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ARCHIVAL METHODS

Course description:

Archives are generically described as collections of information, documents, and records. The discovery and interpretation of archival material is at the heart of many forms of research from a range of academic disciplines to professions like journalism, history, law, and public policy. Understanding what information can be found, where it is, how to get your hands on it, and what to do once you've got it is what we cover in this course. Finding records is only half the battle. Once located, archival materials must be interpreted properly, contextualized within other material, and used in a way that meets certain disciplinary or professional standards.

The course is broken down into four parts, each tackling a different aspect of archival methods. The first is requesting information from public entities (like law enforcement or public transportation agencies and libraries or schools). Students will not only learn the history and rights associated with FOIA but will, in groups, submit FOIA requests for information. We cover FOIA requests first in the hopes of actually receiving responses before the end of the semester. Second, we will get comfortable in the archives, which can be incredibly intimidating. We will discuss the realities of digital archives as we attempt to use them to understand computing and internet history. We will then visit three technology related archives here in D.C. Third, we will investigate legal, policy, and governmental records at some of the most important buildings in America: the Law Library of Congress (where students will get researcher/library cards), the Library of Congress, and the National Archives. Finally, we will discuss how to track down information about people, businesses, and organizations like arrest, tax, voting, and ownership records.

Each visit and class will include readings of research products from the collections to better understand how resources can be successfully utilized and assignments to develop skills, comfort, and confidence. A final short research proposal (3,000-5,000 words) on a topic of the student's choice will be due at the end of the course, that includes specific, detailed sources from at least three of the four portions of the course. Alternatively, students may draft a 3,000-5,000 word paper utilizing one or more the sources discovered during the course. Please note that many of the class sessions in this course do not take place on campus but prompt attendance is expected.

Course Objectives:
- This course will provide students with knowledge of how information is preserved and accessed, the rights and restrictions associated with various records, and ways in which records may be used in different professions and disciplines.
- At the end of the semester, students will have experience working with a number of different archives and types of archival material.

Course Grading:

Attendance and participation		15
	DUE	
Homework:		
#1 Secondary sources	Sept 9	5
#2 Group FOIA submission	Sept 30	5
#3 Individual FOIA submission	Oct 7	5
#4 Teeth project	Oct 21	10
#5 Legal research worksheet	Oct 28	10
Discussion posts:		
#1 Hollerith landmark selfies	Sept 22	5
#2 NARA census selfie	Nov 5	5
#3 LOC reading room selfie	Nov 12	5
#4 Article breakdown	Nov 18	5
#5 Oral history post	Nov 25	5
Final paper	Dec 9	25

Participation: The success of this class depends upon each student being prepared (carefully completing the reading) and actively participating in class. Attendance alone will not be sufficient for a passing grade in this category – you are each expected to participate fully in visits and class discussion.

Assignments: Most weeks you will be given a few questions or tasks to help direct and utilize your reading for the week or from week's prior. Assignments for Tuesday's readings should be posted on Canvas by 11:59PM the preceding Monday night. These will either be "Discussion posts," which can be found in the Discussion space on Canvas or "Homework," which can be found in the Assignments space on Canvas. If it is late, you may bring a hard copy to class.

Final personal archival collection/reflection: Final papers due (submitted through Canvas) on the last day of class Dec 4th. The final paper should be 3,000- 5,000 words (not including citations), double-spaced, Times New Roman 12, one inch margins, and footnotes in any citation format. I encourage you to trade papers and peer-edit before submitting the final version.

Required books:

Michael Schudson, The Rise of the Right to Know (2015).
Wm. David Sloan and Michael Stamm, Historical Methods in Communication, 3rd ed. (2017).
Don MacLeod, How to Find Out Anything (2012).

Class Policies:

Sensitive Subjects: There are no expected sensitive subjects in this course, however, if you are uncomfortable discussing particular topics, please let me know. I am happy to excuse you from individual classes, and assign alternate assignments to substitute for those points.

Assignments: Significant points will be deducted for late assignments (absent compelling circumstances.

Laptops and similar devices can and should be brought to class – but only to ASSIST in the class and group assignments in class. We will often throw out different questions to the class for students to look up and discuss. However, if you are doing anything other than using them for note-taking or in-class assignments, I'll ask you to stop. No email. No social networking. Repeat reprimands will get you kicked out of class for that day.

General Policies:

Disability Accommodations: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodations for this class, please speak with me. These conversations will be kept confidential. Students may also discuss their needs with the University's Academic Resource Center staff, located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335, 202-687-8354, arc@georgetown.edu. More details can be found at http://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability/.

Religious Observances: Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes. The Office of the Provost, in consultation with Campus Ministry and the Registrar, will publish, before classes begin for a given term, a list of major religious holidays likely to affect Georgetown students. The 2013-2014 list of holidays can be found at http://campusministry.georgetown.edu/files/Campus%20Ministry%20Religious%20Days%202013-14.pdf. Students who cannot be accommodated should discuss the matter with an advising dean.

Classroom Behavior: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. We will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that we may make appropriate changes to my records. See the Student Code of Conduct at http://studentconduct.georgetown.edu/files/Code%20of%20Conduct%202013.pdf for more information.

Discrimination and Harassment: Georgetown University policies related to bias, discrimination, and harassment policy apply to all students, staff, and faculty. Any student, staff, or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of sexual harassment or discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Compliance and Ethics at 202-687-6493, Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action at 202-687-4798, or the Center for Multicultural Equity & Access at 202-687-4054. Information about the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://compliance.georgetown.edu/.

Honor Code: All students of the Georgetown University are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Council (carrollprograms@georgetown.edu; 202-687-0665). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/.

SCHEDULE

NOTE: readings will change

September 3 Week 1 Introduction

Visit: none

Readings:
How to Find Out Anything, Chapter 1
Historical Methods in Communication, Chapter 1
Julia Blakely, "Computers and Washington," Smithsonian Libraries Blog (May 6, 2015).

In class:
What are your goals for this course, now that you know what it has to offer? What is the difference between primary and secondary sources? Next class will be in Georgetown special collections – sign up

for access using online system Aeon. Take a **selfie** in front of as many Hollerith landmarks (and at least the plaque in front of the old factory).

Assignment due: none

September 10 Week 2 Archive Basics

Visit: Georgetown Archives

Readings: Computer translation background

- Douglas Hofstadter, "The Shallowness of Google Translate," The Atlantic (Jan 30, 2018).
- Tony Peng, "Microsoft AI Achieves Milestone in Machine Translation," Medium (Mar 14, 2018).
- W. John Hutchins. "Machine Translation: A Brief History" in E.F.K. Koerner and R.E. Asher (eds). *Concise history of the language sciences: from the Sumerians to the cognitivists*. (1995): 431-445.
- The Rise of the Right to Know Chapter 1

In class:
Introduction to hands on archival research with Lynn Conway

Assignment due:
HW#1 What are ten secondary sources (e.g., journal articles and books) you'd find in the library to support your understanding of computer translation? Also be sure to sign up for special collections access here.

September 17 Week 3 FOIA introduction

Visit: none

Reading:
- The Rise of the Right to Know Chapter 2
- Kwoka, Margaret B. "Foia, Inc." Duke LJ 65 (2015): 1361-1438.
- Max Galka, "Who Uses FOIA? – An analysis of 229,000 Requests to 85 Government Agencies," FOIA Mapper (Mar 13, 2017).
- Play around with FOIA Mapper search features

In class:
FOIA introduction
Discuss FOIA topics

Assignment due: none

September 24 Week 4 FOIA in action

Visit: Visitor!

Reading:
- Rise of the Right to Know Chapter 6
- How to find anything Chapter 2 and 3
- Sandhya Kambhampati, "How to Find out About Hot Dogs, Puppy Names, and Parking Tickets," ProPublica Illinois (July 12, 2018).
- Unredacted blog posts, https://unredacted.com/2009/12/17/foia-tip-6%E2%80%94foia-process-in-a-nutshell/
- Drew Harwell, "FBI, ICA find state driver's license photos are a gold mine for facial-recognition searches," Washington Post July 7, 2019.

In class: Guest lecture by Clare Garvie and Jameson Spivack

Assignment due: Post #1 Hollerith selfies due as Discussion posts on Canvas

October 1 Week 5 How to FOIA

Visit: Visitor!

Reading:
- Rise of the Right to Know, Ch 6
- EPIC FOIA request to FTC for Facebook consent decree information after Cambridge Analytica
- Reporters Committee launches iFOIA electronic information request filing and tracking system https://www.rcfp.org/reporters-committee-launches-ifoia-electronic-information-request-filing-and-tracking-system/
- Unredacted sample: https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu//IMG/SampleFOIAletter.pdf
- How to Write a Great FOIA Request, Unredacted, https://unredacted.com/2009/12/03/foia-tip-4-writing-a-good-foia-request/

In class: Guest lecture Adam Marshall from Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press

Assignment due: HW#2 Team FOIA requests due

October 8 Week 6 Organizing the Process: sourcing, corroborating, contextualizing

Visit: none

Reading: Historical Methods in Communication, Chapter 4-5
How to Find Out Anything, Chapters 4-5
Organizing practices:
Taylor Pipes, "How Amy Stewart Brought History to Life with Evernote." Evernote blog (Oct 23, 2015).

Zoë Jackson, "Research Clutter: A New App Helps Create Order Out of Disorder," Perspectives on History (Apr 1, 2018).

In class: situated, organizing, and analyzing archival material in research. Introduce teeth assignment.

Assignment due: HW#3 Individual FOIA requests

October 15 Week 7 Legal Research

Visit: Law Library of Congress

Readings
- Rise of the Right to Know, Chapter 3 and 4
- How to Find Anything Chapter 8
- Legal Methods, Chapter 1

In class: get researcher card, instruction from law librarian

Assignment due:

October 22 Week 8 Census

Visit: none (later independent visit to National Archives)

Readings
- How to find anything Chapter 9 and 7
- Dan Bouk Census Stories project: https://censusstories.us/
  - Make sure to read a few stories and A Note on Method https://censusstories.us/method/
- Margo Anderson, "The Census and the Federal Statistical System: Historical Perspectives," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 631 (September-2010): 152-62
- Daniela Hernandez, Zolan Kanno-Youngs and Zusha Elinson, "Use of Genealogy Data to Track Golden State Killer Raises Privacy Questions." WSJ (Aug 29, 2018)
- Jonathan Blitzer, "Your Grandma Was a Chain Migrant," New Yorker (Feb 5, 2018).

In class: discuss history, controversies, and content of the census. Use historian Dan Bouk's guest lecture blog post to demystify visiting NARA, after independently (on your own schedule) visit NARA and take selfie with census materials. Sign up for the Gelman system next week.

Assignment due: HW#4 Tooth project

October 29 Week 9 National Security

Visit: National Security Archive

Readings
- Rise of the Right to Know, Ch 6
- Sarah Myers West, Survival of the Cryptic https://limn.it/articles/survival-of-the-cryptic/
- White House Emails https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/white_house_email/#WHEM
- William Brennan, "The Declassification Engine: Reading Between the Black Bars," The New Yorker (Oct 16, 2013).
- Unredacted website

In class: check in at Gelman Library, instruction from specialist Lauren Harper

Assignment due: HW#5 legal research worksheet

November 6 Week 10 Technical/Web Archives

Visit: none

Readings:
- Historical Methods in Communication, Chapters 2 and 3
- Sandra Braman, "Privacy by design: Networked computing, 1969-1979." New Media & Society, 14(5), 798-814 (2011).
- Benj Edwards, "The Lost Civilization of Dial-Up Bulletin Board Systems," The Atlantic (Nov4, 2016). https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2016/11/the-lost-civilization-of-dial-up-bulletin-board-systems/506465/
- Matthew Braga, "Google, a Search Company, Has Made Its Internet Archive Impossible to Search," Motherboard (Feb 13, 2015). https://motherboard.vice.com/en_us/article/jp5a77/google-a-search-company-has-made-its-internet-archive-impossible-to-search
- Matthew Lasar, "Before Netscape: Forgotten Web Browsers of the Early 1990s," Ars (Oct 11, 2011), https://arstechnica.com/information-technology/2011/10/before-netscape-forgotten-web-browsers-of-the-early-1990s/

In class:

Assignment due: Post#2 NARA selfie and experience discussion post due on Canvas.

November 12 Week 11 Oral Histories and Internet Culture

Visit: Library of Congress American Folklife Center

Readings
- How to Find Out Anything, Chapter 6-7, 9
- Nicholas Quah, "Can a Podcast Improve the Oral History?" Vulture (Sept 5, 2017), https://www.vulture.com/2017/09/origins-james-andrew-miller-oral-history-podcast.html.
- Listen to an Internet History Podcast http://www.internethistorypodcast.com/
- Listen to an episode of Witness podcast: https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/witness

- Listen to a StoyCorps podcast https://storycorps.org/podcast/ and a few stories https://storycorps.org/stories/

In class: visit with Nicole Saylor about Web Cultures Web Archive and oral histories

Assignment due: Post #3 LOC reading room selfie due as discussion post on Canvas (end of day Nov 12)

November 19 Week 12 Representations of Science and Technology

Visit: Dibner Library National History Museum and Smithsonian Mathematical Objects

Readings
- Rise of the Right to Know, Chapter 3
- How to Find Anything, Chapter 8
- Jill Lepore, "The Surprising Origin Story of Wonder Woman," Smithsonian Magazine (Oct 2014).

In class: Visit with curators Peggy Kidwell and Lilla Vekerdy at the National Museum of American History

Assignment due: Post #4 Identify what secondary sources one of the authors uses to situate their archival work and which archive(s) they are using. Using an article related to your final project, identify what secondary sources the author uses to situate the archival work and which archives they are using.

November 26 Week 12

Visit: independent archival research week

Readings: independent materials for final assignment related to archival visit

In class: independent archival research week

DUE**:** Post #5 oral histories

December 3 Week 14

Visit: none

Reading:
- Rise of the right to know Chapter 8
- Listen: The right to be forgotten debate https://www.npr.org/2015/03/18/393643901/debate-should-the-u-s-adopt-the-right-to-be-forgotten-online

In class: Wrap up, clean up + discussion of final papers.

Due: Final projects due Dec 10 via Canvas