



BOOK REVIEW: “Coding Pedagogy”

Review by Carol Zuegner

Jeremy Sarachan, editor, “Coding Pedagogy,” 2019. Available online <http://codingpedagogy.net/index.html>

If you’ve never written a line of code or you’ve dabbled in HTML and CSS or you’re adept at Python, the online “Coding Pedagogy” still has something for you. This edited volume combines several chapters that outline philosophical reasons for adding coding to curriculum in the liberal arts with chapters that explain approaches to adding varying levels of coding projects to classes in the liberal arts curriculum, again particularly journalism and mass communication.

Volume editor Jeremy Sarachan, associate professor and chair of media and communication at St. John Fisher College, opens with a look at the state of coding in the curriculum of media and communication departments. The numbers are about what you would expect. In Chapter 3, Aaron Chimbale, dean of the Jandoli School of Communication at St. Bonaventure, says coding is more than a shiny toy. Instead, he says “it is important to expose all students to the basics of coding and to give them a baseline of understanding this language, the language of the future.”

Many might wonder just where that coding expertise might come from, especially in smaller departments and programs. That question is acknowledged if not answered. The chapters that follow the philosophical and context ones show how professors have integrated types of coding into mostly communication curricula that range from a writing class that uses coding to develop rhetorical design to developing an interactive documentary, to developing an app, developing mobile games and using R language. The rationale, sample course design and assignment examples

in each chapter provide ways to explore adding classes or course units like these into classes. Each case-study-like chapter has plenty of resources and some links to tutorials or ways to teach yourself coding.

I recommend the book no matter where you might be on the coding spectrum. If you’re new to coding, the online book offers a glimpse of possibilities and ways to dip your toe in the coding pool. I’m eager to try some of the suggested tutorials. If you have more experience, the hands-on nature of the book could help in course or assignment development. The online nature of the book also allows for adding more chapters in the future. [Article proposals](#) are accepted at any time.

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