

## **HIS 392: Designing History's Future**

Dr. Karl Hagstrom Miller  
Fall 2013  
Unique #: HIS 392: 40187  
AMS 391: 30901  
F 2:00-5:00 pm  
GAR 0.132

Email: [karlmiller@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:karlmiller@mail.utexas.edu)  
Office: GAR 3.312  
Office Hours: TH 3:30-5:00 or by  
appointment

This is a graduate course in which we will experiment with history pedagogy. It is not about acquiring and displaying historiographical competence or archival chops. It is about leveraging participants' collective intelligence and creativity to build a better mousetrap. Students collectively will explore, imagine, and design possible futures of teaching history in United States colleges and universities. From the cognitive science of learning to the use of digital technology in the classroom; from debates over the cost and funding of higher education to debates about student learning and assessment, from MOOCs and peer grading to social networks and peer learning: history and humanities faculty face a number of new challenges and opportunities that encourage us to articulate or re-conceptualize what and how we teach.

This seminar is designed as a collaborative research project exploring the potentials of history pedagogy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Students—as individuals and as subject research groups—will research the state of the field in different areas of history, humanities, and higher education pedagogy literature. They will then design specific syllabi, classroom activities, or assessment tools for the undergraduate classroom. Some of the curriculum designed in the class will be implemented and beta-tested in a US History survey taught in following semesters by Dr. Miller in collaboration with its creators. This class will not only teach you what established experts already know. It will make you a new kind of expert.

We will spend a few weeks reading some common books and articles in order to understand the current state of history and the humanities in higher education. Together, we will decide on the aspects and opportunities of the current moment that need the most attention or that can most benefit from our efforts. We will then divide into Subject Research Groups to investigate, explore and build tools within each of these areas. Every week, each Subject Research Group, in collaboration with the class as a whole, will develop a specific set of research questions or design goals that it will strive to achieve before the following class session. We will work together to develop the syllabus for each student week-by-week. Before each class session—by Wednesday at 5 pm—each student will post weekly findings to the course blog. By class time on Friday, each student will read and comment on other students' posts. Everyone will benefit from your insights into your particular part of the larger puzzle. And you will be able to pull on every other student's insights to help you with your own projects and research.

There are three objectives for the class. First, each student will become conversant in history and humanities pedagogy in relation to the current moment of

change and develop some teaching tools that address specific contemporary challenges in higher education. Second, we will build a public blog through which other interested parties—grad students, faculty, or the public—can learn about our collective understanding of the challenges that face history teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and how we can face them. Finally, each student will build a portfolio of teaching and learning materials designed for use by undergraduate history students.

**Required Books available at the COOP:**

James Gee, *What Video Games Have to Teach Us about Learning and Literacy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.  
Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past*

Other required readings—in addition to your peers' weekly blog posts—are listed in the weekly schedule.

The course blog is: <http://historyfuture.wordpress.com/>

**Assignments:**

Class participation: 25%

Attendance is mandatory. This is a group effort. Participation grade involves showing up, participating in the discussion, and making a series of presentations on your research findings and projects. Students will also lead their peers in beta-testing the learning tools they have designed.

Weekly posts to the course blog: 35%

Blog posts should be between 750 and 1000 words. This is an academic blog that will be available for outside consumption. We will discuss any privacy issues this may raise in class. **Posts are due on Wednesdays by 5 pm.**

Peer comments on course blog posts: 10%

Comments are where we celebrate others' discoveries, critique them, add to them, and, most importantly, build a web of connections between the post and others. They are also the way that students demonstrate that they are coming to class prepared and invested in the conversation. Comment often.

Teaching Tools portfolio: 30%

This course is graded on the +/- scale. Please familiarize yourself with UT policies about academic integrity and plagiarism. Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

**Weekly Schedule:**

**August 30: Introduction**

Three Digital Revolutions

**September 6: Critiques of Modern Pedagogy**

**Reading:**

Gardiner, Lion F., "Why We Must Change: The Research Evidence," *Thought & Action* 14:1 (Spring 1998).

[www.nea.org/assets/img/PubThoughtAndAction/TAA\\_00Fal\\_13.pdf](http://www.nea.org/assets/img/PubThoughtAndAction/TAA_00Fal_13.pdf)

James Paul Gee, *What Video Games have to Teach Us about Literacy and Learning*

Grant Wiggins, "Everything you know about curriculum may be wrong. Really."

<http://grantwiggins.wordpress.com/2012/03/13/everything-you-know-about-curriculum-may-be-wrong-really/>

Cathy Davidson, "Should We Really ABOLISH the Term Paper? A Response to the NY Times": [http://www.hastac.org/blogs/cathy-](http://www.hastac.org/blogs/cathy-davidson/2012/01/21/should-we-really-abolish-term-paper-response-ny-times)

[davidson/2012/01/21/should-we-really-abolish-term-paper-response-ny-times](http://www.hastac.org/blogs/cathy-davidson/2012/01/21/should-we-really-abolish-term-paper-response-ny-times)

**September 13: Teaching History****Reading:**

Sam Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past*

Calder, Lendol, "Uncoverage: Toward a Signature Pedagogy for the History Survey," *Journal of American History* 92:4 (March 2006), pp. 1358-1370.

T. Mills Kelly, "The History Curriculum, 2023"

<http://edwired.org/longform/the-history-curriculum-in-2023/>

Review the contents of Sam Wineburg's Stanford project website: Reading

Like a Historian Program in public schools <http://sheg.stanford.edu/>

Write: Blog post

**September 20: Roundtable I: University Crises**

**Assignment:** You each will choose a name from the following list. Familiarize yourself with the author's body of work (including at least one specific book), his or her major ideas about higher education, and critics' responses. Write a 1500-word blog post introducing and reviewing the work of your author. In class you will provide a five minute oral summary, and we will all discuss the relationships among the various authors' ideas.

Clayton M. Christensen

Roderick Ferguson

Christopher Newfield

Derek Bok

William G. Bowen

Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa

**September 27: Roundtable II: Innovative Pedagogies**

**Assignment:** same as last week.

T. Mills Kelly  
Cathy Davidson  
David Masur  
John Seely Brown  
Andrea Lunsford  
Anne Belasmo  
Katie Salen  
Henry Jenkins

## **SECTION II: RESEARCH SUBJECT GROUPS**

### **October 4:**

Reading: Group/Self directed.  
Writing: Blog post

### **October 11:**

Reading: Group/Self directed.  
Writing: Blog post

### **October 18:**

Reading: Group/Self directed.  
Writing: Blog post

### **October 25:**

Reading: Group/Self directed.  
Writing: Blog post

### **November 1:**

Reading: Group/Self directed.  
Writing: Blog post

## **SECTION III: DESIGNING LEARNING TOOLS**

### **November 8:**

Reading: Group/Self directed.  
Writing: Blog post

### **November 15:**

Reading: Group/Self directed.  
Writing: Blog post

### **November 22:**

Reading: Group/Self directed.  
Writing: Blog post

### **November 29:**

Reading: Group/Self directed.  
Writing: Blog post

**December 6: Debriefing and Final Presentations**