



Digital Humanities 1011B

This is a first course in programming, intended for students of all backgrounds. No prior experience is necessary! You will need a laptop computer and a one-year student license for the Max 6 + Gen software, available online at

<http://cycling74.com/shop/temp/>

Max is a great language for working with sound, music, text, images, video, computer graphics and real time performances. You can learn more about Max here:

<http://cycling74.com/whatismax/>
<http://cycling74.com/products/max/>

The best way to learn how to program is to write programs. We will meet for two hours each day, twice a week. During the first hour of each class, I will connect my laptop to the LCD projector and write programs while explaining to you how they work. You can follow along on your own machines and ask questions about anything that isn't clear. During the second hour of each class, you will be programming alone or in pairs, and I will walk around and help you if you get stuck, make suggestions about other things to explore, etc.

Instead of having large projects or exams, your grade will be based on a large number of small programming assignments. This will encourage you to practice your programming skills regularly, and enable you to be experimental in your coursework.

I have quite a few fun programming projects in mind for us to work on, and Max 6 is powerful and high-level enough that we can do things with a page of code that would take hundreds of pages (and a whole semester) to do in a language like Java or C++.

Here is a random smattering of a few of the things we will be exploring with code, in no particular order:

- phase music
- interaction design
- generative art
- robotics
- sensation and perception
- digital puppetry
- artificial life
- steganography
- sampling
- visualization and audification
- sound design
- video art
- synesthesia
- sensors
- randomness
- computer vision



The main idea of the course is that programming can be a way of exploring the kinds of questions that humanists and artists have always been interested in: what is true? what is beautiful? how can we be sure of what we know? what does it mean to be human? what does it mean to be alive? Computer programs can also provide humanists, artists and social scientists with ways of communicating with one another. Plus, it is a lot of fun!

You can learn a bit more about the kind of work that I do on my website:

<http://williamjturkel.net>

I am also on Twitter @williamjturkel

Please don't hesitate to e-mail me if you have any questions, concerns or thoughts that you'd like to share. I can be reached at:

william.j.turkel@gmail.com