8:28 am

  Did you just call ME an analog professor?? You may have made me, but you can't break me, Groom. Peace out.

- Reverend
  September 1, 2009 at 8:49 am

  Give me time, Scanlon, just give me time.

« Song of the bava, a frontispiece
Graffiti is Art! »

- CogDogBlog » WP to Twitter + HashTag (an idea in search of a use)
  Pingback on Sep 3rd, 2009 at 1:10 pm
- Hacking Together Egalitarian Educational Communities: Some Notes on the Looking for Whitman Project | The Lapland Chronicles
  Pingback on May 29th, 2010 at 5:59 am

Leave a Reply

Previous	Next
MIT, Penn, and Yale Get Rid of Paper Rejection Letters	Professor Encourages Students to Pass Notes During Class -- via Twitter

April 8, 2009, 01:28 PM ET

Whitman Takes Manhattan

By Jennifer Howard

I too lived, (I was of old Brooklyn,) I too walked the streets of Manhattan Island, and bathed in the waters around it, I too felt the curious abrupt questionings stir within me, In the day, among crowds of people, sometimes they came upon me, In my walks home late at night, or as I lay in my bed, they came upon me.

Those lines, from "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," the version that appeared in the 1860 edition of *Leaves of Grass,* are a good reminder that Walt Whitman was a Brooklyn boy as well as a citizen of the world. Next fall, some modern New Yorkers — students at City Tech, CUNY's New York City College of Technology — will explore the Fulton Ferry Landing that Whitman described in the poem and record their investigations on a Web site. Meanwhile, thanks to open-source software, students at three other institutions — New York University, Rutgers University at Camden, and the University of Mary Washington, in Virginia — will be recording their own literary and geographical explorations of Whitman's work on that same Web site.

The project, "Looking for Whitman: The Poetry of Place in the Life and Work of Walt Whitman," is the brainchild of a group of professors at all four schools led by Matthew K. Gold, an assistant professor of English at City Tech. It received a start-up grant of $25,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities' Office of Digital Humanities. James Groom, an instructional-technology specialist at the University of Mary Washington, is the site's architect.

The technological backbone of the project, according to Mr. Gold, is the WordPress multi-user blogging engine. It will draw on CommentPress, an "open-source theme" designed by the Institute for the Future of the Book for use with WordPress, and BuddyPress, which makes WordPress into a platform for social networking. The site will incorporate wiki tools and such Web 2.0 staples as Flickr, YouTube, and Twitter.

"The basic idea is to bring all four of these classes together in this one space," Mr. Gold said in an interview. Each class will have its own turf on the Web site, and each will concentrate on a different era of the poet's life. Students at NYU and City Tech will focus on Whitman in mid-19th-century New York, those at Mary Washington will examine his Civil War-era experience, and the Rutgers contingent will turn its attention to his sage-of-Camden period. Each group will work with and annotate the relevant edition or editions of *Leaves of Grass*. Each will have access to the others' work. So will the general public — at least that's the plan.

"We really don't know what these interactions will be like," Mr. Gold said. "It's one of the risks of the project but also one of the exciting things about it. What can NYU students learn from City Tech students and vice versa? Even as education is becoming more open, we are still, many of us, in the silos of our universities. Breaking through those walls is one of the things that's innovative about this project."

Mr. Gold believes that Whitman would appreciate the openness of the endeavor. The poet was nothing if not open source:

It avails not, neither time or place — instance avails not, I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence, I project myself — also I return — I am with you, and know how it is.

Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt, Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one of a crowd, Just as you are refreshed by the gladness of the river, and the bright flow, I was refreshed ...

—Jennifer Howard

42

NEDERLANDS | ENGLISH

Ode

Vast Sky   Genpo Merzel Roshi
Bernie Glassman Roshi
Ken Wilber

WWW.VASTSKY.ORG

MAGAZINE BLOGS EXCHANGE GOOD NEWS PEOPLE GROUPS MARKETPLACE   ABOUT ODE SUBSCRIBE NEWSLETTER LOGIN / REGISTER

Exchange

SEARCH   GO

TAGS

open education, digital learning, Social Networking, interactive education, Walt Whitman

RELATED ARTICLES

Ode profiles several leading social entrepreneurs

RELATED EXCHANGE ENTRIES

Carticipate: The iPhone gets wheels

SNIF Tags help arrange puppy play dates

Peace and Collaborative Development Network: Building bridges, networks and expertise across sectors

RELATED PEOPLE

JANERA, United States
LORILENNOX, USA
TOOHEYMOMSTER, USA
ALIZASHERMAN, usa

EXCHANGE ARCHIVE

Walt Whitman's democratic spirit lives on in City Tech professor's foray into digital learning

June 2007
July 2007
August 2007
September 2007
October 2007
November 2007
December 2007
January 2008
February 2008
March 2008
April 2008
May 2008
June 2008
July 2008
August 2008
September 2008
October 2008
November 2008
December 2008
January 2009
February 2009
March 2009

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) recently awarded Matthew K. Gold, assistant professor of English at New York City College of Technology (City Tech), a grant for his innovative digital humanities project, "Looking for Whitman: The Poetry of Place in the Life and Work of Walt Whitman."

Print this blog entry
Email this blog entry
View comments (0)
Post a comment

BOOKMARK

The project focuses on a new kind of interactive learning, made possible by recent advances in social networking technologies, that is gradually reshaping academia by expanding the boundaries of education beyond the "walled garden" of traditional academic disciplines, classroom activities and online learning environments.

At the center of the project is an open-source website that will connect classes from four colleges (City Tech, New York University, University of Mary Washington and Rutgers University, Camden), each of which is located in an area central to Whitman's life and work. As students explore those locations, they will document and share their research experiences with one another through Web 2.0 platforms such as WordPress, MediaWiki, Flickr, Twitter, YouTube and Google Maps.

City Tech students, for example, will investigate the Fulton Ferry Landing, which Whitman described in his famous poem, "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry." They will share the photos and videos they create there with students from other classes, who will similarly share work from their own locations. Faculty members will encourage

cross-classroom interaction and collaboration.

The project is part of a larger trend towards "open education" that is taking place across higher education. "Humanities research and teaching need to shift in response to technological innovations that have made new kinds of collaboration possible," affirms Gold, who has been teaching at City Tech since 2007. "Writing and reading have changed, and the academy has to respond. We have a tremendous opportunity before us if we're willing to take advantage of it."

Building a community of learners from a variety of institutions and with very different life experiences is very much in keeping with Whitman's democratic spirit, Gold adds. "Whitman believed that America's strength came from the diversity of its citizens. When he wrote the first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, the political and economic strains leading to the Civil War were pulling the country apart. He desperately wanted the country to cohere and hoped to enable his fellow citizens to think beyond divisions that separated them so that they might embrace the ties that bound them together. It was a radically optimistic text for its time and remains one today."

The project takes advantage of City Tech's proximity to the Brooklyn waterfront, where Whitman worked early in his career. Gold notes that the school is "two blocks from the site where the first copy of *Leaves of Grass* was printed, a short walk from the Brooklyn Bridge and close to the many Brooklyn locations in which Whitman lived. There is so much history here, but our students often don't know about it. I want to connect our learning to these places, to get our students out of the classroom and into the streets, into the archives. I want our students to see the streets themselves as archives."

To read the entire press release, click here.

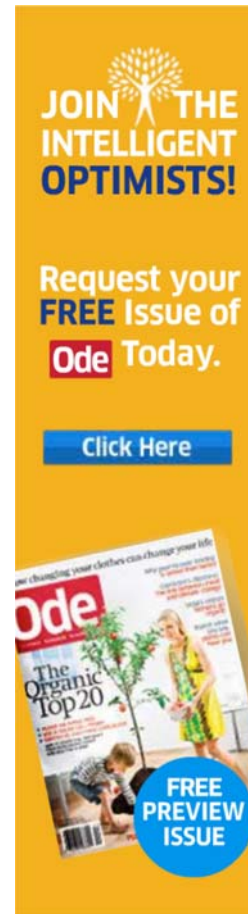*posted by* **MFORSTEN** *on 3/12/2009 6:24 pm* | **COMMENTS** (0)

COMMENTS

POST A COMMENT

You must be a registered user to comment. If you are already registered **Click here to login** or **Click here for our fast, free registration**.

MIXED & MASHED

AN IT DIGEST FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

WALT WHITMAN
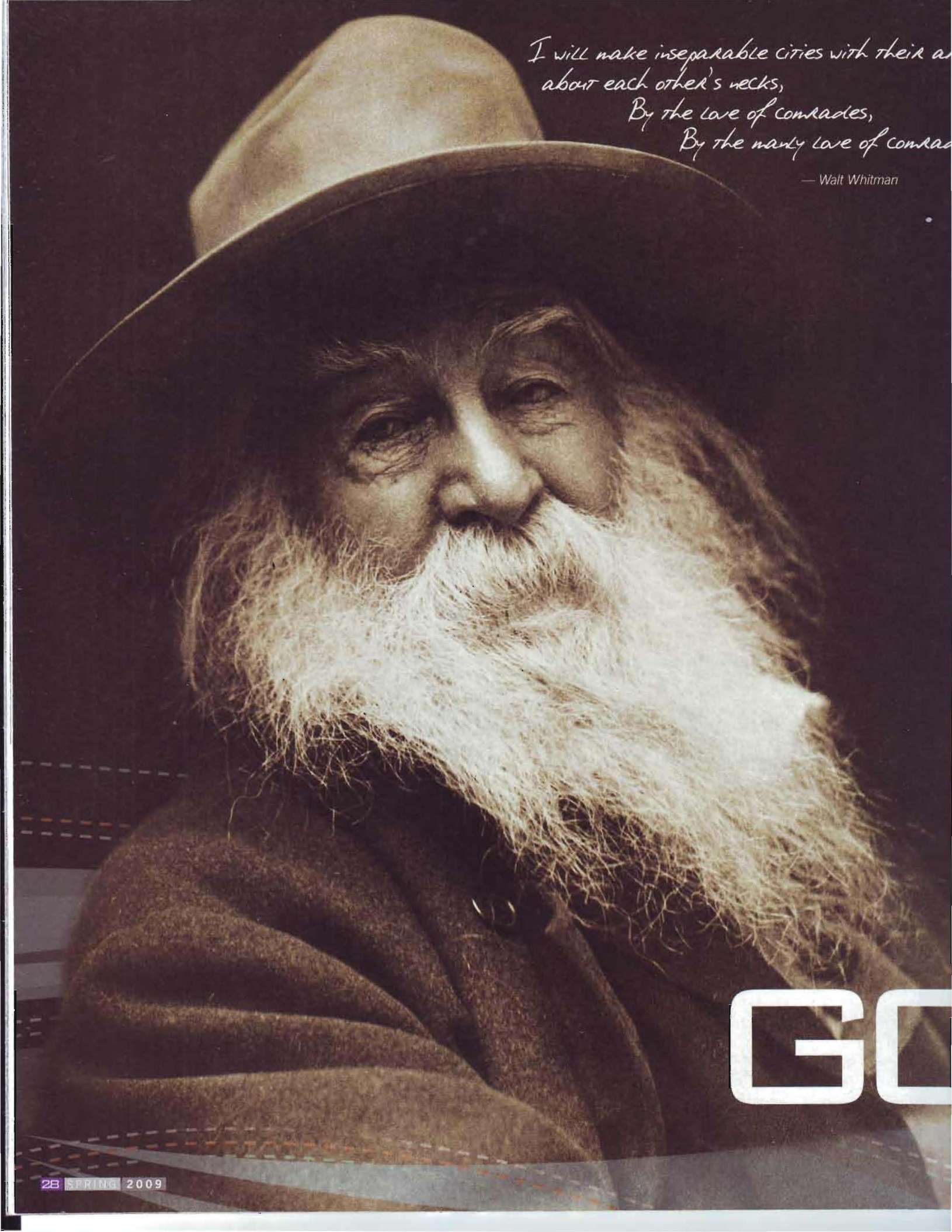IN A **2.0 WORLD**
P28

converge
SPRING
2009

P14

FUTURE FORCES

CHECK OUT HOW
**10 BREAKTHROUGH
TECHNOLOGIES** WILL
TRANSFORM THE WAY
WE WORK, PLAY AND
LEARN IN THE NEXT
20 TO 30 YEARS.

I will make inseparable cities with their a
about each other's necks,
By the love of comrades,
By the many love of comra

— Walt Whitman

GO

BY CHANDLER HARRIS

A MULTI-CAMPUS PROGRAM ABOUT **WALT WHITMAN** WILL UTILIZE SOCIAL NETWORKING TOOLS TO BRING THE POET INTO THE 21ST CENTURY.

ONE OF THE MOST influential poets in American history, Walt Whitman and his works are still revered and discussed in the halls of academia throughout the country.

And the importance of his work — namely "Leaves of Grass" — to literature, history and philosophy in America is relevant more than 150 years after the first poem published.

Whitman, and his vision for interconnectedness and unity, is being transformed through Internet users who are changing the way in which the man's words — his works of art — are shared, disbursed and discussed.

WALT WHITMAN

ES 2.0

AN IDEA IS BORN

If Whitman was alive today, he'd find that his work, previously circulated solely on bound book pages, is now accessible on millions of Web sites.

One such site is The Walt Whitman Archive – a comprehensive resource about Whitman's life and work. This site is a groundbreaking humanities Web project and serves as an incredible repository of Whitman materials and scholarship, according to Matthew Gold, an assistant professor of English at the New York City College of Technology at the City University of New York (CUNY).

However, The Walt Whitman Archive is static. It doesn't take advantage of the read-write Web, and is, therefore, considered Walt Whitman 1.0.

For anything to be considered 2.0, social networking tools must be used. In the case of Whitman, social networking helps create his ideal sense of democracy and discourse – it unites students, classes and schools, enabling them to learn more about the works of this American poet.

CUNY's Gold is creating what he refers to as "Walt Whitman Web 2.0," a modern progression of teaching Whitman.

WHITMAN GOES 2.0

With funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities' Office of Digital Humanities, Gold created a program titled, "Looking for Whitman: the Poetry of Place in the Life and Work of Walt Whitman." This program is a series of courses at four partner colleges – New York University (NYU), Rutgers, University of Mary Washington and CUNY – to engage students in online and real-world investigations of Whitman's work in a geographical context.

The colleges at which the fall 2009 series of courses will be taught are at different ends of the educational and socioeconomic spectrums.

PHOTO BY NINA YOUNG

"The fact that this all goes back to the ideas in Whitman's work is what makes this experiment in multi-campus pedagogy so exciting."

The semester-long program will explore the interrelationship of Whitman's poetry to geographic and historical points he described – and will do so in a way that Gold said he believes will break traditional education barriers: classroom walls, campuses, levels of students and literary-visual disconnects.

THE LOCAL ANGLE

In "Looking for Whitman," the students at each school will investigate a specific locale that coincides with a particular phase of Whitman's poetry.

Because Gold has a Web design background, he's interested in utilizing new technologies in the classroom. But it wasn't until he attended a lecture by Karen Karbiener,

author of the book "Songs of Ourselves: Walt Whitman and the Dawn of Modern American Poetry," that he received the inspiration to incorporate social networking technology into his curriculum.

Karbiener mentioned the geographic links between Whitman's poetry and Brooklyn and other locations. Gold was inspired to start a program that would connect students at different colleges by exploring those geographic landmarks near the campuses.

Each class will utilize open source software, such as Google maps, and social networking tools – Flickr, del.icio.us, Twitter, YouTube, etc. – to post blogs, videos, pictures and essays to connect with participating students.

With grant money, Gold is building a Web site, which will become the information hub for the class and serve as the platform for multi-campus dissemination of ideas. Next, he will coordinate training for lead faculty members, who are experts on Whitman, at the four colleges.

Each course will vary depending on the research, resources and location, but Gold is hoping to focus on three different phases of Whitman's career:
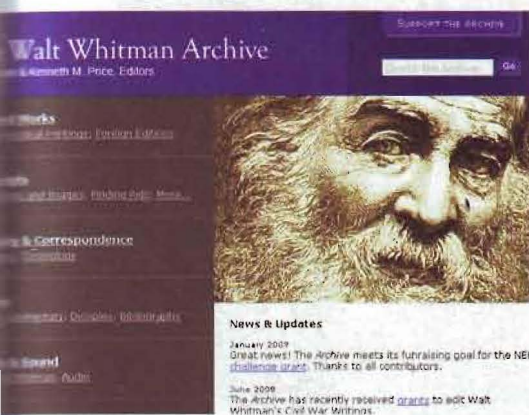
- CUNY and NYU will focus on his early career, which is from birth through the early editions of "Leaves of Grass;"

Whitman's Brooklyn
A Virtual Visit Circa 1850

- the University of Mary Washington will focus on the middle of his career, which includes Civil War experiences as a nurse in Virginia and Washington, D.C., and the Calamus poems from "Leaves of Grass;" and
- Rutgers will focus on the latter part of Whitman's career, which includes the later editions of "Leaves of Grass."

Gold is also hoping students will take advantage of different archival resources to study Whitman.

"I'm really hoping to engage all different forms of narratives," Gold said, "and for the students to get out of the classroom and into the street."

Walt Whitman Archive

THE CHANGING CLASSROOM

Steve Brier, coordinator for the Interactive Technology and Pedagogy Certificate Program and co-director of the New Media Lab at the CUNY Graduate Center, sees a continued move toward "educational hybridity" that blends traditional classroom lectures with Web technologies such as blogs, wikis and hands-on educational experience.

"I think this new technology affords [more] real, interesting and unusual possibilities than what we've typically done with standard classroom pedagogy," Brier said. "I think they have the possibility of engaging students much more accurately, making them active creators of knowledge, not simply passive recipients."

As the technical liaison for the Walt Whitman 2.0 project, Jim Groom, instructional technologist at the University of Mary Washington, said the utilization of

social networking platforms is offering exciting possibilities for teaching, learning and publishing. He has designed an innovative publishing platform called UMW Blogs that integrates blogging into the academic life of the university, a version of which he will implement for the Walt Whitman 2.0 project.

The Walt Whitman 2.0 project is the type of program Groom sees as a potential future of a more seamless integration of digital scholarship and pedagogy in the humanities.

"What we have is an interdisciplinary, inter-campus network of research about Whitman from four different points of view from four different scholars and their seminars dedicated on Whitman," Groom said, "which I think is a kind of unique combination of not only resources from respected institutions, but integrating that into a larger coherent and dialogic space online."

WHITMAN'S VISION TODAY

When "Leaves of Grass" was published in 1855, America was at the brink of civil war. Many scholars believe the themes of interconnectedness and unity in Whitman's poems were an attempt to unify the country and make people realize how connected we are.

Now more than ever, the world is a connected community that can access the multi-disciplinary studies of humanities through the Internet. Scholars must no longer physically go to libraries; they can go there virtually through the Internet. And it's because of the Internet that humanities projects are more frequently featuring collaboration among historians, librarians, computer scientists and social scientists, to name a few.

By utilizing interactive Web 2.0 technologies and connecting students from various campuses, the "Looking for Whitman" project is highlighting Whitman's vision while simultaneously helping to further a new frontier for the way we learn.

"One of the things I find interesting is bringing these various types of students together and discovering what they can learn from one another," Gold said. "To me, it's a vision that's very much alive in Whitman's poetry." ◉

2.0 TRENDS

The **"Looking for Whitman" project** is part of a growing trend in education of utilizing new and existing technology in humanities curriculums and disciplines.

In April 2008, the Bamboo Planning Project was launched with a goal of understanding how a consortium of educational institutions can develop shared technology services to advance research in the arts, humanities and interpretive social sciences.

With a $1.4 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the University of California and the University of Chicago are leading the 18-month project. It involves approximately 360 individuals from more than 90 institutions, including humanities faculty, campus information technology leaders, computer and information scientists, and senior librarians.

Some of the most important leadership in digital humanities comes from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the largest supporter of humanities programs. Last year, the NEH formalized its two-year Digital Humanities Initiative to create the Office of Digital Humanities (ODH) to offer grants for implementing technology to advance the humanities. In the case of Gold's Whitman project, the ODH digital humanities startup grant funded an innovative use of technology in the humanities, said Brett Bobley, chief information officer of the NEH and director of the ODH.

"We thought that was a really terrific use of taking existing technology — social networking technology of blogging and the like — and using it in a classroom setting," he said. "That makes the subject matter more interesting and engaging to the classroom."