

360.420 - Humanities Lab: Making Maps of Mexico

Fall 2022

Monday & Wednesday, 1:30-2:45

Greenhouse 113

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Office Hours: Mondays 10:00-12:00

Gilman 330G or online

Sign up: <https://calendly.com/lurtz/office-hours>

For questions about data, GIS, and maps you can see the library [GIS Guide](#) or reach out to:

Data Services, <https://dataservices.library.jhu.edu>

Email: dataservices@jhu.edu

Course Description

Making Maps of Mexico is an experiment in collective, collaborative research and learning. This syllabus is a flexible outline for how the semester will progress. The course is designed to help you learn something about Mexican history in the nineteenth century and something about the basics of qualitative data management and map making.

The course is designed around data and maps from Mexico in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century that Prof. Lurtz has been working to digitize over the past few years. We will use data from the 1895 and 1900 Mexican censuses and political and postal maps from the same period to think about the history of data, maps, and information, and the potential and the problems inherent in digital humanities.

Your work in this class will contribute to an ongoing project whose aim is a digital atlas that makes these historical data and maps made from them widely available to scholars in an interactive, online format. Our conversations and work will help shape that project, and you will all receive credit for your contributions when it is published. We will collectively decide on the aim of the final project(s) for this course in order to best move the overall project forward.

Monday classes will center on discussion of weekly readings and Wednesday classes will operate as lab days for learning and working with digital humanities tools. **NO EXPERIENCE WITH DATA MANAGEMENT OR MAPPING IS REQUIRED FOR THIS COURSE** – we will all be learning together.

By the end of the term, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with the major questions of turn-of-the-century Mexican history
- Discuss some of the potential benefits and difficulties of digital humanities projects and public facing scholarship
- Conduct primary and secondary research in digital archives and libraries
- Manage and standardize qualitative data in tabular databases
- Create and manage metadata
- Make basic maps, shapefiles, and feature layers in ArcGIS using historical data and images
- Create and present a StoryMap

Grading:

Participation (20%)

This class is a collaborative research exercise and participation is the only thing that will make it work. Constructive discussion is a skill in and of itself and one that we will work on in this class. If you are in need of advice on how to gain confidence in asking questions, responding to colleagues, or moving the conversation forward, please reach out.

Participation for this class also entails keeping up with the group activities and documents in Canvas. Weekly assignments indicate where and what to write and read in these spaces.

Above all, this is a space of shared learning. I leave the final word on this to Dr. Miriam Posner of UCLA's Program in Digital Humanities, an expert in the field:



<https://twitter.com/miriamkp/status/1349095892700205057?s=21>

Datasets and Attendant Process Notes (20%)

Final Cleaned Data due via Canvas on Oct 5, 2022

- Collaborate with your colleagues to establish norms for transcribing and cleaning our data
- Select and transcribe comparable datasets for one state from the 1895 and 1900 censuses
- Standardize your datasets in accord with our norms
- Demonstrate understanding of OpenRefine
- Record the steps you take to clean your data in the Process & Ideas Log
- Produce metadata for your datasets

ArcGIS Maps and Attendant Process Notes (10%)

Final Standardized Maps due Nov. 9 in ArcGIS Online Group, explanation in Canvas

- Collaborate with your colleagues to establish norms for mapping our data
- Demonstrate understanding of analysis tools in ArcGIS Online
- Create the following maps in ArcGIS Online
 - Map of all the municipalities in your two states using the Mexico in 1900 Feature Layer in the ArcGIS Group
 - Map the population of your states and represent the percentage of men and women in each district using the Mexico in 1900 Feature Layer
 - Map the dataset you transcribed from your state publication and use analysis tools to visually represent the information it contains
- Record your steps you take and the decisions you have made in the Process & Ideas Log
- Provide metadata for your maps in ArcGIS
- Provide a brief explanation of your maps via Canvas (this can be a copy of the description/summary you write for ArcGIS)

Georeferencing, Symbology, and Attendant Process Notes (10%)

Final Feature Layer due Nov. 9 in ArcGIS Online Group, explanation in Canvas

- Demonstrate understanding of georeferencing and symbols in ArcGIS Online
- Georeference 1899 Atlas Metódico or 1904 Postal Code map for one of your states
- Create a feature layer of the major features labeled in that map and generate a symbology to represent those features
- Record your steps and the decisions you have made in the Process & Ideas Log
- Produce metadata for your files and include in ArcGIS upload
- Provide a brief explanation of your maps via Canvas (this can be a copy of the description/summary you write for ArcGIS)

Source Annotations & Bibliography (15%)

Due Nov 30 in Canvas

- Collect 5-7 primary sources that provide context for our maps and datasets for inclusion in your final StoryMap. Write proper citations of the sources and a brief description of each.
- Find two secondary sources that help explain and frame the maps and datasets we are building. Write a brief (300-500) annotation of each highlighting key arguments and explaining how the piece applies to our work.
- Compile a bibliography of 3-5 secondary works (including your annotated works) that you will use in producing your final StoryMap. You can include texts assigned for this class, but they will not count toward your total. The bibliography should be formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style and should include a short description of your planned StoryMap at the top.

StoryMap (25%)

Draft due Dec. 5 to ArcGIS Online Group; final StoryMap due TBD

- Create a StoryMap that draws on our datasets, maps, and sources to tell a story or make an argument about the materials we have examined in this class. We will decide by mid-semester whether we're all working on a unified project or if everyone is going to follow their own interests
 - Include at least:
 - 3 maps and/or data visualizations
 - 3 primary source images
 - 1 embedded feature
 - Text appropriate to communicate your argument or story
 - Demonstrate that you can do the following:
 - Communicate effectively using combination of words and text
 - Incorporate maps and data into a presentation
 - Properly cite and link to relevant research and source material

Policies

The following policies are designed to facilitate an accessible, equitable, collaborative, and productive semester for us all. These are strange times and I ask that we all be as accommodating, patient, and understanding as we can be while still moving forward with the work of this class. Please communicate with me if you need additional time, flexibility, or help.

We will collectively establish a set of values and norms to guide discussion in the first week of class.

A number of our sessions will take place with the support of librarians and data specialists. Some of these sessions require preparatory online workshops. Please be considerate of our guests' time and come to class having completed the suggested seminars. Really, this consideration goes for your classmates and me as well: this class only works if we all do what we can to show up for each other.

Email and office hours

I respond to email during regular business hours (9am – 5 pm), Monday thru Friday. Allow 24 hours for a response. Please use proper formatting and address (I am Professor or Dr. Lurtz) when writing your email.

Come to my office hours – it's what they're there for. You do not need to have a specific question or concern, just come chat about how things are going. Sign up if you know you need to chat, but also feel free to just drop by on Monday mornings.

Late work and drafts

Extensions are available, but only if requested in advance of the due date. Unexcused late assignments will be docked a grade for each day they are late (e.g., an A becomes an A- becomes a B+). Back up your computer and use and use a cloud storage service like Dropbox, Google Drive, or OneDrive – hard drive crashes do not excuse missing work.

I will read drafts, so long as they are received with ample time for comment and revision before the deadline. Students should plan on attending office hours to talk about drafts.

Accommodations

Accommodations will be made for those who need them. Please come talk with me early in the semester to discuss your needs. Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class should also obtain an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.

Mental Health

Many students experience anxiety, depression, and other emotional challenges. Please be in touch with me if you need an extension, reschedule, or other adaptation of the course. If you would like to speak to a counselor, please visit the campus Counseling Center. Information is available on the Counseling Center's website: <https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/counselingcenter>

Academic Integrity

The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Ethical violations include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery and falsification, lying, facilitating academic dishonesty, and unfair competition.

Report any violations you witness to the instructor. You may consult the associate dean of student conduct (or designee) by calling the Office of the Dean of Students at 410-516-8208 or via email at integrity@jhu.edu. For more information, see the Homewood Student Affairs site on academic ethics: (<https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/student-life/student-conduct/academic-ethics-undergraduates>) or the e-catalog entry on the undergraduate academic ethics board: (<http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/undergrad-students/student-life-policies/#UAEB>)

Course Schedule

Week 1 – August 29 & 31

Workshop (in class):

- Sign up for ArcGIS and join course group
- Fill out survey, explore survey results, and think what they tell us about data collection
- What is digital humanities?
 - Digital Humanities Manifesto 2.0
(https://www.humanitiesblast.com/manifesto/Manifesto_V2.pdf)
 - <http://whatisdigitalhumanities.com/>
- Explore successful digital humanities project – [Mapping Inequality](#)
- Create our own values and norms for this class

DATA

Week 2 – Sept 7 (no class Monday Sept 5)

Reading (by Weds):

- Joseph, Gilbert M. and Jürgen Buchenau. “Porfirian Modernization and its Costs.” In *Mexico's Once and Future Revolution*, 15-36. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.
 - If you want more on this, also read Katz, Friedrich. “The Liberal Republic and the Porfiriato, 1867–1910.” Chapter. In *Mexico since Independence*, edited by Leslie Bethell, 49–124. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Assignment (by Weds):

- Group Files
 - Pick two states from the list in the folder and add your name
 - Add the PDFs and any CSV files you find on the [INEGI website](#) for the 1895 and 1900 Censuses to the appropriate folders in the Group Files folder
- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Write a basic profile (with citations and links to maps if possible) of your districts/states, add link to the page where you downloaded your census data/pdfs

Wednesday Workshop (In Class):

- Managing qualitative data
 - Compare original documents and transcription for the summary publications
 - Finding similarities and coming up with norms for transcribing state data
 - What problems are we facing as we try to move from data to digital interface?

Week 3 – Sept 12 & 14

Reading (by Monday):

- Scott, Joan Wallach. “A Statistical Representation of Work.” In *Gender and the Politics of History*, 113-138. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.
- Bouk, Dan. “Error, Uncertainty, and the Shifting Ground of Census Data.” *Harvard Data Science Review* 2, no. 2 (May 26, 2020). <https://doi.org/10.1162/99608f92.962cb309>.

Assignment (by Weds):

- Your Data:
 - For one of your chosen states, select one subset of the data that appears in both 1895 and 1900 and transcribe as much of it as you can by 9/14
- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Keep track of what you have transcribed and the decisions you’ve made as you’ve done so
 - Identify major hurdles to making the datasets you have selected ingestible and comparable that you’ve noticed from a first reading
- Workshop prep: Data & GIS Documentation module

Wednesday Workshop with Data Services Librarians

(Meet in the Electronic Resources Center on the main level of the MSE Library):

- Cleaning and standardizing tabular data using Open Refine

Week 4 – Sept 19 & 21

Reading (by Monday):

- Tenorio, Mauricio. "Mexican Statistics, Maps, Patents, and Governance." In *Mexico at the World's Fair*, 125-141. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.

Assignment (by Weds):

- Your Data:
 - Start cleaning up your data using the tools from last week
- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Post a summary of what you've done so far and what problems you're facing, especially those based on differences between places

Wednesday Workshop:

- Problem solving data management – what challenges are we all facing and how should we address them? Do we want to redistribute the work of data cleaning?

Week 5 – Sept 26 & 28

Reading (by Monday):

- Johnson, Jessica Marie. "Markup Bodies: Black [Life] Studies and Slavery [Death] Studies at the Digital Crossroads." *Social Text* 36:4 (December 2018): 57–79.
- Data Visualization intro from Stanford's Tooling Up for Digital Humanities
http://toolingup.stanford.edu/?page_id=1247

Assignment:

- Data:
 - Develop norms and code for OpenRefine for your columns/categories and share them via Canvas
- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Narrative of what you & your working group did, what worked and what you're still working on, what kinds of information that might get flattened you want to keep track of
 - Post as you work if you find things you think other groups might need to address or find useful

Wednesday Workshop:

- Discuss decisions you made about how to reconcile differences in original data set

- Decide which approaches we want to adopt as a class and clarify how we will all modify our data to normalize it
- Breakout groups to examine other data visualization projects online
- Discuss ideas for what kinds of data visualizations we could potentially create with the data we have

MAPS

Week 6 – Oct 3 & 5

Monday – Meet in Special Collections

Reading (by Monday):

- White, Richard. “What is Spatial History?” Stanford Spatial History Lab Website: <http://www.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/pub.php?id=29>

Assignment (by Weds):

- Your Data:
 - Bring your data into alignment with norms we set previous week, export from OpenRefine as a csv file, and upload csv files for each of your datasets to Canvas. I will add them to our group folder Name them something new (like Nayarit1.Cleaned) to distinguish them from the originals.
- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Write a narrative of your data normalization process, challenges you faced, decisions you made, and possibilities you think could be pursued. This will be useful for you later when putting together your final StoryMap project.
 - For Weds: Post any questions you have for the GIS librarians and any thoughts about possibilities of ArcGIS based on the Intro online workshop

Workshop prep:

- Intro to ArcGIS Online

Wednesday Workshop with Data Services Librarians

(Meet in the Electronic Resources Center on the main level of the MSE Library):

- Intro to importing and creating data in ArcGIS

Week 7 – Oct 10 & 12

Reading (by Monday):

- Berry, Mary Elizabeth. “Maps are Strange.” In *Japan in Print*, 54-103. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.

Assignment (by Weds):

- ArcGIS Online:
 - Import your data to ArcGIS online and see what problems pop up as you play around with tools introduced last week

- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Document your process
 - Post ideas for maps to build, problems you're encountering, etc.

Wednesday Workshop with Data Services Librarians

(Meet in ????):

- Intro to analysis tools in ArcGIS Online, importing web layer, sharing web maps and data; troubleshooting Q&A

Week 8 – Oct 17 & 19

Reading:

- Craib, Raymond. "Situated Knowledges: The Geographic Exploration Commission (I)" and "Spatial Progressions: The Geographic Exploration Commission (II)." In *Cartographic Mexico*, 127-192. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

Assignment (by Weds):

- ArcGIS Online:
 - Join your data to the 1900 Municipality Map
- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Keep track of your progress and decisions
 - Note any hiccups in the joining process

Wednesday Workshop:

- Share progress on maps and problems you've encountered
- Primary source scouting – overview of digital map resources

Week 9 – Oct 24 & 26

Reading (for Monday) (pick two or three to discuss)

- Bonilla, Yarimar and Max Hantel, "Visualizing Sovereignty: Cartographic Queries for the Digital Age." *Archipelagos* 1 (June 2016). <http://archipelagosjournal.org/issue01/bonilla-visualizing.html>
- Goffe, Tao Leigh. "Unmapping the Caribbean: Toward a Digital Praxis of Archipelagic Sounding." *Archipelagos* 5 (Dec 2020). <http://archipelagosjournal.org/issue05/goffe-unmapping.html>
- Brown, Elspeth; McKinney, Cait; Guadagnolo, Dan; Mezo Gonzalez, Juan Carlos; Cunningham, Sid; et al. "Transmediation as Radical Pedagogy in Building Queer and Trans Digital Archives." *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 16: 2 (2022) <http://digitalhumanities.org:8081/dhq/vol/16/2/000610/000610.html>
- Daigle, Michelle and Margaret Marietta Ramírez. "Decolonial Geographies." In *Keywords in Radical Geography: Antipode at 50*, edited by the *Antipode* Editorial Collective, 78-84. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2019. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/9781119558071>

- Giesecking , Jen Jack. “Where Are We? The Method of Mapping with GIS in Digital Humanities.” *American Quarterly* 70: 3 (2018), 641-648. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/704349/summary>

Assignment (by Weds):

- ArcGIS Group:
 - Have your datasets uploaded, along with whatever mapping progress you've made
- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Keep track of what you're mapping, decision making process, etc. Start working on shared metadata for our maps and feature layers
- Primary Sources
 - Find at least two historical maps (preferably digitized, but we can talk to Lena about digitizing any you saw at the library, too) you would like to work with and start exploring other potential primary sources that could supplement our censuses and maps

Workshop:

(Meet in the Electronic Resources Center on the main level of the MSE Library)

- Georeferencing and troubleshooting

Week 10 – Oct 31 & Nov 2

No Class Mon Oct 31

Assignment (by Weds): Keep chugging!

- Bring ideas for the topics, themes, places, people, etc., you might want to write about for your final project to class to make the workshop more useful to you.

Workshop Wednesday:

- Looking for secondary sources (Zoom session with History librarian, Heather Furnas)

STORIES

Week 11 – Nov 7 & 9

Reading (for Monday):

- Lara Putnam, “The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast” *American Historical Review* 121:2 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/121.2.377>.

Assignment (by Weds):

- ArcGIS Group
 - Bring maps into alignment with class norms and add to class group
- Assignments in Canvas:
 - Brief guide to your maps and how I should navigate them. Narrative of decisions you made and what you were able to do, as well as what you haven't yet figured out to do.
- Progress & Ideas Log:

- Share the links to your final maps and comment on a couple of your classmates'
- Any final challenges you're facing or work you'd like to keep doing

Workshop:

- Sharing maps and deciding on parameters for final projects.

Week 12 – Nov 14 & 16

Reading (for Monday):

- Browse the [ESRI Storymaps Gallery](#) for examples you find inspiring
- Olson, Dean, Allison Fischer-Olson, Brenda Nicolas, Wendy Teeter, Maylei Blackwell, and Mishuana Goeman, "Community resilience, contested spaces, and Indigenous geographies." In *Resilient Communities across Geographies* edited by Sheila Lakshmi Steinberg and Steven Steinberg, 129-154. ESRI Press (2021).

Assignment (by Weds):

- StoryMaps
 - Work on contexts and text for Storymap
 - Continue building primary and secondary source library
- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Share any good databases you find
 - Share anything you're having trouble finding

Workshop:

- Intro to StoryMaps (Data Services librarians)

Week 13 – Thanksgiving Break!

Week 14 – Nov 28 & 30

Monday and Wednesday are both workshop days

Reading (by Monday): Poke around and navigate what you can as they're in Spanish

- ["Los negocios y su dimensión espacial: La ciudad de México en el directorio comercial de Jerónimo Figueroa Doménech, 1899."](#)
- [ArchivoMex](#)
- [Visor Toponímico Mexicano \(VTM\)](#)

Assignment (by Weds):

- Annotated Bibliography due in Canvas
- On your computer
 - Keep building source base
 - Start analyzing sources and outlining your StoryMap

- StoryMaps:
 - Set up a StoryMap according to the theme we decide on for the class & share to ArcGIS group
- Progress & Ideas Log:
 - Post link to your StoryMap in progress
 - Share any good databases you find
 - Share anything you're having trouble finding

Workshop:

- Settle on norms and themes for our StoryMaps
- Work on and troubleshoot StoryMaps, sources, bibliography, etc.

Week 15 – Dec 5 & 7

Assignment:

- StoryMaps:
 - draft due

Workshop:

- Present and workshop StoryMaps