

**Engaged Humanities Fundamentals**  
**Fall 2024 · CAS 391C · T 6:00-6:55 · DB 136**  
**Dr. Jen McDaneld · [mcdaneld@up.edu](mailto:mcdaneld@up.edu) · DB 105**  
**Office Hours: T/Th 2:30-4:00, W 1:30-3:30, and by appointment**

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

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The Public Research Fellows program was founded upon the belief that the humanities have a vital role to play in responding to the challenges facing our communities today. How can the humanities help us engage significant problems of our era? And how can we connect humanistic inquiry with other disciplines to develop creative responses to those problems? The two parts of the program—student/faculty research and participation in this course with other fellows—are designed to work in tandem. Taken together, the program provides the opportunity to investigate how colleges might engage significant and timely issues by bringing together humanities and non-humanities perspectives to reach beyond an audience of like-minded academics to the wider world in which we live. Across the semester, we will read a variety of texts that introduce key issues and debates in the field of the engaged humanities while we explore a range of models and methods for publicly engaged projects. Our goal is for students to develop a background in engaged humanities inquiry and practices that they can then bring to bear on their collaboration with their research groups. As we work toward developing connections across disciplines and between our projects and the public, we will continually reflect on our own relationship to our academic work and how we envision making it matter—to our personal and professional futures, and for the public good.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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By participating in this course, students should expect to:

- gain familiarity with the engaged humanities and situate the field within contemporary debates about the purpose of higher education
- develop understandings of engaged humanities perspectives, tools, and methods that can help shape the processes and outcomes 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
- foster connections between their research activities and their personal and professional development

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**

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

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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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 browsing/activities 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. 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.

Weekly Forum Activities (30%): Many weeks you will post some type of forum response to a prompt based on our readings and/or project development. Responses should be posted by 4pm before the class in which they are due. We will use these responses to inform our class discussions and activities; therefore, I encourage you to read the posts of your classmates.

Brainstorming Dossier (15%): Across the term you will build a file 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, articles, and/or documents you've collected, as well as brief journal entries on potential interests you have in course materials, topics, and 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 (~800-1000 words) on their experience with their research project and its relationship to issues raised by course texts. This piece should:

- reflect on the research process
- draw connections between your project and what we've read together
- synthesize how you might employ engaged humanities concepts, examples, and/or methods to continue to develop your research project
- reflect on how you imagine your work on this project might connect to your future personal and professional goals
- be written in a first-person, personal voice and use your brainstorming dossier and specific references to course texts/resources to flesh out your ideas.

## COURSE STRUCTURE AND POLICIES

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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 engaged 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. 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.

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 (and not always have a laptop open), I realize that this might not always 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 above) across the semester.

Tech Etiquette: To make the most out of our time together now that we're back in person, please keep our classroom a multi-tasking free zone. This means keeping phones out of sight/on silent and keeping laptops closed unless actively using them to refer to an online text or source. And last: be sure to check your UP email daily for class updates.

Office Hours and Communication: I will hold office hours from 2:30-4:00pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays and from 1:30-3:30pm on Wednesdays. 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.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

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Readings/activities are due the day they are listed.

All readings are available on the Moodle course page.

- 8/27: Introductions: To the Program and “Everyday Democracy,” to the Course, and to Each Other**
- 9/3: Why Engage? (Part 1): A Foundational Argument**  
Read: Boyer, “The Scholarship of Engagement”
- 9/10: Why Engage? (Part 2): An Updated Argument**  
Read: Davidson, “Palpable Impact”; Bear and Skorton, “The World Needs Students with Interdisciplinary Education”
- 9/17: Introducing the Engaged Humanities**  
Read: Gale and Carton, “Toward the Practice of the Humanities”; Fisher, “Goals for the Publicly-Engaged Humanities”
- 9/24: Examining Models in Engaged Humanities Work**  
Read and Browse: “A Typology of the Publicly-Engaged Humanities”
- 10/1: What are the Civic Humanities? Why Do We Need Them?**  
Read: Jonathan Weisman, “Is the Partisan Divide Too Big To Be Bridged?” and Susan Svrluga, “These Professors Are Asking Students to Consider Divisive Ideas—And Learn”
- 10/8: Exploring Methods: Conversation and Storytelling**  
Read: Sherry Turkle, excerpt from “Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age”; Laura Otto, “Storytelling as a Research Method Offers Insights into Society’s Needs”

**10/15: FALL BREAK—NO CLASS**

**10/22: Applying Engaged Humanities Models and Methods**

Do: Which engaged humanities method(s) are most suited for your project? Choose a model that we've encountered in the first half of the semester and make a list of the elements you find most useful for your own research project. Then create an action plan that outlines how you could import lessons from this model into your own research team's work.

**10/29: Everyday Democracy in Action**

Read: Drew Lindsay, "Major Funders Bet Big on Rural American and 'Everyday Democracy'"

Browse: [Trust for Civic Life](#), especially the "[Civic Life in Action](#)" section.

Do: The article and website showcase a variety of organizations and projects whose missions may at first seem quite far removed from the issue of democracy—how do you see your project as contributing to "everyday democracy" writ large?

**11/5: BridgeUP Class Visit**

Browse and Read: To prep for today's class visit by the organizer of the UP chapter of BridgeUSA, browse the [BridgeUSA website](#) and read the linked article "If you think campus speech is all angry confrontation, you're looking in the wrong places"

**11/12: Project Group Meetings**

Instead of class this week, I will be doing individual meetings with each project group on T, W, or Th. Look out for an email from me to schedule this.

**11/19: Oregon Humanities Consider This Event: A Conversation with Manu Meel, CEO of BridgeUSA, 7:00-8:30pm**

For class this week, we'll be attending this event at the Alberta Rose Theater. Details to follow on logistics.

**11/26: Framing Your Project for and with the Public**

Do: #1) Brainstorm with your research partners how you could get the UP campus and/or wider public engaged with your projects; develop a list of potential specific activities for connecting with collaborators, communicating about your project, and extending the reach of your work.

**12/3: Framing Your Project for the Future**

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

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

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**University of Portland's Code of Academic Integrity:** The University of Portland is a diverse academic community of learners and scholars who are dedicated to freely sharing ideas and engaging in respectful discussion of those ideas to discover truth. Such pursuits require each person, whether student or faculty, to present truthfully our own ideas and give credit to others for the ideas that they generate. Thus, cheating on exams, copying another student's assignment, including homework, or using the work of others without proper citation are some examples of violating academic integrity.

Especially for written and oral assignments, students have an ethical responsibility to properly cite the authors of any books, articles, or other sources that they use. Students should expect to submit assignments to Turnitin, a database that ensures assignments are original work of the student submitting. Each discipline has guidelines for how to give appropriate credit, and instructors will communicate the specific guidelines for their discipline. The Clark Library also maintains a webpage that provides citation guidelines at <https://libguides.up.edu/cite>.

The misuse of AI to shortcut course learning outcomes will be treated as a violation of academic integrity comparable to plagiarism or cheating. Faculty are responsible for including a written "Course AI Policy" in their syllabi that clearly states what they consider appropriate and inappropriate uses of AI in the context of their courses. Students are responsible for using AI in ways that do not detract from the established learning outcomes of the course. All members of the scholarly community are responsible for demonstrating sound judgment in discerning when and how to utilize AI in their work, upholding standards of citation, originality, and integrity.

**Assessment Disclosure Statement:** Student work products for this course may be used by the University for educational quality assurance purposes. For reasons of confidentiality, such examples will not include student names.

**Accessibility:** The University of Portland strives to make its courses and services fully accessible to all students. Students are encouraged to discuss with their instructors what might be most helpful in enabling them to meet the learning goals of the course. Students who experience a disability are encouraged to use the services of the Office for Accessible Education Services (AES), located in the Shepard Academic Resource Center (503-943-8985). **If you have an AES Accommodation Plan**, you should meet with your instructor to discuss how to implement your plan in this class. Requests for alternate location for exams and/or 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. Also, if applicable, you should meet with your instructor to discuss emergency medical information or how best to ensure your safe evacuation from the building in case of fire or other emergency. All information that students provide regarding disability or accommodation is confidential. All students are responsible for completing the required coursework and are held to the same evaluation standards specified in the course syllabus.

**Mental Health:** Anyone can experience problems with their 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 Counseling Center (<https://www.up.edu/counseling/>) in the upper level of Orrico Hall (down the hill from Franz Hall and near Mehling Hall) at 503-943-7134 or [hcc@up.edu](mailto:hcc@up.edu). Their services are free and confidential. In addition, mental health consultation and support is available through the Pilot Helpline by calling 503-

943-7134 and pressing 3. The University of Portland Campus Safety Department (503-943-4444) also 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. For more information on health and wellness resources at UP go to [www.linktr.ee/wellnessUP](http://www.linktr.ee/wellnessUP).

**Non-Violence:** The University of Portland is committed to fostering a safe and respectful community free from all forms of violence. Violence of any kind, and in particular acts of power-based personal violence, are inconsistent with our mission. Together, all UP community members must take a stand against violence. Learn more about what interpersonal violence looks like, campus and community resources, UP's prevention strategy, and what we as individuals can do to assist on the [Green Dot website](http://www.up.edu/greendot), [www.up.edu/greendot](http://www.up.edu/greendot). Further information and reporting options may be found on the [Title IX website](http://www.up.edu/titleix), [www.up.edu/titleix](http://www.up.edu/titleix).

**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](http://libguides.up.edu/ethicaluse) at [libguides.up.edu/ethicaluse](http://libguides.up.edu/ethicaluse).

**The Learning Commons:** Students can get academic assistance through Learning Commons tutoring services and workshops. The Co-Pilot peer tutoring program provides students with opportunities to work with other students to get help in writing, math, group projects, and other courses. Schedule an appointment to meet with a Co-Pilot (tutor) by visiting the [Learning Commons website](http://www.up.edu/learningcommons) ([www.up.edu/learningcommons](http://www.up.edu/learningcommons)). Students can also meet with a Co-Pilot during drop-in hours. Check the Learning Commons website or drop by the Learning Commons in BC 163 to learn more about their services. Find a tutor at the Learning Commons to get support on your academic journey.