

## **Proposal**

### **Digital Humanities and Culture Graduate Certificate**

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#### **Justification**

The English Department proposes to offer a nine-credit hour graduate certificate in Digital Humanities and Culture. The certificate emphasizes historical, rhetorical, and cultural knowledge by building expertise in the critical analysis and creative production of digital media. This understanding prepares students for problem solving and communicating both locally and globally. More than learning a specific technology or computing platform, a graduate certificate in Digital Humanities and Culture directs students to learn how, when, and most importantly why to use technology to solve a range of problems for digital classrooms, scholarly research methodologies, information technology companies, political advocacy groups, social justice projects and beyond. Merging theory and practice, the Digital Humanities and Culture certificate provides a foundation for critical digital literacy.

Designed to enhance already existing graduate programs in the humanities and the social sciences, the graduate certificate in Digital Humanities and Culture will offer graduate-level coursework in critical methods, textual analysis, composing practices, and hands-on production for engaging with humanistic studies in, as well as about, digital environments. Sharing the vision of the College of Arts and Sciences to, “Connect faculty and students across disciplines and campuses to enable them to address problems that transcend disciplinary boundaries,” the graduate certificate in Digital Humanities and Culture will bring together courses, students and faculty with an emphasis on the interdisciplinary strengths of the English department and the Digital Technology and Culture program.

The core courses offered by the English department pull from the strengths of our diverse faculty highlighting both the critical and practical aspects of the proposed certificate: critical inquiry and theory connected to digital production and processes. Our faculty’s wide range of specialties and areas of expertise including Rhetoric and Technical Communication, Digital Media Studies, Print Culture, Cultural Criticism and Ethnography, will draw both English graduate students and graduate students across the College of Arts and Sciences. This interdisciplinary focus upholds a key objective of the CAS Strategic Plan to promote “Interdisciplinary Teaching, Research, and Creative Activity.” Furthermore, the graduate certificate builds directly from the English Department’s Strategic Plan emphasizing Manuscript, Print, and Digital Cultures as an “area for

strategic growth.” That is, the Digital Humanities and Culture certificate will focus on investigating how “the advent of new technologies—understood in the broadest sense—continues to enable new patterns of thought and expression.” The Digital Humanities and Culture graduate certificate brings together both College and department level goals with the overall emphasis of the University on building world class, diverse, and globally focused curriculum.

### **Requirements**

Students seeking to earn this certificate must be simultaneously enrolled in a graduate degree-granting program at Washington State University. A total of nine-credit hours are required for the DHC graduate certificate: English/DTC 560 (three-credit hours) and DTC/English 561 (three-credit hours) are mandatory and the final three-credit hours are chosen by the students from a list of electives depending on their focus. The required two core courses bring together theory, practice, methods, and ethics.

**English/DTC 560: Critical Theories, Methods, and Practice in Digital Humanities**  
*Critical Theories, Methods, and Practice in Digital Humanities* examines the history, theory, and practice of digital humanities, paying special attention to the ways in which digital humanities are transforming research, disciplines, workplaces, and access to knowledge across disciplines. Topics include contrasts and continuities between traditional and digital humanities scholarship; tools and techniques used by digital humanists and practitioners; the ethics of digital circulation; the politics of open access and diverse scholarship; and the crossover between critical theory and digital humanities methods.

### **DTC/Engl 561: Studies in Technology and Culture**

*Studies in Technology and Culture* develops a historical, ethical, rhetorical, and cultural understanding of technology and culture by merging theory and practice with a crucial emphasis on cultural needs, historical trajectories and current lived practices. This course provides a foundational examination of the key concepts, debates, tools and possibilities afforded by engaging with technology through a critical cultural lens. The course challenges both technologically determinist and celebratory narratives by providing students with a critical vocabulary and in-depth knowledge of the historical, political, social and ethical decisions, projects and processes that define everyday uses and practical implementations of technological solutions that are never culturally neutral or value-free.

### **Electives**

Students must choose at least one elective course from the following list to complete the requirements for the certificate. Other courses may be accepted upon request and approval by the Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Director of Digital Technology and Culture.

**AMST 522 Digital Cultures, Digital Divides:** Critical analysis of the social and cultural dimensions of the digital divide and use of digital technologies by dominant and subaltern communities.

**DTC/ENGL 477 Advanced Multimedia Authoring:** Advanced writing, imaging and teamwork skills for authoring in new computer-based media.

**DTC/ENGL 478 Usability and Interface Design:** Design of websites using best practices of visual literacy, interface architecture and usability.

**ENGL 548 Seminar in Critical and Cultural Theory:** Examines critical and cultural theory, at times including issues of technology studies, feminist theory, postcolonial theory, and cultural criticism.

**ENGL 591 Topics in Pedagogy:** Theory and practice of designing and teaching courses in literature, rhetoric, composition, theory, or cultural studies.

**HIST 527 [M] Public History: Theory and Methodology:** An introduction to the broad range of non-traditional careers in history.

**HIST 529 Interpreting History through Material Culture:** Historical interpretation to work on major historic preservation and museum projects.

### **Resources and Infrastructure**

As the DHC graduate certificate is defined in this document all of the core and elective courses can, will and are being taught by current faculty across English and DTC. On the Pullman campus, ENGL/DTC 560 and DTC/ENGL 561 will be offered alternately every other year. The two core courses will be taught by English or DTC faculty, ensuring both continuity in the core courses and a regular commitment to the rotation of courses needed to ensure student success. Many of the elective courses are currently taught in and by ENGL/DTC faculty and will be taught on a regular rotation. The remaining electives offered by History and American Studies show our commitment to engaging faculty across campus while not placing a burden on any unit to require a specific course rotation. Additionally, these offerings will allow students to fulfill their elective requirements in a timely manner. The certificate emphasizes theory more than practice at the moment and so the minimal lab space that is currently used by English and DTC will suffice. The plans from the President's office to upgrade DTC lab space will allow instructors more flexibility in coming years and with the addition of faculty lines we will intensify the practice portion of the certificate. However, given the emphasis of this certificate on critical cultural inquiry, we will always maintain a balance between theory and practice weighing on the side of the cultural production of technology itself.