Regents Teaching Excellence Award

Department of History, Georgia State University

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
College of Arts and Sciences

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Georgia State
University

15 November 2018

Dear Colleagues,

I write today to nominate the Department of History for the Regents Teaching Excellence Award. I am proud to be a part of an excellent group of faculty who are deeply committed to student success, pedagogical excellence, and to developing innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

Over the past two years, the department has deepened its commitment to teaching excellence in three ways: a series of online initiatives, a faculty learning community dedicated to high-impact pedagogies, and a focus on career readiness (for undergraduates) and career diversity (for graduate students).

Together, these commitments have led to less-expensive course materials for students, a project-based curriculum that allows students to master key digital technologies used widely in today's careers, and a collaborative and collegial faculty environment. The department has been a leader in deploying high-impact pedagogies like Reacting to the Past at GSU, and our focus on career readiness and diversity has been recognized nationally by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Historical Association.

The discipline of history is undergoing dramatic structural change related to decreased student demand for majors outside of the STEM fields. Our department has met this challenge head on, seeking to build new ways to teach historical content and the importance of historical thinking. The following documents our success in generating new and innovative ways to teach about the past in ways that are meaningful to all students at Georgia State University.

All my best,

Jared Poley, Ph.D.
Professor | Acting Chair
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Georgia State
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November 28, 2018

Selection Committee
Regents' Teaching Excellence Awards
University System of Georgia
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Regents' Teaching Excellence Award Committee members:

I am pleased to nominate the Department of History at Georgia State University (Atlanta Campus) for the Regents' Teaching Excellence Award for Department or Program. The History Department is a role model for pedagogical transformation and inventiveness and champions the use of learner-centered approaches in teaching to support student success. Particular areas of success include adopting "Reacting To The Past" role-playing in general education, upper division, and graduate-level history courses, infusing career readiness competencies into the curriculum, and developing and scaling innovative online courses that are designed to promote student learning. At the helm of these efforts are three faculty members, Dr. Jeff Young (the 2018 Felton Jenkins, Jr. Hall of Fame award winner), Dr. Jared Poley (acting chair) and Dr. Rob Baker (Chancellor's Learning Scholar), who are working department-wide to support the initiatives highlighted below.

In 2016, the History Department received an Endeavor Challenge grant from the Reacting To The Past (RTTP) consortium to incorporate RTTP into their curriculum. That first year they implemented several games in lower and upper division courses and held campus-wide workshops to introduce RTTP to their colleagues. Led by Dr. Rob Baker, the department continues to expand RTTP and to connect with other units on campus who are now integrating this high-impact learning approach into their own courses, including undergraduate courses in the School of Public Health and STEM disciplines. The student testimonials included in this packet highlight the impact that RTTP has on student learning and engagement. Dr. Baker and the department just received news that they will also be receiving an additional RTTP grant to support their work in designing RTTP games.

The department has also been promoting the use of innovative data visualization technology in key history courses. The World History survey and the History of Georgia courses include

projects requiring students to make and use maps as part of their assignments. Students learn to use ARC GIS and Tableau software programs and learn to apply historical information and concepts in real world situations. As a result, they gain skills that are essential for a range of future careers.

Led by Drs. Jeff Young and Jared Poley, the department has redesigned the U.S. History and World History survey courses. The online versions of these courses are the departmental gold standards and the resources and instructional modules form the foundation of the core curriculum and have been widely adopted by the Atlanta-campus faculty. These courses include pedagogical methods designed to reduce DFWI rates and increase student engagement and learning, including early feedback on low-stake assessments and interactive and effective digital tools connected to a bank of over 130 learning modules in U.S. History and 100's more for World History. These modules can be organized in any way to custom create a course and include short videos, readings, quiz questions and interactive materials that students can engage with in a variety of ways that support and facilitate critical thinking.

In summary, the History Department on the Atlanta campus of Georgia State University is at the forefront of how a department can come together to develop and use engaging pedagogical methodologies to support student success. The History faculty have worked collaboratively to design a teaching environment that directly supports student learning. They are just the type of dedicated instructors that the Regents' Teaching Award for Program/Department should honor, and I forward this nomination to you with my own enthusiastic endorsement.

Sincerely,

Risa Palm

Risa Palm
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Narrative Statement
Aligned with the Georgia State University Strategic Plan, one mission of the Department of History (Atlanta Campus) is "to help students acquire historical perspectives and knowledge for intellectual satisfaction, learn how to think critically and analyze and interpret information appropriately and effectively, and enhance their understanding of the world around them, thereby to be able to shape a meaningful life." The department has developed a three-pronged approach to achieving this mission of fostering student success: launching online initiatives; deploying high-impact and active-learning practices; and emphasizing career readiness for undergraduates and career diversity for graduate students.

Online Initiatives
The department offered its first online course section in Fall 2015. Focusing initially on History 2110, the introductory course in American history that accounts for the majority of the department's credit hours, an online curriculum was designed in accordance with the following principles:

- The curriculum should leverage the capability of an online learning management system to provide meaningful data on how students are using the course materials. That data should then be used to assist struggling students and improve course design.
- The curriculum should minimize potential obstacles (such as increased cost) to students' successful completion of online courses.
- The curriculum should emphasize projects that challenge students to work directly with historical evidence using tools (databases and data visualization software) that many of them will encounter in their future careers.
- The curriculum should be the product of an ongoing collaborative effort by department faculty contributing individual expertise on subject matter to the common curriculum. These faculty should then coordinate to review student outcomes on individual assignments to continue to refine the curriculum.

In launching the online curriculum, the department has closely monitored D/F/W rates in online sections in an effort to minimize the number of students unable to progress to successful course outcomes. In Spring 2016, the D/F/W rate for students enrolled in online History 2110 sections was 21%, compared to 16% in face-to-face sections. After reviewing data indicating the points in the curriculum that were creating roadblocks to student success, the curriculum was revised. In particular, we increased the number of low-stakes assignments given early in the semester. This gave the faculty a set of data from which to identify at-risk students earlier in the semester. Once identified, at-risk students were contacted, encouraged to stay on schedule, and offered extra assistance. In Spring 2018, the online students' D/F/W rate had been lowered to 7%, a figure below the departmental average for all sections that term (13%).

In 2017-18, the department increased the role of project-based pedagogy in the online introductory courses. Online students in the U.S. and World history survey courses are challenged to use Tableau (powerful data visualization software) to make sense of historical datasets. The datasets we use are taken from some of the most cutting-edge and important research fields, including petitions to southern courts and legislatures on the subject of race and slavery, data on lynchings in the U.S., census data on American population and economic growth, records of early modern plague outbreaks in Europe and Asia, and data on global

refugees in the 20th and 21st centuries. While the complexity of these assignments certainly challenges students, thus raising the possibility that they will fail or give up, the department has created a library of video tutorials to walk students past technical challenges. Each week, the students master skills that then serve as a foundation for more advanced techniques covered later in the semester. By the end of the course, students have been trained to conduct sophisticated analysis of complicated evidence and to present their findings in a public-facing visual presentation.

In Summer 2017, the department successfully offered its first online section of a graduate course, the History of Georgia. The first upper-level undergraduate course (also exploring the History of Georgia) was offered as an online course in Summer 2018. As the department refines and expands its online graduate and upper-level undergraduate course offerings, it will increasingly challenge online students to conduct historical research into meaningful questions by using digital tools to engage with evidence. Training in Geographical Information Systems (GIS) is a focus of this advanced online curriculum. Skills such as the referencing of historical geographic boundaries in digital maps and the use of maps to provide insight into historical variables are covered in software packages such as ESRI's ArcGIS products, tools that are increasingly found in the modern workplace.

Faculty Learning Community: High Impact and Active Learning Pedagogies

The History Department established a Faculty Learning Community in order to enable faculty to implement innovative and effective forms of pedagogy in the department. Our community is open to all faculty in the department and to any interested faculty in other fields. We currently attract faculty from English, Public Health, and Computer Science to our events.

The department's faculty learning community has the goal of increasing high-impact teaching for our undergraduates, and is deploying several initiatives to reach that goal. The first is to develop active learning pedagogies to transform the classroom. The second is to implement digital methods into both online and classroom learning.

In 2016, the History Department authored a grant in conjunction with Georgia State University's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to the Reacting Consortium and Endeavor Foundation. The grant's purpose was to introduce faculty to Reacting To The Past (RTTP), a pedagogy that takes historical events and materials and allows students to assume historical roles and "play out" historical scenarios. RTTP is a research-based pedagogy with demonstrated impact on student learning, particularly in the areas most difficult to teach: critical thinking, primary source interpretation, and historical mindedness. Because student work is outward-facing, with the goal of producing responsible and persuasive arguments for their classmates as well as their instructors, students gain experience in written and oral communication. Finally, students must work in factions during a competitive gaming period, a prime place for the experience of leadership and collaboration.

The History Department teaches approximately 7,000 student every year in four classes key to the core curriculum of the University (HIST 2110, US History; HIST 1111, World History to 1500; HIST 1112, World History from 1500; HIST 1140, African and African-American History). In order to incorporate RTTP into a large portion of these classes, we needed to wholly redesign the curriculum, employing online materials to facilitate a "flipped classroom" that would allow class time to be devoted to Reacting assignments.

Student satisfaction with the RTTP pilot (as measured by student evaluations) was exceedingly high: (4.85 out of 5 on the overall teaching effectiveness question from the GSU

Student Evaluation of Instructor instrument). Students were also invited to participate in qualitative surveys after the class, and ten chose to do so. Their experience and reaction provided insights into how we might improve the delivery of the class. All feedback was used to create lesson plans and a comprehensive syllabus which can be adopted (and modified) by instructors who wish to use RTTP in the classroom.

In Fall 2017, RTTP was piloted in five distinct upper-division courses taught by five different faculty. Faculty kept logs about the implementation of RTTP, integrated it into undergraduate research projects, and then reported at the end of the year about the successes and failures of implementation. Student enthusiasm for the pedagogy was strong, as evidenced by strong student evaluations and by student participation in a qualitative survey conducted at the end of classes. The qualitative survey was voluntary, open-ended, and allowed the students to reflect on the substance of what they learned, and what skills they honed in RTTP. Students pointed to soft skills like "teamwork" and "leadership," and remarked frequently that they had never worked so hard in a class before.

RTTP is now taught in our Graduate level pedagogy course (HIST 7050). We are currently training GTAs in how to use RTTP effectively in the college classroom, both at Georgia State and after they have graduated. We have trained approximately 20 GTAs in this pedagogy at present.

Our faculty learning community has also been devoted to learning methods for teaching digital technology. Implementing digital pedagogy in the classroom faces several significant roadblocks. First, faculty must be competent in the appropriate software packages. Second, students must be trained in how to use these software packages. Third, once students have been trained, we must have large-scale, ongoing collaborative projects to bring students into. In order to overcome these roadblocks, our Faculty Learning Community began sharing datasets and planned out a series of intensive, monthly workshops where we imported the datasets into Tableau and ArcGIS and learned how to use the software to interpret the data. We record the workshops (using a screen-capture video) both for members who cannot make the workshops and for future reference. From these workshops we will develop tutorial modules that individual instructors can plug into their courses in order to train up students. Finally, we are using our shared datasets to develop collaborative projects that we can use in multiple courses. At present, six faculty have begun using advanced digital technology. We have also adopted a digital methods unit for our graduate-level pedagogy course (HIST 7050).

Career Readiness and Career Diversity
The skills developed in the liberal arts--critical thinking, writing proficiency, speaking skills--are consistently listed by employers as the most important for college graduates to possess. Quite sadly, employers just as consistently complain that it is precisely these skills that college graduates lack. The disconnect is apparent at the level of college curriculum. Students cannot sometimes see how rigorous academic work in the liberal arts (for many taken only to fulfill core education requirements) will lead to practical skills that employers desire. The department has sought to bridge this perceived gap between our mission in the classroom and GSU's objective of providing our students with an education that gives them the best chance at professional success. We have done so by including in our classes a number of assignments -- like the ones detailed above -- that aim to provide our students the skills that employers say they wish their employees possessed: critical thinking, communication, and leadership/collaboration ability. As

such, the department has been well positioned to contribute to the new Quality Enhancement Plan, College-to-Career, which GSU is crafting as part of our SACSCOC reaffirmation process.

The department is also focused on providing our graduate students with the skills necessary for a richly rewarding career regardless of field. We recognize, in short, that many of our graduate students do not wish to become academics. History 7050 introduces our Masters and Doctoral students to the variety of careers that their graduate training might prepare them for, as well as conveying to them best practices with respect to historical pedagogy. In keeping with the department's commitment to maximize our graduate's professional prospects, the course curriculum has evolved over the past two years to consider non-academic as well as academic career outcomes. The course explores historical pedagogy through skills as such as digital mapping, data visualization, video and audio content production, the modeling of three dimensional digital resources for use in augmented and virtual reality historical simulations. Students are encouraged to prepare themselves to become competitive candidates for a variety of academic and non-academic careers.

The department is currently in our third year of participation in the AHA Career Diversity initiative which is aimed at expanding the career prospects of students who earn PhDs in History. Thanks to a series of AHA Career Diversity Grants, we organized a series of programs and events aimed at expanding our students horizons beyond careers in academia. The Department also collaborated with the English Department to receive an NEH Next Generation PhD Planning Grant in 2016-2017 which worked toward similar goals. As a result of these two grants, we have revised our intro to graduate studies course to get students to consider a wide variety of career outcomes from the start of their degree programs. We also expanded internship opportunities for our graduate students and have developed closer ties with the university's Career Services office.

Department Fact Sheet

The Department of History at Georgia State University (Atlanta Campus) offers BA, MA, Masters of Heritage Preservation, and PhD degrees. History incorporates both the humanities and social sciences and is one of the keys to understanding the diverse cultures, global interactions, and daily workings of the modern world. A knowledge of history is a foundation for contemporary intelligence and enables us to undertake a sensible exploration of the political, economic, social, religious, and cultural issues that have shaped the past and inform the present. The department is critical to the mission of the College and the University, and it performs a vital service to society as a whole.

Students: History majors succeed at rates better than the College or University. The six-year retention and graduation rates for full-time first-time freshman history majors is 57 and 63%, respectively. The four-year retention and graduation rates for juniors stands at 71 and 77%. 43% of history majors are women, and 44% are students of color.

Faculty: The history department has 30 full time permanent faculty (22 tenure track, 8 non-tenure track) and six limited-term lecturers. Of the TT faculty, one is an assistant professor, 16 are associate professors, and five are full professors. The NTT faculty consist of three lecturers, three senior lecturers, and one principal senior lecturer. One third of the faculty are women; 13% are people of color.

Faculty have been awarded numerous external grants, fellowships and awards, many of which are by prestigious research organizations including the American Philosophical Society, American Historical Association, the American Council of Learned Societies, National Humanities Center, and the National Endowment for the Humanities Faculty members have received competitive research fellowships History faculty have recently published 17 books or monographs, 28 book chapters, 42 journal articles.

Curricular Role: The department trains history majors and graduate students in the discipline of history. It also oversees a massive number of non-majors who take the freshman surveys as part of their core curriculum requirements. Over the course of the 2017-18 academic year, nearly 7,500 students took these core courses from history faculty. We anticipate teaching nearly 8,000 freshman students in the 2018-19 cycle.

Evidence to Support Award Nomination
Online Initiatives

Student Demand for Online Courses (2015-18)
In 2015-16, 293 students enrolled in online sections of History 2110 in a largely successful rollout of the online curriculum. Accounting for 5% of the department's total seats in the U.S. and World introductory courses, these online students provided positive feedback about the teaching videos and digital textbook that were produced by department faculty and distributed without additional charge to students. In 2016-17, 922 students enrolled in online sections (14% of the seats in the U.S. and World introductory courses); and in 2017-18, just the third year of the online curriculum rollout, 1,721 online students filled 24% of the introductory course seats.

Online Enrollment as Percent of Total Introductory Course Enrollment (HIST 2110, HIST 1111, HIST 1112)
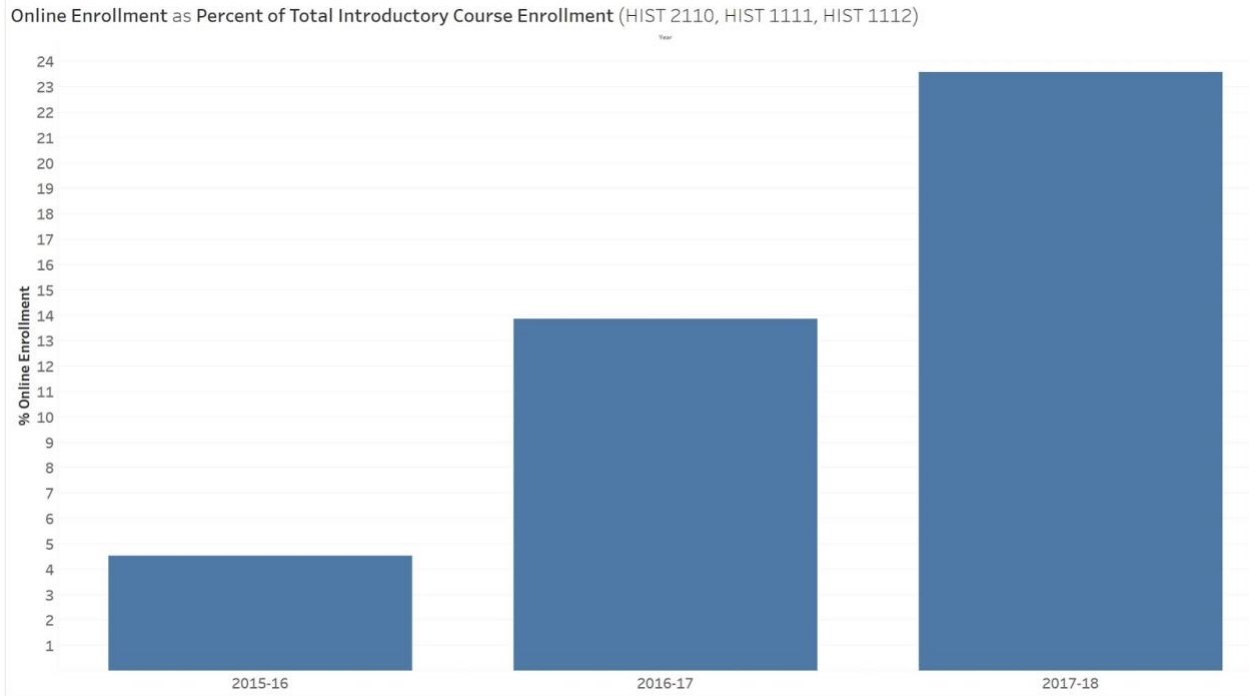
Student Success in US History Survey (DFW rates)

Assessment Loops in 2110. These charts demonstrate the drop in DFW rates for online 2110 sections from Spring 2016 to Spring 2018. The drop reflects the impact of a revamped course design that created more assessments tied to specific learning objectives (as opposed to fewer higher stakes assignments) and a communication flow directed at students who were underperforming relative to their peers.

Spring 2016: Average DFW Rate by Instructor, History 2110
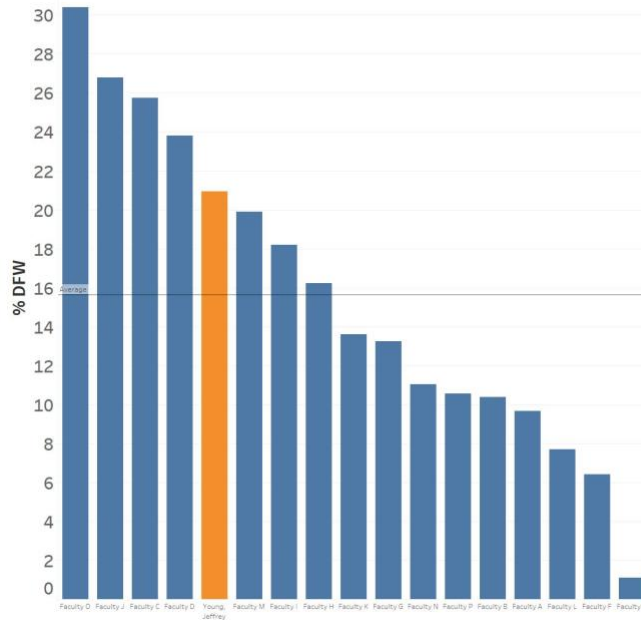
Spring 2018: Average DFW Rate by Instructor, History 2110
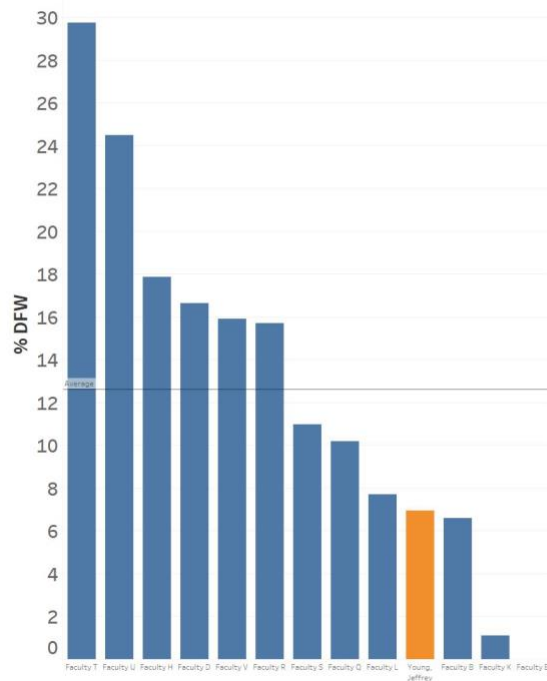
<u>Sample Digital Assignment from History 2110</u>
The following is the text of a digital capstone assignment. Some of the language is technical, but the project is part of a larger scaffold of work that allows students to exhibit mastery of Tableau while producing new knowledge about the past.

In the capstone for Unit 6, we will explore how to create and interpret a bivariate choropleth, a map that allows one to make visual sense of several variables simultaneously through the use of color.

We will do this with an eye towards understanding the complexities in the relationship between slavery and support for secession in Georgia in 1860. For each of Georgia's 132 counties in 1860, there is data on the enslaved population, the total county population, and the county's degree of support for secession (as measured on a scale of 0 (fully Unionist) to 1 (fully Secessionist).

Complete the following steps, watching the associate video tutorial for each of them.

Step 1: Wrap your mind around the mysterious and powerful mapping tool known as a bivariate choropleth. Consider the example of county-level support for Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election and county-level participation in the Medicaid Insurance Program. After using the data to create three color categories for each individual choropleth, think about the nine color categories that need to be created once the choropleths are combined into a bivariate choropleth.

And here is a direct link to the example bivariate choropleth discussed in this step of the capstone.

Step 2: Download the data files from iCollege to your computer. Open Tableau and access the census 1860 excel file. Create a new measure that calculates the percent of each county's population that was enslaved. Then, in a worksheet called SlaveryData, create a vertical bar chart of the values for that variable for each county, sorted from least to most.

Add a data connection to the county shapefile and left join the census data with shapefile data selecting County as the census variable and Nhgisnam as the shapefile variable in the join. In a new worksheet, SlaveryChoropleth, drag the Geometry measure into the worksheet to create a map of the 1860 Georgia county boundaries. Drag the SlavePercentage measure into the Color Mark area and then change this variable from Sum to Dimension to create the choropleth. Edit the color mark to create an equal-interval categorization of the variable with 3 groups.

In the SlaveryData worksheet, drag Distribution Band from the Analytics Pane into the worksheet, change Scope to Entire Table, change Computation to Quantiles, and select 3 as the Number of Tiles to calculate the boundaries between the terciles. Note the values that establish the boundaries between the terciles (27.09, 49.45).

Create a new Dimension, SlavePercentCategory, in the Data pane. Create an IF THEN formula to assign labels to each county ('LowSlavery', 'ModerateSlavery', 'HighSlavery').

In the SlaveryChoropleth worksheet, remove the SlavePercentage variable from the Color mark and replace it with the SlaveryPercentCategory. Customize the colors so that the HighSlavery cases are colored dark blue, the ModerateSlavery cases are colored light blue, and the LowSlavery cases are colored white. You have created a choropleth that categorizes the variable in question by quantile!
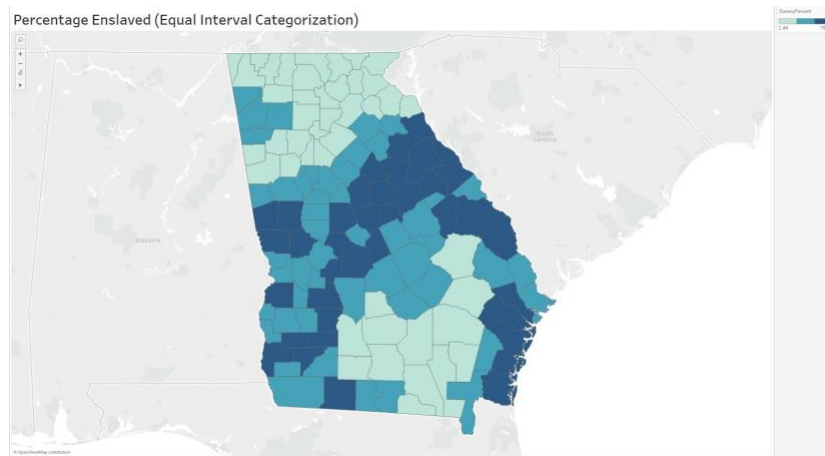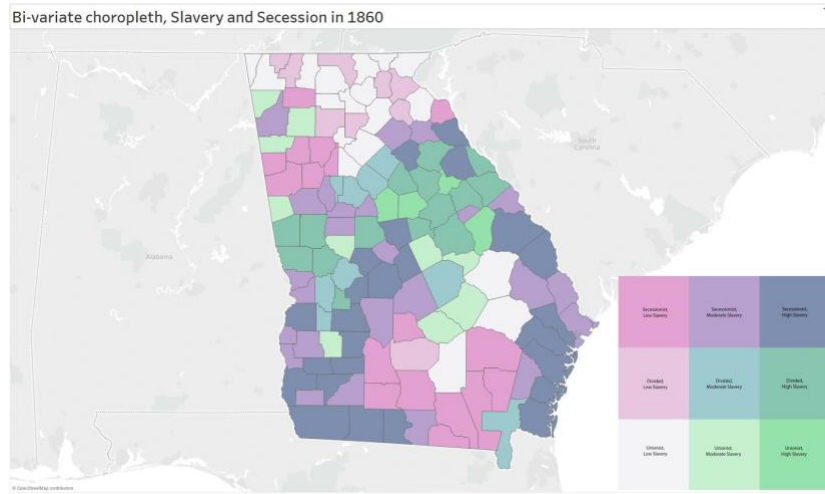
Step 3: Create a new worksheet, SecessionData, in which you use a vertical bar chart to survey the Secession variable values by county. Take note of the logical values for the variable that might establish useful boundaries for a custom color categorization (less than .17, less than 1). Create a new Dimension, SecessionCategory, that uses an IF THEN formula to assign labels to each county ('Unionist', 'Divided', 'Secessionist').
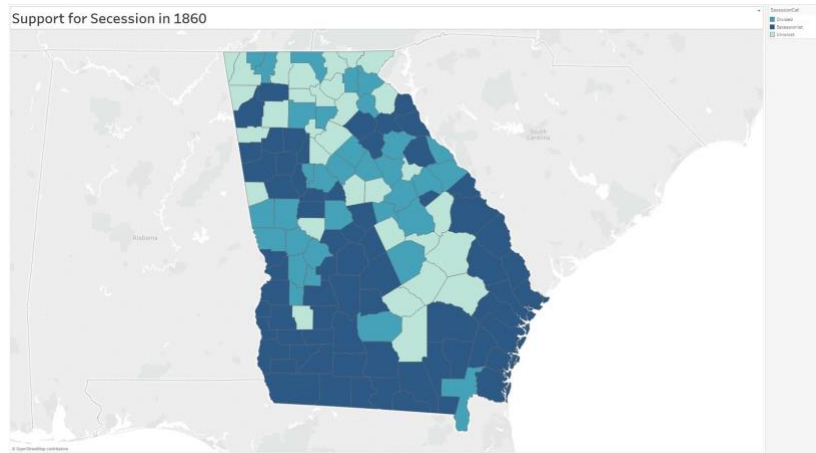
Create a new worksheet, SecessionChoropleth, that uses the SecessionCategory variable to create a new choropleth. Use the same color scheme (using HTML color codes) for this choropleth that you used in the SlaveryChoropleth and compare the two choropleths. Where are they similar (showing correlation between the slavery and secession category variables) and where are they different?

Step 4: Create a new worksheet, BivariateSlaverySecession. Use the Geometry measure to establish the historic Georgia county boundaries for this new choropleth. Then create a new Dimension,

BivariateCategory, to create a new label for each county that includes that county's SlavePercentCategory and SecessionCategory labels.

Edit the colors for the choropleth to assign the HTML color codes indicated in the color scheme I have provided in iCollege. Think about what this bivariate choropleth reveals about the relationship between slavery and secession as measured at the county level in Georgia in 1860. Congratulations, you now know how to create and to interpret bivariate choropleths and are ready to move on to the Capstone 6 quiz!

Bi-variate choropleth, Slavery and Secession in 1860

Percentage Enslaved (Equal Interval Categorization)

Support for Secession in 1860

Student Testimonials on Historical Mapping in Tableau or Arc-GIS
NB: these pedagogies are relatively novel and the department has not collected a wide sample of student reaction. Nonetheless, preliminary reactions, seen below, describe the impact on both lower and upper division students.

"The capstones were very interactive. This course not only taught history, it also gave insights on how historians gather their information." Student in History 2110: Survey of US History, Summer 2018 on historical mapping exercises.

"The material assigned was interesting and the projects, while time-consuming, were fun and engaging. I am naturally inclined towards the study of history, but Professor Young incorporated new methods to learn and appreciate the information covered in the class previously unknown to me. Professor Young's use and inclusion of data mapping was very useful and gave me a sense of accomplishment…." Student in History 4310: Georgia History, Summer 2018 on historical mapping exercises.

Faculty Learning Community: High Impact and Active Learning Pedagogies

Student Testimonials about Reacting to the Past

"What does the History class look like...at Georgia State University?"
"Reacting to the Past at Georgia State University"

"This course really helped me come out of my shell and taught me to work with other students, which I have rarely done in previous courses." Student in History 3900: Human Rights in Historical Perspective, Fall 2017 on Reacting to the Past simulation of the Rwanda crisis, 1994.

Via anonymous survey, students in History 3900: Human Rights in Historical Perspective (Fall 2018) were asked to rate if they did a "significant amount of research," did a "significant amount of writing," and if the RTTP simulation (on the 1994 Rwanda crisis) was a "useful experience." Students used a scale of 1-5 (strongly disagree – strongly agree). 46 respondents rated the research at 3.8, the writing at 4.3, and the usefulness at 4.5. The qualitative comments gathered by the survey include the following:

"I was able to really feel and experience the pressure and challenges faced in political decision-making. I was challenged. I enjoyed collaborating…"

"gave me a view of politics on a global scale"

"worked on real life skills: organizing, politicking, speaking, cooperating, planning"

"made me think differently"

"I've never had a learning experience like this, which was valuable in & of itself"

"I was forced to focus on opinions I didn't share. Although it is irritating, it makes me think in a different way and I ultimately understand more."

"taught the realities of political factions"

"required everyone to be…actively involved in learning. It was a more interesting method of teaching than what is typically found in the classroom"

"I was forced to do a lot of research in a short amount of time, which would probably occur in a real job."

"dynamic way of learning"

"I learned how to negotiate, rally support, and protest actions [that were counter to this student's goals]"

"allowed me to see the world from a different point of view, sometimes that made me feel very uncomfortable and sometimes [the experience] allowed me to grow intellectually."

"working with others [was a positive experience]"

"it builds communication skills because you have to talk to a lot of people and create relationships"

"I never had a simulation like this. [I] got to get close and truly work together with my group."

"gave me an eye-opening perspective"

[I was] "able to work in a group with a collective objective (we tried to write our opinion influence others players). Good for understanding […] and better comprehension of the historical context."

"unique way of learning"

"felt more confident"

"I was able to learn and realize the kind of work it takes to be a journalist. I think this was a good way to learn about the events rather than listen to lectures."

Experience was positive because: "improv information; speaking skills; patience"

"interesting, engaging"

Graduate students in History 7050: Introduction to Graduate Studies and Pedagogy shared these perspectives on the Reacting to the Past simulation "Patriots, Loyalists, & Revolution in New York City, 1775-1776:

"I felt the responsibility to take the role and my classmates' roles seriously. The game was not a mockery or a parody of the oppression of African-American enslaved persons and women. It was actually a pedagogical tool that elucidated their experiences and amplified their voices and concerns. Throughout the entire game, I learned. I also laughed, but much of my laughter was the reaction to my own amusement at the brilliance of my classmates as I watched them craft proposals and amendments that would benefit their character's life circumstances. As I played the game, my knowledge about American politics was reinforced."

"Aside from the excitement generated among opposing parties, I think the exercise also showed how special interests can derail coalitions and bring regular operating procedure to a halt. The process was messy, impulsive, and loud. It lurched from one topic to the other, but I remained captivated, especially by each character and their distinct motivations and interests."

"Education on all levels often requires stepping out of the comfort zone in order to gain true knowledge and understanding. This is a concept with broad application, and as such is in sync with the American Historical Association's mission to prepare majors for careers beyond academia. Role playing is a regular feature of training programs in business settings and is frequently used to learn skills in negotiations and human resources; these settings are often purposely uncomfortable and created to have the participants work hard to succeed and learn new lessons or techniques. Role playing entails stepping not only into someone else's shoes, but into their actual character…. I felt directly the frustration of not being at the table to engage in the arguments and this frustration was a valuable lesson; understanding the frustration of those who have historically been kept away from the table, from the negotiation. My mission was to step outside my comfort zone and into an arena where extra effort was needed to learn something new."

Student Engagement in RTTP Sessions As Seen in Slack Messaging Analytics
Students in one upper-division class using Reacting to the Past used the team management software system SLACK in order to communicate with one another. During the three week period that the RTTP game was being played, 27 students wrote over 4,500 messages to one another and to the class. Public channel posts (posts that were visible to all members of the class)

evinced a high level of engagement with the class materials. The vast majority of posts, however, were direct messages between class members, the high volume of which is indicative of a superior level of student engagement. SLACK analytics also gave us data that helped us improve instruction. For instance, we discovered that students evinced a high level of engagement with each other during the first part of the game, but that students tended to overlook vital information posted to public channels during this time (October 30-November 6). As the game went on, students became aware of the materials and interacted more with the posts. These data revealed that we needed to acclimate students to the public channels before the RTTP game begins. We have done so by integrating SLACK into the overall class structure and opening up public channels for class discussion before the game starts.
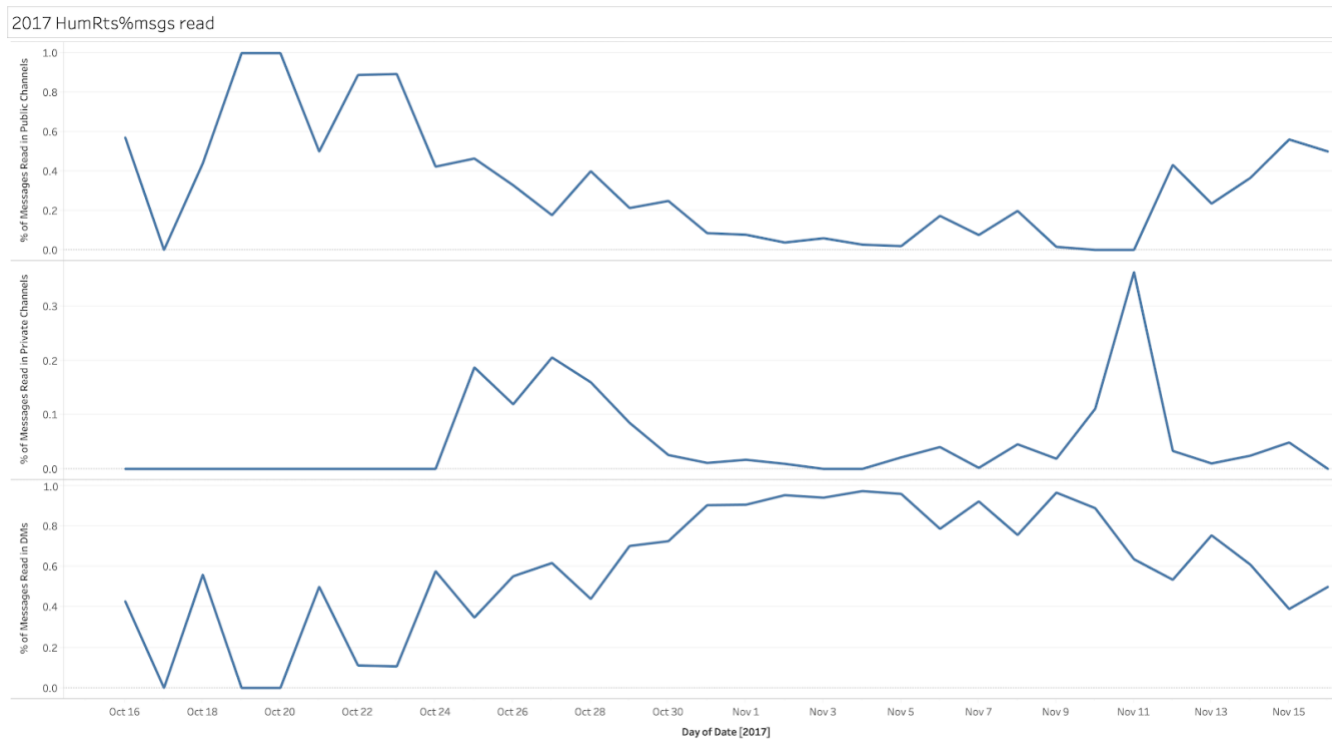
Percentage of Messages Read in Public Channels (top graph), Private Channels (middle graph) and Direct Messages (bottom graph)

REACTING CONSORTIUM

ENGAGING HISTORY: PLAY YOUR PART.

October 28, 2018

Re: GSU Department of History Teaching Excellence Award

To those concerned:

As the Executive Director of the Reacting Consortium, I watch with considerable interest as over 400 colleges and universities throughout the world implement the Reacting to the Past pedagogy, widely recognized as the leader among a spate of "beyond high impact" learning practices in higher education.

Three years ago, the Reacting Consortium, having received a grant from Endeavor Foundation, invited applications for institutions seeking a broader implementation of Reacting at their institution. Of the 96 applications we received, that from the GSU History Department was among the two or three most promising. It received one of the 18 grants.

In *Our Underachieving Colleges*, former Harvard president Derek Bok explained that few colleges or universities are capable of transforming their schools into becoming "effective institutions" (see "Why Colleges Underperform," pp. 313ff): the obstacles to change are simply too great. But the team at GSU History demonstrated just how to overcome institutional and professional inertia. Not only were the individual members of the GSU History team demonstrably outstanding teacher-scholars, but they were unusually committed to inspiring and motivating students. Perhaps most impressive, they were remarkably savvy about removing bureaucratic pediments to change.

As a result, they have devised a program that combines the curricular breadth and cost-savings of online-learning with the powerful, in-class learning community generated by the Reacting pedagogy. Their initiative has the potential of transforming higher education not only within the Georgia system but throughout the nation. I have cited it as a model for the Endeavor Foundation, and at least three other state systems are looking at the GSU History model.

Often we associate creativity with the finest scholarship. But the GSU History team has shown that a team of top-notch teacher scholars can exhibit an even rarer, and perhaps more important form of creativity: the type that transforms institutions and ensures the success of our students.

I congratulate the Georgia system for recognizing the importance of such initiatives—and for recognizing those who have excelled in this work so brilliantly.

With best wishes,

Mark C. Carnes

Professor of History

Executive Director

Successful Grant Applications Related to Pedagogy and Faculty Development
- Reacting To The Past Endeavor Grant (focus on faculty development; undergraduate education)
- National Endowment for the Humanities (focus on career diversity for graduate students)
- American Historical Association Career Diversity Award (focus on career diversity for graduate students)
- USG grant for online education (focus on online education in the freshman surveys)
- NEH Summer Institute (focus on K-12 teacher training)

Faculty Accomplishments and Recognition.
- Felton Jenkins, Jr Hall of Fame, Jeff Young (awarded in 2018)
- Governor's Teaching Fellow, Jeff Young (awarded in 2015)
- Chancellor's Learning Scholar, Robert Baker (awarded in 2018)
- College to Career Department Fellowship (awarded in 2018)

Pedagogy Research and Instructional Development
- Jeff Young & Jared Poley: "Challenging Students to Use Data Visualization Software in a Gen Ed History Course" presentation at Innovation in Teaching Conference (UGA)
- Jeff Young: "Predictors of Success in Online, Hybrid, and Face-to-face Survey Courses" presentation at SoTL Commons Conference (Georgia Southern University)
- Institute for Pedagogy in the Liberal Arts (Jared Poley and Jeff Young)
- Reacting To The Past winter institute (Marni Davis, Jared Poley, Jeff Young, Rob Baker, Mary Rolinson, Allen Fromherz)
- Reacting To The Past summer institute (Jared Poley, Rob Baker)
- Completion of the data-gathering phase of a three-year study (2015-18) of how 12,600 students interacted with digital resources in survey history courses (Jeff Young, Rob Baker)

Career Readiness and Career Diversity

Graduate Student Internship & Opportunities for Career Enhancement and Diversity.
Graduate students performed internships with the following organizations: Atlanta Urban Design Commission, Easements Atlanta, Inc., Bleakley Group, Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions, Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, Fulton County Schools Archive, Students also work on class projects in collaboration with local partners "in the field" to develop their skills. Recent projects include Interpretative Plan for the Central Georgia Railroad Depot" for the City of Madison, GA Downtown Development Authority; "National Register Nomination for the City of Locust Grove" for the City of Locust Grove, GA Historic Preservation Commission; and "Preservation Plan for Historic Westview and Southview Cemeteries, Covington" for the City of Covington Department of Planning.

Recent Graduate Student Fellowships and Awards
- Provost Dissertation Fellowship, Georgia State University
- Mayers Fellow, The Huntington Library
- Erasmus Scholarship, Universitá Ca'Foscari Venezia.

- Research Award, Columbia University Libraries.
- Dissertation Fellowship, Harry Ransom Center, Univ. of Texas Austin.
- Career Diversity Fellowship, American Historical Association/Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Short-Term Research Fellowship, Renaissance Society of America
- Allington Fellowship, Science History Institute *formerly the Chemical Heritage Foundation*
- Everett Helm Visiting Fellowship, Lilly Library
- Teaching Assistant Fellowship, GSU History Department
- Writing across the Curriculum Fellowship, GSU Center for Instructional Innovation
- Research Assistant Fellowship, GSU Art History Department
- Pantzer New Scholar, Bibliographical Society of America
- National Science Foundation Travel Grant for the History of Science Society Annual Meeting
- Friends of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries Grants to Scholars
- New Scholars Award, Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry
- Digital Humanities Summer Institute Scholarship, Renaissance Society of America
- Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia Scholarship, Rare Book School
- Introduction to English Paleography Scholarship, Folger Shakespeare Library