

A historical map of the Great Lakes region, showing various lakes and land parcels. The map is color-coded with pink, yellow, and green. Overlaid on the map is the text: "Texts, Maps, Networks: Digital Methods in the Humanities (Su14)".

# Texts, Maps, Networks: Digital Methods in the Humanities (Su14)

North Dakota State University, Summer 2014

## Course Description

- Summer 2014, North Dakota State University
- Barry Hall 272
- Professor: [Ryan Cordell, r.cordell@neu.edu](mailto:r.cordell@neu.edu)
- Teaching Assistant: [Benjamin Doyle, doyle.ben@husky.neu.edu](mailto:doyle.ben@husky.neu.edu)
- We're both: happy to meet by appointment, in person while we're in Fargo or virtually in the week following the class.

## Course Description

Humanities scholars have long studied texts, but in recent years new technologies have greatly expanded how those texts can be explored, both in research and the classroom. One can discuss a book, a chapter, a line, or a single word: or one can model patterns across entire corpora. In “Texts, Maps, Networks,” we will investigate both the affordances and potential pitfalls of digital humanities (DH) methodologies, attending most closely to the recent “spatial turn” that foregrounds questions of space and place.

Our class sessions will balance theory and praxis, moving between discussion of readings and humanities labs. Through our readings we will explore questions such as:

- What debates are (re)shaping DH in its current moment of growth?
- What are the central theories that have led humanities scholars to experiment with computational, geospatial, and network methodologies?
- How can mapping and other visualization tools illuminate literature, history, writing, and other humanities subjects? How might they obscure those same subjects?
- How might these new modes of research and publication influence our classrooms?

Our course labs will provide a practical introduction to geospatial analysis and network modeling using open-access tools that can be easily adapted for both research and pedagogy. Students will use these tools to develop “deep mapping” projects which overlay historical maps, census data, texts, photographs, videos, and other geo-spatial layers to create complex, nuanced arguments related to their own areas of scholarly interest. No prior technical expertise is expected or required to take the course, but students should be willing to experiment with new technical skills.