**Introduction to Public Humanities:**

**Theory and Practice**

**Fall 2020 · CAS 391B · W 4:10-5:05 · Zoom/Moodle**

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**Office Hours: On Teams W 1:00-4:00, TR 1:00-2:15 and by appointment**

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

Higher education, headlines tell us, is in a state of crisis. While at first it may have seemed like only the humanistic disciplines were under siege, it’s now clear that the entire project of the liberal arts is under pressure. The critiques of universities have become commonplace: too expensive, too detached, not practical or relevant enough for the fast-paced and vocation-focused 21st century. In the face of mounting challenges, how should students, faculty, and universities respond? More broadly, how can scholarly research intervene in the most pressing issues facing our communities today?

The Public Research Fellows program was founded upon the belief that the humanities, far from being a drag on the revival of university education in the face of these issues, are in fact crucial to its future. The two parts of the program—student/faculty research and participation in this course—are designed to work in tandem. Using an annual theme as our touchstone—this year, Displacement and Justice—the program provides the opportunity to investigate how scholars might engage a timely topic using creative public humanities methods, reaching beyond an audience of like-minded academics to the wider world in which we live. During the Fall semester, we will read a variety of texts that introduce key issues, debates, and methodologies in the field of public humanities while we explore a range of models for publicly-engaged projects. Our goal is for students to develop a background in public humanities tools and methods that they can then bring to bear on their collaboration with their faculty partner. As we work toward developing connections between our research projects and the public, we will continually reflect on our own relationship to our academic work and how we envision making it matter in ways that move beyond the individual to the public good.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By participating in this course, students should expect to:

* gain familiarity with the public humanities and situate the field within contemporary debates about the purpose of higher education
* develop understandings of public humanities tools and methods that can help shape the process and outcome of faculty/student research projects
* cultivate analytical and reflective skills on the research process and creative ways to connect research interests with the public sphere

You will work toward these objectives through:

* commitment to active reading
* rigorous participation in class discussion, small group work, and reflection
* informal and formal writing assignments and activities

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

* All readings will be available as PDFs or links on our course Moodle site

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Attendance and Participation (30%): As a reading course, the success of the class relies upon vigorous engagement with our texts and each other. Active participation requires being present, of course, but it’s much more than that: it means coming to class having done the reading (or listening/watching/browsing, as the case may be), having the reading readily available (either on paper or easily accessible on laptop/tablet), and preparing your own questions, comments, and areas of discussion to share with the class. At the midpoint of the semester I will provide feedback on the quality of your participation (e.g. evident preparedness, active listening, quality of discussion, and commitment to the course and our cohort’s collaborative exploration of the public humanities). If you must be absent, it is your responsibility to keep up with the course readings and activities by referring to the schedule and Moodle.

Forum Responses (30%): Most weeks you will write a short (~500-word) response to our readings and the issues they raise. These responses are meant to give you an informal space to consider a text, a model project, and/or debate, and explore them a bit, especially as they relate to the development of your own projects. Each week I will give you a broad question or two to consider; the only guidelines are that you do this in a thoughtful, clear way and present a new idea or perspective (in other words, these posts should not be summaries of texts or class discussion). Responses should be posted by noon before the class in which they are due. We will use these responses to inform our class discussions; therefore, I encourage you to read the posts of your classmates (you may also formulate your response as a reply to a classmate).

Brainstorming Dossier (15%): Across the term you will contribute to a brainstorming dossier that demonstrates your reflective process as it relates to your interests in the course and your research project. This dossier might contain various brainstorming exercises (clustering, lists, freewrites, etc.), images and documents you’ve collected, as well as brief journal entries on potential interests you have in course materials, topics, and/or related issues. You may construct your dossier digitally, analog, or some combination of the two; it will be turned in to Moodle on the last day of class.

Final Reflection (25%): At the end of the semester each student will write a reflection (~1000-1200 words) on their project and its relationship to issues raised by course texts. This piece should reflect on the research process, draw connections between your project and the theme of Displacement and Justice, and synthesize how you might employ public humanities concepts, examples, and/or methods to showcase your work next semester. While the reflection may be written in a first-person, personal voice, you should use your brainstorming dossier and specific references to course texts to flesh out your ideas. You will turn in your reflections to Moodle on the last day of class.

**COURSE STRUCTURE AND POLICIES**

Classroom Expectations: This course is designed to foster active learning, which means that the majority of class time will be devoted to direct engagement with the texts and each other in an effort to develop deeper understandings of the public humanities. In addition to class discussion, we will also use a variety of small group work and in-class exercises to sharpen our ideas and prepare us for conversation (see below for a more detailed description of how class will work during this online semester). Because engagement with one another is so important for the success of the course, it is imperative that students be respectful of one another—good listeners and observers, as well as participants.

How Class Will Work: Across the semester, we will be using synchronous discussion activities, meaning that we will all show up to class on Zoom each week at 4:10 on Wednesdays. Our classes will almost entirely take place in small group breakout rooms to help us develop a sense of community and keep it manageable and lively. Since it’s a short, once a week class, we should be able to avoid the Zoom-fatigue that can set in with synchronous work, but we will keep an eye on this and adjust accordingly. All activities will be outlined on Moodle under each day of class.

Here’s how a typical session will work:

To enter class, you will click the Zoom link at the top of the course Moodle page (this link will work for each class across the semester) and enter the class password (CAS391b!). You should always keep our course Moodle page open for the duration of the session since we’ll be using it to guide most of our activities.

We will always start class all together as a group. This time will serve as a check-in. I will give a brief (~5 min.) overview of what we’re doing that day, any background on the texts we’re reading, and our goals for the session; I’ll also ask for any questions to make sure we’re all on the same page.

From there, we will usually move into a series of synchronous small group activities on the day’s texts/topics; these will vary but will generally consist of small group discussions and writing/reflective activities. We will use Zoom’s breakout room function for these, and I will drop into each group’s discussion for a few minutes at a time to join in discussion. During these classes, we will always come back together for the last 5-10 minutes of the session, when I will briefly recap the work we’ve done and provide reminders for the course moving forward.

Moodle Documents: All course readings are available on Moodle. While it’s ideal to print readings so that you can have the text in front of you during class, saving your screen for participation on Zoom, I realize that this might not be possible. Keeping a notebook devoted to your reading notes for the course will help mitigate this issue, giving you reference points for discussion and helping you develop your ideas. These notes will also be helpful for you as you compile your Brainstorming Dossier (see below) across the semester.

Tech Etiquette: Given the nature of our switch to an online semester, tech etiquette looks a little different than usual. To make the most out of our time together, please try to keep your multi-tasking during class to a minimum. Remember to silence your device’s notifications so that they don’t distract during discussion. Ideally, everyone’s cameras will be on during discussion**.** I understand there are times when there will need to be exceptions to this; please get in touch with me if you have any concerns about this issue and we will work it out! And last: Students are expected to check their UP email daily for class updates.

Office Hours and Communication: I will hold office hours from 1:00-2:15pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays and from 1:00-4:00pm on Wednesdays, all on Microsoft Teams. If you’d like to meet outside of those hours, just send me an email to schedule an appointment and we’ll figure out a time. I’d also like to schedule individual meetings with each of you at least once during the semester; we’ll develop a plan for this during the first weeks of class.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

Remote Learning and Covid-19: The focus on remote learning for fall semester 2020 presents unique challenges to both faculty members and students in the online environment. Working together, we can create a successful learning community by following some important guidelines:

* To be successful in remote learning, all students must have access to a functioning computer with a working microphone, camera, and headphones or headset. Students who do not have access to such technology may contact the Office of Financial Aid for possible assistance.
* All course content will be available through course Moodle pages accessible through the UP Portal (PilotsUP). Students should have a working knowledge of both Zoom and Microsoft Teams.
* Students are expected to attend all class sessions, whether synchronous or asynchronous, according to the instructor’s direction, and follow guidelines for class conduct during online sessions (e.g. muting, camera on/off, etc.)
* If a student does not feel well enough to attend class remotely, they should communicate with their instructor as to how to make up missed work.
* For the benefit of students who are not able to attend class due to illness, extreme time zone differences, or temporary internet problems, classroom sessions may be recorded and made available on the course Moodle site. Students may not distribute or share any course images or recordings without the permission of the instructor.

University of Portland’s Code of Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is openness and honesty in all scholarly endeavors. The University of Portland is a scholarly community dedicated to the discovery, investigation, and dissemination of truth, and to the development of the whole person. Membership in this community is a privilege, requiring each person to practice academic integrity at its highest level, while expecting and promoting the same in others. Breaches of academic integrity will not be tolerated and will be addressed by the community with all due gravity.

Ethics of Information: The University of Portland is a community dedicated to the investigation and discovery of processes for thinking ethically and encouraging the development of ethical reasoning in the formation of the whole person. Using information ethically, as an element in open and honest scholarly endeavors, involves moral reasoning to determine the right way to access, create, distribute, and employ information including: considerations of intellectual property rights, fair use, information bias, censorship, and privacy. More information can be found in the Clark Library’s guide to the [Ethical Use of Information](https://libguides.up.edu/ethicaluse/) at [libguides.up.edu/ethicaluse](https://libguides.up.edu/ethicaluse/).

Accessibility: The University of Portland endeavors to make its courses and services fully accessible to all students, within course, program and University essential requirements. Students are encouraged to discuss with their instructors what might be most helpful in enabling them to meet the learning goals of the course in the remote learning environment. Students who experience a disability are also encouraged to use the services of Accessible Education Services (AES), located in the Shepard Academic Resource Center (503-943-8985). If you have an AES Accommodation Plan, you should make a virtual appointment to meet with your faculty member to discuss how to implement your plan in this class. Requests for extended exam time should, where possible, be made two weeks in advance of an exam, and must be made at least one week in advance of an exam or quiz. For Clinicals/Student Teaching/Labs held in-person: You should meet with your faculty member to discuss emergency medical information or how best to ensure your safe evacuation from the building in case of fire or other emergency.

Mental Health: As a college student, you may sometimes experience problems with your mental health that interfere with academic experiences and negatively impact daily life. If you or someone you know experiences mental health challenges at UP, please contact the University of Portland Health and Counseling Center at [www.up.edu/healthcenter](http://www.up.edu/healthcenter) or at 503-943-7134. Their services are free and confidential, and if necessary they can provide same day appointments. In addition, after-hours phone counseling is available if you call 503-943-7134 and press 3 outside of business hours. Also know that the University of Portland Campus Safety Department (503-943-4444) has personnel trained to respond sensitively to mental health emergencies at all hours. Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do – for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you.

Non-Violence Statement: The University of Portland is committed to fostering a community free from all forms of violence in which all members feel safe and respected. Violence of any kind, and in particular acts of power-based personal violence, are inconsistent with our mission. Together, we take a stand against violence. Join us in learning more about campus and community resources, UP’s prevention strategy, and reporting options on the [Green Dot website](https://www.up.edu/greendot/), [www.up.edu/greendot](https://www.up.edu/greendot/) or the [Title IX website,](https://www.up.edu/titleix/) [www.up.edu/titleix](https://www.up.edu/titleix/).

Assessment Disclosure Statement: Student work products for this course may be used by the University for educational quality assurance purposes.

The Learning Commons: The Learning Commons invites all students to connect with our trained writing assistants and peer tutors as an *effective learning strategy* for greater success in their college courses. Working with our writing assistants and tutors also makes your online learning experience at UP more socially connected. Our peer educators offer a rich synchronous face-to-face experience in Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or GoBoard in the following areas:

* The Writing Center: Students can book an appointment at [www.up.mywconline.net](http://www.up.mywconline.net). For help at a time not offered on the scheduler, students can send an email request to [writing@up.edu](mailto:writing@up.edu). Please note that you will create an WCONLINE account the first time you request an appointment.

All other tutoring programs can be accessed by using our bit.ly link (<https://bit.ly/learning-up>). Please make appointments at least 12 hours in advance.

* Math Resource Center: For support in 100-300 level math courses, including Finite Math (MTH 141) and Statistics (MTH 161).
* Nursing Tutoring: For individual and group peer tutoring in any of the 100–400 level nursing classes, as well as BIO 205, microbiology, and anatomy and physiology courses for nurses.
* The Language Studio: Students can access French, German, Spanish, and Chinese language tutors.
* Natural Sciences Center: Students can make appointments for biology, chemistry, and physics tutoring for 200 and 300 level courses.
* Business Tutoring: For support in economics, accounting, finance, OTM, and business law.
* Speech & Presentation Lab: Students can improve their presentation writing and online delivery skills.
* Group Work Lab: Students can meet as a group to develop their project with a Group Work Lab consultant for online group projects.

Tutoring works best when students use it proactively and consistently during the semester. For example, students can use the Writing Center for brainstorming ideas for a paper and later for working on a first draft. Likewise, those seeking tutoring can work with a tutor a few times leading up to a test. We also welcome small group appointments for 2-4 students at a time; such social learning can be very effective.

Questions about the Learning Commons and our programs can be directed to Jeffrey White at [white@up.edu](mailto:white@up.edu).

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Readings/activities are due the day they are listed.

All readings are available on the Moodle course page.

**8/26: Introductions: To the Program, to the Course, and to Each Other**

**9/2: The Crisis of the Humanities**

Read: Lewin, “As Interest Fades in the Humanities, Colleges Worry”; Schmidt, “The Humanities Are in Crisis”

Listen: “Humanities in Decline: A Cultural Crisis” (Aspen Ideas To Go Podcast; ~50 min.; Optional)

**9/9: …or Is It the Crisis of Higher Education?**

Read: Deresiewicz, “The Neoliberal Arts”; Davidson, “Palpable Impact”; Hoffman, “Isolated Scholars”

**9/16: Education and Engagement: Competing Views**

Read: Boyer, “The Scholarship of Engagement”; Fish, “Aim Low”; Kezar, Drivalas, and Kitchen, “Defining the Evolving Concept of Public Scholarship” (3-10 and 15-17); Blain and Kendi, “How to Avoid a Post-Scholar America”

**9/23:** **The Public Humanities: An Intervention**

Read: Gale and Carton, “Toward the Practice of the Humanities”; Williams, “The New Humanities”

Browse: “A Typology of the Publicly-Engaged Humanities” (link on M).

**9/30: No Class….instead, see below:**

**10/1: *Public Research Fellows Fall Virtual Series Event, 6:00-7:00pm, Zoom***

No class on 9/30 during our usual time; instead, please plan to attend this virtual event the following day, where fellows from last year will discuss their projects. I’ll provide details the week ahead of the event.

**10/7: The Promise (and Perils) of the Public Humanities**

Read: Looser, “The Hows and Whys of Public Humanities”; Woodward, “The Future of the Humanities in the Present & in Public”

**10/14: Fall Break—No Class**

**10/21: Project Check-Ins**

**10/28: PH in Practice: Some Rules of Engagement**

Read: Lubar, “Seven Rules for Public Humanists”; Fisher, “Goals for the Publicly-Engaged Humanities”; Fisher, “Partnership and Publicly-Engaged Humanities Work”

**11/4: PH in Practice: Civic Dialogue**

Read:Cooper, “Is Civic Discourse Still Alive?”;Abram, “Kitchen Conversations”

Browse: Oregon Humanities Conversation Project

**11/11: PH in Practice: Public Spaces/Public Stories**

Read: Godfrey and McCarthy, “Celebrating Simms: Complicating the ‘Single Story’ in Community-Engagement Projects”; Solnit, “City of Women”

Browse: StoryMap Examples; Narratives of Displacement and Resistance, Anti-Eviction Mapping Project

**11/18: PH in Practice: Social Media Engagements**

Read: Blissett and Baker, “Seeing Is More Than Believing: Visual Media, Social Media, and Anti-Racism on College Campuses”; Seidman, “Who Needs Feminism? Lessons from a Digital World”

Browse: “A Social Media Guide for Academics”

**11/25: Thanksgiving Break—No Class**

**12/2: Public Humanities in the Time of Pandemic**

Read: Domke, “The Something We Can Do”; Fai, “Humanities Responders”; Schmidl, “Do Humanities Matter in a Crisis?”

Due: Brainstorming Dossier and Final Reflection (upload to the Moodle assignments)