

## **Digital Humanities in the classroom: Mapping strategies and possibilities for teaching computational methods in humanities curricula**

### **Organizers**

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### **Background**

The last decade has shown that Digital Humanities is definitely an area of growth, stimulating discussions and debates about the nature and methods of humanities research. At the same time, the necessity of integrating DH in the actual practice of teaching and developing a critical pedagogy, has become more urgent. With the support of CLARIAH the Erasmus Studio has taken up the initiative of mapping all existing academic DH teaching in the Netherlands and Flanders. This will result in the Google map overview *Dutch/Flemish Overview Digital Humanities*, which will be presented in its final form at the proposed workshop (<http://www.clariah.nl/en/dodh>). In a recent survey held among DH lecturers and in a session at THAT Camp The Hague (January 14-15, 2014) on Digital History, persons involved in these initiatives identified a number of issues with regard to the further development of DH education. This has led to the idea to propose a workshop on the challenges of DH teaching in NL/FL.

### **Challenges**

Firstly, there appear to be difficulties with regard to organizing and financing DH education. Consistent with challenges in other education innovation initiatives, departments either reshuffle subjects in the existing curricula and correspondent budgets to facilitate new DH modules, or they try to incorporate a DH approach in existing modules. However, the interdisciplinary character of DH calls for interfaculty collaboration, and the establishment of (new) connections with in-house IT services as well as Computer Science departments.

Secondly, the DH approach calls for rethinking teaching methods. Student groups appear to be rather heterogeneous in terms of digital literacy and competence. The same goes for the competencies of some of the teaching staff involved. Moreover, a focus on process instead of results seems to be more suitable in assessing students' work. Participants of the survey also signaled a need for a few basic but well-structured datasets to work with, as well as a corpus of example exercises for testing digital tools and methods.

Thirdly, a number of issues at the theoretical level are still unresolved. What place should DH ideally get in any humanities curriculum? Should DH be represented in a separate (minor) program, in which several departments and academic fields work together, or should it be fully integrated in every curriculum, as a set of basic academic skills? Are social sciences approaches part and parcel of the computational approach to data or should they be treated as a separate discipline?

## **Goals**

The goal of the proposed workshop would be threefold:

1. Present the state of the art with regard to DH modules and teaching requirements in the Netherlands and Flanders;
2. Set up a multidisciplinary and interuniversity platform for the exchange of information between the different DH education initiatives in the Netherlands and in Belgium;
3. Open up a roundtable discussion to explore both the challenges in DH education mentioned above, as well as efficient ways of dealing with them