Overview

In “Digital Texuality: Theory and Practice of Textual Editing in the Humanities,” a technology architecture was deployed to enable students in the course to research, discuss and produce practical work on modes of representing texts from the past in digital media form. Students edited an electronic version of volume 4 of Horace Traubel’s monumental and influential biography of Walt Whitman, *With Walt Whitman In Camden*. This work was published at the *Walt Whitman Archive* after final editing by the instructor. The project included the construction of web-based tools for students to use as tutorials when learning how to encode text, forums for discussion of their work, and electronic means that students can use to organize their work in small groups on the text.

Outcomes

- Standards-based, rigorously edited, freely available edition of an important research text.
- Portable modules for use in future versions of this course, which will use different content for the practicum.
- Tested (and improved, thanks to student feedback) a model of, as one student put it, “an English class with a lab”.
- Created web-based tutorial for future encoders working for the Traubel Project.
- Expanded clip library and TEI tag set for the *Walt Whitman Archive*.
- 29 students who can show you ways that XML is poetic and that poetry can be a form of structural markup!

Technology Used

- XML
- Dreamweaver
- Blackboard
- NoteTab Editor
- "The structure of the course mandated that students bridge the gap to the respective “dark sides” of their fields. Students who were initially reluctant to participate in mark-up were soon absorbed in it, and those who had never before taken an English class began suggesting improvements in our mark-up strategy in order better to preserve the textual nuances of *With Walt Whitman in Camden.*”
  - Heather Lucas, Senior

Instructional Technology Showcase 2005