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# Embedding Digital Humanities in a Classics Master Programme

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## Introduction

Pedagogy in the Digital Humanities is now leaving its “bracketed” state – a term used by HIRSCH 2012 to emphasise the fact that this dimension was not given the consideration its practical importance deserves. As programmes and courses are created on a larger scale and increasingly drive institutional strategies, also in Europe (see Sahle, 2013 and the [DARIAH Digital Humanities Course Registry](#)), it becomes essential to make comparisons and shared reflections possible.

Since 2014 all students of Greek and Latin languages and literatures at the Université Paris-Ouest Nanterre (France) have been enrolling in a Master programme entitled “Humanités classiques et humanités numériques.” Each semester features a fully fledged course of Digital Humanities: it is therefore an experiment in embedding Digital Humanities into an existing discipline, or rather into the array of disciplines which constitute the field of Classical studies around its philological backbone.

The aim of this poster is to share the approach I take in designing and teaching these courses, and to reflect on what this experience suggests about digital educational models, in Classics and beyond.

The poster will have three components, devoted to situating, describing and comparing the courses.

## Context and History

I will set out the conditions in which the curriculum was reformed (which involves both national and local contexts), the specific problems encountered (as the heterogeneous levels and motivations of the students, the relationships with the other courses, the available technical options, or the recent introduction of podcasting and distance learning), as well as the rationale and methods which shape the courses, including its main sources of inspiration in the Digital

Humanities community, whether online syllabi or publications like Jockers (2014) and Rockwell and Sinclair (2016).

## Overview of the Courses

The courses alternately take the form of more traditional classes and collaborative or personal projects. Across the two years, their contents include theoretical and historical insights, while concentrating on hands-on experience: digital literacy elements are gradually integrated as students go from traditional scholarly editing in TEI XML (the focus of year 1) and, beyond text and editing, discover computer-assisted analytical and visualisation methods with the [Voyant Tools](#) software environment and then work in a literate programming framework (For which the canonical reference is Knuth, 1984) implemented in R Markdown (the focus of year 2, see Figure 1).

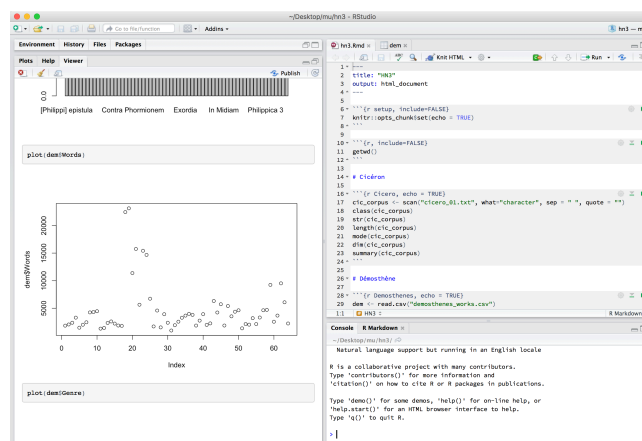


Figure 1: Text analysis in RStudio

The principles of the courses will be expounded: favouring active participation, learning-by-doing and flipped classroom teaching; insisting on the critical, reflexive dimension of digital procedures; promoting free resources like *TEI by Example* (Van den Branden, Terras, and Vanhoutte) and *The Programming Historian* (Crymble et al), as well as data reuse; developing an open publication culture through the [Classiques et numériques blog](#) maintained by the students (see Figure 2) or a shared Zotero group library; creating an awareness of the surrounding Digital Humanities communities; fostering actual collaboration, both between the students and with other projects or programmes – to date, with another MA specialised in Web design on an online edition prototype, with the [Pelagios Commons project](#) on the annotation of place names and with the [Sunoikisis](#)

[Digital Classics network](#) in its effort to collectively define a core syllabus.

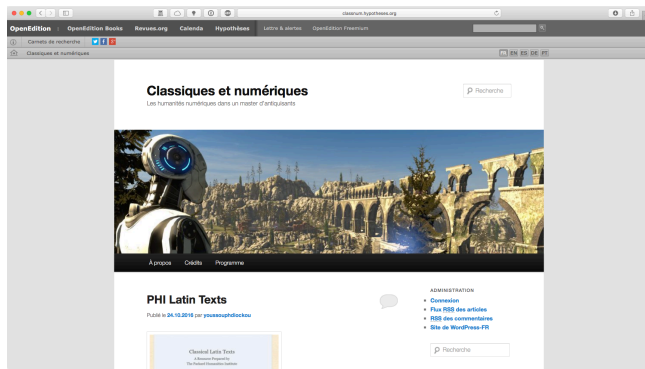


Figure 2: Classiques et numériques, the blog of the MA

## Comparing Models

Finally, drawing on this experience I will address several aspects of the current development of Digital Humanities pedagogy: as a separate enterprise or within established disciplines, with or without infrastructural, collegial or cross-departmental support, in various time formats, with different modes of external collaboration, etc. To sketch this broader typology, I will compare this French series of courses with other models, using in particular the data contributed to the aforementioned Digital Humanities Course Registry.

The poster will be in English, but I will naturally interact with the audience of the poster sessions both in English and French.

## Bibliography

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