

Digital Multimodal Mapping Assignment

The assignment described below was originally taught as part of a 3000-level undergraduate course in Digital Writing & Publishing at Georgia State University. However, it could be adapted to serve the learning goals of a range of courses across the curriculum. The assignment combines place-based research of a local, public issue with writing and walking on location via site visits. Students ultimately produce a digital map that makes an argument about their selected issue.

Purpose & Audience

Your purpose is to create a multimodal text (a map) that makes an argument for social change about a self-selected local, public issue. You will use the multimodal map as a digitized space that complements, complicates, or extends the physical, public places.

Tasks

For this assignment, you will do the following:

- Select a local public issue;
- Choose a series of (approximately 3 to 5) locations you will visit, observe, and write on location via mobile technologies; and
- Compose a multimodal text in the form of a digital map published on Google maps that rhetorically represents your location-based findings and stance as an argument for social change;
- Identify a target audience for this project. Note: your audience will likely be local in focus given the requirements of a local issue and locations. However, because your maps will be public and searchable by anyone online, you should keep in mind the possibility of a broader public audience, and I encourage you to share your final maps with friends, family, peers, and teachers.

Public Locations / Public Arguments

Choosing your locations may help you define your issue, or vice versa—you might decide on your issue and then think about which locations would allow you to explore and exemplify your issue best. Be strategic in choosing your locations. Think about how individually or together they will help you communicate your message. Ideally you will choose a series of locations that are related in some way, whether it's three examples of the same genre (e.g., three walls with graffiti) or whether the locations when combined work together to support your argument (e.g., a soup kitchen, a homeless shelter, and a public health center). Below is a list of a few ideas to get you thinking, but this list is certainly not exhaustive nor is it meant to limit your ideas.

- Art installations, murals, public street art, graffiti
- Parks or green spaces

Supplemental resource to *Learning on Location: Place-based Approaches for Diverse Learners in Higher Education*, by Ashley J. Holmes. Routledge / Center for Engaged Learning, 2023.

- Civic or political locations, protests, or rallies
- Community or non-profit organizations
- Sites related to public transit
- Public events, readings, or vigils
- Spaces that may be unmapped or that outsiders may not recognize

This assignment is purposefully open-ended and meant to challenge you to think outside the box, so you are encouraged to be creative. You could choose locations that are part of your everyday life or ones that are unfamiliar to you. Keep in mind that you will need to be able to visit your locations. You could successfully complete this project, though, without leaving the bounds of campus, so you do not have to choose locations that are far away or that cost money.

Multimodality

You will create the foundation for your multimodal project creating your own Google Map. You will drop pins at your locations and then add content that will display or be linked from those pins. In addition to the spatial mode of the map, your multimodal project should combine at least two other modes identified by the New London Group: linguistic, visual, aural, and/or gestural. The digital, multimodal components of this project will help you communicate your argument. Your multimodal content should include the following:

- At least one image (still picture or moving video) of each of your locations that has been taken by you, and
- Written or spoken text composed by you.

Attributing Sources

You must give credit to any content that you did not entirely create yourself; that means if you use a clip from a song that's not yours or use an image or photo you didn't take/create, you need to attribute it. There is no requirement for you to incorporate outside research, but you may find that outside references are necessary to support your claims and present yourself as a credible authority. Because you are not writing in an academic genre, you do not have to use MLA or APA citation style. Instead, I ask that you attribute your sources by 1) providing enough information so readers can find the source themselves, and 2) using an attribution/citation style that is credible within the context of the genre you've chosen to produce. This might mean using endnotes or footnotes, including a list of citations at the end or on a separate page of your multimodal text, and/or providing hyperlinks to sources.

Digital Publishing & Submission

You will make your Google map public and submit the URL through our learning management system. All multimodal components of your project must be live, online, and linked from your Google map by the due date.

Evaluative Criteria

Your multimodal map will be evaluated in the following areas: how the multiple modes of your project work together to make an argument for social change about your local, public issue; the extent to which multimodal content represents critical engagement with the physical places and sites represented digitally on the map; the map includes at least 3 sites/dropped pins, at least one

image taken by you, and written or spoken text composed by you; the argument is clear, relevant, and targeted towards your selected audience; and sources are attributed in a way that allows readers to find them.