

Omeka projects work well for:

- Semester-long projects.
- Single-student projects (each student works on their own site, as opposed to collaborative or simultaneous work).
- Collections-based website building (where you can get more information about each object or document in the collection, more like a database).
- Final products that involve combinations of objects or documents, narrative text, and visuals like timelines. Omeka is not the best place for maps-based storytelling, although it is possible to embed limited interactive maps using extensions.

Example student work to explore:

Zoë Mitchell, undergraduate Honors student in Public History

<https://collections.ecu.edu/os/s/LifeInAyden/page/SouthAydenHighSchool>

Ashlyn Racine, M.A. student in Public History

<https://collections.ecu.edu/os/s/black-history-of-ayden/page/home>

Molly Trivelpiece, M.A. student in Public History

<https://collections.ecu.edu/os/s/BuriedintheGraveyard/page/about>

Travis Dunn, M.A. student in Public History

<https://collections.ecu.edu/os/s/SouthAtlanticPowwowArchive/page/About-It>

Setting up students to work in Omeka:

Step 1: If you are interested in a research or student project in Omeka, fill out the “[Digital Scholarship Request Form](#)”

Describing the project as you imagine it will help the Joyner Digital Humanities Working Group (currently Jeanne Hoover, Alston Cobourn, Jennifer Daugherty, and Allison Kaefting) to see if Omeka is the best fit. If it is, they will guide you through next steps: creating a title for your site URL, requesting that Omeka site be created, and creating Omeka accounts for you and your student.

Step 2: Training

After the student’s Omeka site has been created and they have an account with their ECU email, the student should set up a training meeting by emailing the same list of librarians: Jeanne Hoover, Alston Cobourn, Jennifer Daugherty, and Allison Kaefting. Faculty are welcome to learn alongside students!

Step 3: Establish which descriptor fields you require

The library team will help students understand descriptor fields (like “date,” “description,” “creator,” “contributor,” “format,” “source,” “subject,” “publisher,” etc.), but without diving deep into nomenclature systems (like [Dublin Core](#) metadata elements), you will want to be

clear with the student which ones you require and how you want them used. I suggest asking them to enter what you'd like them to use in a bibliographic entry, including the host repository and the URL where they got the source.

Step 4: Begin building the collection

The student builds their collections through locating sources and describing them in object pages. Museum objects, library collections (like Joyner's [Digital Collections](#)), scanned photographs, screengrabs of websites, all can be "objects" in the collection.

Step 5: Design the "galleries" or pages for the site

The student should pick several stories to tell, maybe imagining them like gallery rooms in a museum or chapters of an historical narrative. Tabs in the Omeka site can be used to organize objects from the collection. The student can add to the collection anytime, as they realize what is needed to tell these stories fully.

Step 6: Assessment

I set up deadlines in Canvas with specific goals, every 1-2 weeks. A goal could be "add at least 10 objects to your collection" or "start gallery 1" or "revise gallery 2 in response to my comments." Students would submit just the URL of their site with any questions they have for me, and I'd review what they wrote or added and make suggestions in Canvas.

Ultimately your assessment can focus on the writing and content in the site and your experience as a user.

I recommend including a metacognitive reflection or process paper at the end of the assignment to offer them a place to explain what they wish they could have done if they had more time, coding skills, or graphic design training.

Step 7: Longevity

By request and approval of the library, a student can be granted permission to join the Omeka ECU license with a personal email once they graduate, to continue to steward their site. A faculty member or other ECU employee must also remain attached to that Omeka site. To my knowledge this has only been offered to graduate students.