

DIGITAL STUDIES CERTIFICATE



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I. OVERVIEW

Digital Studies is a multidisciplinary field that considers the ethical, social, and cultural implications of artificial intelligence and other digital technologies. This certificate is available to everyone, whether a student is pursuing a technology-related career, preparing for a university program, or simply exploring what it means to be human in the digital age. To graduate with the Digital Studies Certificate students need to take six eligible courses, which are drawn from their Gen Ed requirements and complementary courses as well as some program requirements. The certificate does not require any additional work or courses; rather, the eligible courses double as requirements for the DEC and/or program.

Topics addressed by eligible courses:

Philosophical questions

What does it mean to be human? Could a machine have emotions, mental states, and self-awareness? Is thought a computational process? Is consciousness substrate neutral? In what sense is the output of generative AI creative and original?

Citizenship, social justice, geopolitics

Bias in data-driven decision making
Privacy, data protection, surveillance
Aligning AI with democratic values
Technological espionage

Environment

Resource-intensive data farms
Combatting climate change with AI-driven data analysis
Planned obsolescence and electronic waste

Economics and labour

Automation and the job market
The attention economy
Who owns and profits from your data?

Health Sciences

AI in diagnostics
BioGPT (biomedical text generation)
Neurotechnology and cognitive liberty
Social media and mental health

Culture

AI in literature, art, and film
Digital visual culture
Digital media culture in the contemporary novel
Communication technologies
Utopian and dystopian views of our digital future
Intellectual property in the age of generative AI
Gendered representations of AI
Cultural analytics
History of reading and the book
Posthumanism

Research methods and practical applications

Technical digital competency
Online mis- and disinformation
Media literacy and using online sources
Deep Fakes
Netiquette (Social Media Etiquette)
Special projects in or about social media

II. RATIONALE AND GOALS

Digital technology has been transforming our society since the mid-20th century. More recent advances in AI research are accelerating that transformation. By some accounts, generative AI has led us to an historical precipice, the best-case scenario being an equitable and efficient society in which human creativity flourishes and justice abounds and the worst-case scenario being human extinction. In this constantly evolving digital landscape, the Digital Studies Certificate would keep students informed and provide them with opportunities to reflect and think critically. The main goals of the Digital Studies Certificate are as follows:



To grant a certificate that would be an asset in university, job, and internship applications



To provide students with the knowledge, skills, and cultural awareness to navigate digital media and use digital tools responsibly



To encourage students to situate contemporary technological developments within a historical framework



To promote reflection on the ethical and philosophical issues posed by digital technology



To provide students with the opportunity to share their tech-related fears and interests



To encourage students to express themselves creatively as they think about the implications of digital technology



To pair existing curricular competencies with topics in Digital Studies



To foster a multidisciplinary, college-wide conversation about the implications of digital technology



To provide a community for teachers who would like to share and discuss their course materials

III. COURSE LIST (Updated October, 2026)

To be eligible a course must have 15% relevant content, in course hours, or an opportunity for a project(s), on a relevant topic, worth 25% of the overall grade.

ALC Core Courses

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
502-CCB-AB	Culture & the Environment in the Digital Age	All teachers		
530-ANE-AB Explorations in Animation		Daniel Schorr		

ALC Options

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
340-PCM-AB/ 340-PLC-AB	Philosophy of Communication	Avery Larose		

Business Management

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
401-256-AB e-Business and Strategic Management		Herman Tumurcuoglu		
410-404-AB Internet Marketing		"		

Complementary

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
201-DAC-AB Math Puzzles, Games, and Other Diversions		Derrick Chung		

412-DBB-AB Introduction to Web Design		TBA		
420-DBA-03 Introduction to Programming		Elzahraa Hasan		
420-DAB Introduction to Computers		TBA		
420-DAB-AB Enhancing Your Computer Knowledge		"		
420-DAC-AB Introduction to E-Commerce		"		
530-DFA-AB Animation / Cinéma d'animation en stop motion		Daniel Schorr		
530-DBA-03 Animation / Animation Filmmaking in Stop Motion – An Introduction		Daniel Schorr		
530-DAB-03 Film Studies: World Animation		Daniel Schorr		

Computer Science Technology

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
420-2T3-AB Information Technology		Aref Mourtada		
420-3D6-AB Database		Meghrig Terzian, Helen Katalifos		
420-6P3-AB Connected Objects		Michael Haaf		
420-SN1-RE Programming in Science		Younna Badawy, Preeti Pearl D'Melo, Alex Fulleringer, Peter Grundy, Michael Haaf, Gabriel Larco, Keith		

		Macdonald, Elizabeth Poggie,		
420-SNP-AB Science Options	Problem Solving: From Algorithms to Programs	Ian Clement		
"	Demystifying AI: From Data to Intelligence	Youmna Badawy		

English

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
603-101-MQ: Introduction to College English	Intelligence: from IQ to AI	Jesse Bouvier		
"	Reading the City	Yann Geoffroy		
"	Attention	Yael Margalit		
"	Loneliness	Yael Margalit		
603-102-MQ: Literary Genres	Literature and Science	Tom Abray		
"	Truth/Persuasion/Manipulation	Carousel Calvo		
"	Utopias and Dystopias	Nicole de Hoop		
"	A Godlike Science	Anna Lepine		
"	The Contemporary Novel	Yael Margalit		
"	Medieval and Renaissance Literature	Yael Margalit		
"	Netflix and the American Gothic	Michele Trepanier		
"	Sci-Fi Shakespeare	Jennifer		

		McDermott		
603-103-MQ: Literary Themes	Shakespeare & Co.	Yael Margalit		
"	Shakespearean Bodies	Jennifer McDermott		
603-200-AB: Forms of Discourse	Fragments and Variations	Mathieu Bouchard		
"	Volunteers	Christina Oltmann		
"	The Twenties: Then and Now	Neil Briffett		
"	Hybrid Bodies	Carousel Calvo		
"	Word and Image	Yael Margalit		
"	Mad Science	Jennifer McDermott		
"	Visions of Wastelands	Lisa Szabo-Jones		
"	AI in Literature and Film, the March towards Enhanced Intelligence	Lawrence Szigeti		

French

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
602-C02-MQ	Français et société québécoise - Niveau 2	Shahrouz Pezeshki		
602-102-MQ	French Level 3	Robert Inch		

602-AB-203	French Level 4	Jean-Marc Beausoleil		
"	"	Shahrouz Pezeshki		

Geosciences

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
320-100-AB Introduction to Geography		Julie Podmore		

Graphic and Web Design

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
570-151-AB Web Fundamentals		Eric Girouard		
570-353-AB Web Publishing				
570-452-AB User Experience Design		Eric Girouard Ian Rogers		
570-652-AB Digital Marketing		Kellie-Rae Ryan		

Humanities

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
345-101-MQ Knowledge	Current Events and Media	Nick Alvarez		
	Stranger Than Fiction	Ful Massimi		
	Science and Pseudoscience	Alberto Sanchez		

	We Humans	Alberto Sanchez		
	Where Did God Go?	Hicham Tiflati		
	Planning Utopias	Tom Young		
345-102-MQ World Views	Aspects of Freedom	Fareed Awan		
	Technology and Human Values	Roy Fu		
	The Pursuit of Happiness	John Hamer		
"	Mind-Body	Alberto Sanchez		
"	Introduction to World Views	Candis Steenbergen		
"	Views on Games and Play	"		
"	Games and Play	Steven Sych		
"	Sustainable Health	Anna Woodrow		
345-212-AB Ethics and Aesthetics	Values and the Arts	Steven Sych		
345-213-AB Social Issues	The Cinematic Body	Mario Bellemare		
"	Current Ethical Issues	Candis Steenbergen		
	Media Messages and Social Issues	Candis Steenbergen		
345-214-AB Science and Society	Bioethics	Fareed Awan, Grace Lin		
	Critical Issues for the New Millennium	Sarwat Viqar		
345-214-AB HUMANITÉS (for Arts and Science)		Stéphanie Claude		

Information and Library Technology

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
393-JAC-AB Automatisation 1		Adria Seccareccia		
393-JBD-AB Records Management		Niusha Zohoorian Foolad		
393-JCE-AB Preservation and Treatment		Catherine Henderson		
393-JEE-AB Historical Archives		Adria Seccareccia		

Mathematics

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
201-SNP-AB Playing with Probability: An Introduction to Stochastic Processes		Luiz Kazuo Takei		

Media Arts

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
530-DG1- AB Digital Media 1 or 530-DMA-AB Intro to Digital Media		Fred Belzile		
530-DG2-AB Digital Media 2		Fred Belzile		
530-MDA-AB Visual Culture and Communication		Anne Golden		

530-FS5-AB Film Studies: World Animation		Daniel Schorr		
530-FS2-AB Film Studies: Science Fiction		Yudi Sewraj		
530-FL1-AB Filmmaking 1		Yudi Sewraj		
530-FL2-AB F Filmmaking 2		Yudi Sewraj		
585-VR1-AB Video Production 1		Yudi Sewraj		
585-VR2-AB Video Production 2		Yudi Sewraj		

Multidisciplinary Science

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
360-PRO-AB Capstone Course for Science Program		Bruce Tracy/ Younna Badawy Phoebe Jackson/ Katherine Pagnucco Tania Peres/Chris Levesque Tania Peres/Angelo Dos Santos Junior Richard Léveillé/ Karim Jaffer Daniel Gatien/Simon Daoust Luiz Kazuo Takei/Ian Clement Roxanne Millette/ Etienne Portelance Sean Hughes/Ferenc Balogh		

Multidisciplinary Social Science

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
300-101-AB Introduction to Social Science		With Kathryn Kalemkerian only		
300-303-AB Social Science Integrative Project		With Wendy Hadd only		

Physical Education

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
109-MQ	Nature Identification and Fitness	Andrew Plimer		

Political Science

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
385-100-AB Introduction to Political Science		Jean-Michel Sotiron		
385-DBA-AB Politics of Crisis Management		Jean-Michel Sotiron		
385-DFC-AB <i>Parlons politique</i>		Julien Morency-Laflamme		
385-PPF-AB <i>Parlons politique</i>		Julien Morency-Laflamme		

Psychology

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects

350-201-AB Interaction and Communication		Jim Katz		
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Sociology

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
387-101-AB Introduction to Sociology		Wendi Hadd, Onur Kapdan		
387-204-AB Sociological Questions		All teachers		
387-206-AB Popular Culture		All teachers		
387-206-AB Technology and Society		All teachers		
387-214-AB Environmental Sociology		All teachers		
387-202-AB Sociology of Sport		All teachers		

Visual Arts

Course code and title	Subtitle	Teacher(s)	15% in course design	25% special projects
510-DS1-AB Fundamentals of Design		Jamie Wilson Goodyear		

IV. CONTACT

Email dsc@johnabbott.qc.ca for more information.