Post Blog Edit and Final Profile
Mason Smith
My name is Mason Smith I am an education major at Georgia Southern University and I am a knowledge addict! I have always been seen a leader in everything. I am an Eagle Scout and on top of that I was the youngest senior patrol leader to ever be elected for a troop in our nation’s history, at the age of 13. On top of that it was the largest troop in the state of Georgia. I have always been fascinated by the outdoors as well as technology. I believe these two fascinations are what make me such an avid learner in the digital humanities field. On top of that, my personal value for the relationship between technology and our world will indefinitely make me a tremendous asset to any team in this field.
The first of my blogs was essentially me gaining my ground. I can honestly say that upon entering the class I did not know what digital humanities was. Through reading a very insightful interview with Sharon M. Leon I got a new understand for it. I learned about how digital humanities is the relationship between humans and the technological world. It is more than just the creation of technology and its uses, but how it plays a role in our lives and specifically how it advances us as a human race.
This assignment was the first time we got to see how the digital humanities field could play a role in our lives. We used a tool called Voyant to analyze text. I analyzed the text from the first and last chapter of the bible and saw how his messages were given to us. The interesting thing that I learned was how word usage and repetition plays a role in the message we perceive from the text. Things that we would normally not notice can be revealed uses tools like Voyant. Hearing a single word excessively more than any other word can make us think or feel or think a way that the author makes us want to feel.
The next step in my digital humanities journey was a very important one. We explored the world of mapping and specifically how to “escape the flatland” when creating a map. This means adding extra mechanics that give the map a 3d effect or make it interactive in ways even though it is on a flat piece of paper. I created an interactive map for a hiking trip that I was taking over spring break. I have always been good with maps due to my intensive hiking experience. I learned that techniques like shading and layering can create a unique way of looking at things, like a topography map.
If there was one thing that I learned from the entire course is that there is data in everything. Everything can be broken down into simpler forms of data, and boiling things down to data can be tricky. We also must deal with vast amounts of data that couldn’t be sorted easily or in a timely manner. Programs like Gephi, NodeXL and UCINET can be used to organize data in a way that you want. We can put millions of nodes into programs and they will be sorted to our predetermined requirements. This is important for dealing with vast amounts of data or organizing data that has small differences between them. This is very similar to text analysis where we enter a set of text and we can then pull back a layer and look at the mechanics and dynamics, as opposed to the final product presented to us.
The most fun activity was dealing with games. We played two games and interviewed a classmate on the games they played. We mostly explored what goes into making a game and how the mechanics create a product that is desired. I further explored the ideas of a prestigious game maker, Greg Costikyan. Costikyan asks us what creates a game and what makes something a game. We learn that the creator of the game, using patterns, can manipulate rules, time, difficulty and many other things to create a desired aesthetic feeling. The combination of the mechanics is what determines the aesthetics. Many designers say that the balance between difficulty and interest is very important to help immerse the player.
For this assignment, I created a three-dimensional figure of my head and shoulders by using a scanner. The scanner uses triangles to triangulate the dimensions of my head and reflects it into a 3D looking image on a 2D screen. We focused on the difference between a three-dimensional product and viewing the real image. Things like shadows and texture in the real world are what creates the real image look real compared to the 3D. Even programs that add shadow aren’t the same thing because as you move your head looking at the screen the shadows don’t move like they would in life. We are always advancing our technology and maybe one day there will be digital imagery that is realistic, but for now we cannot mimic life imagery on a screen.
I had the opportunity to be a group leader in a mock proposal for museum exhibit. We studied the history of the phone and created our own history for the next 13 years. We interviewed others on what they thought the future may hold for cell phones. This taught us how to take data or a visual from a focus group and create a proposal that was most realistic. Aside from learning to manage a group of people I created the poster above. I understand how the presentation of data can be the difference in how it is analyzed by the viewer. A poster with an all-white background and plain black text will not convey the message as well as a poster with text boxes that flow in different ways and fit together like a puzzle. Color scheme, presentation and organization can grab a viewer and present the data in the way its creator intended.
The final creation of mine was done as a group as well. I, once again, had the opportunity to be project manager and further developed my management skills. We created an interactive map that would be at a kiosk in our museum. The 17 points on the map show the location and history of the museum and the previous locations of the items in the exhibit. The dots are color coded for easy using. The important thing we had to figure out was how to make something complicated be simple. A kiosk must be very user friendly so we organized all the information we wanted to convey into 17 easy and clickable points. Like many of our other assignments learning to alter our mechanics and dynamics were crucial in creating the final product we desired.
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EDUCATION

Roswell High School
Graduation: May 2016
G.P.A. 3.33

EXPERIENCE

Ceviche: Roswell, GA
Food Runner, Back server, Busboy, Barback: 1/2016-7/2016
  • Quality control of food, deliver food, and clean tables

Table and Main: Roswell, GA
Food Runner, Back server, Busboy, Barback: 8/2015-1/2016
  • Quality control of food, deliver food, and clean tables

Anticos Pizza: Alpharetta, GA
Food Runner, Busboy: 5/2015-8/2015
  • Quality control of food, deliver food, and clean tables

ROUX on Canton Street: Roswell, GA
Food Runner and Busboy: 8/2014-1/2015
  • Quality control of food, deliver food, and clean tables

Contour Engineering, LLC: Kennesaw, Georgia
  • Visited job sites to review how geotechnical tasks were being performed
  • Calculated densities and performed reviews on specifications for different soils and concrete

Knotts Brothers Miscellaneous Job Service: Roswell, GA
Owner: 1/2010 - Present
  • Performed landscaping and miscellaneous jobs in surrounding neighborhoods

O.S.H.A Certified: Roswell, Ga
  • Earned O.S.H.A certification in Roswell High school Construction Class

ACTIVITIES

Sierra Club: Roswell High School
Member: 8/2013- 5/2015
President: 8/2015 - Present
  • Organized and participated in outdoor adventure activities and education awareness
  • Organized community clean-up project for the Chattahoochee River
**Interact Club:** Roswell High School  
*Member:* 8/2014- Present  
- Rotary Community Service Club - participated in several projects; Habitat for Humanity, Roswell Veterans support, and Homeless youth

**Northpoint Youth Ministries:** Alpharetta, GA  
*Member:* 2012-Present  
- Participated in several youth related community service projects

**Flood Ministries:** Roswell, GA  
*Volunteer:* 2013  
- Volunteered for several community service projects; helping families in need with moving services and providing landscaping services for The Drake House - (non-profit organization for homeless mothers and their children)

**Football:** Roswell High School  
- *Participant/Leader of Defense* - Sophomore and Junior years- Starting Defensive End