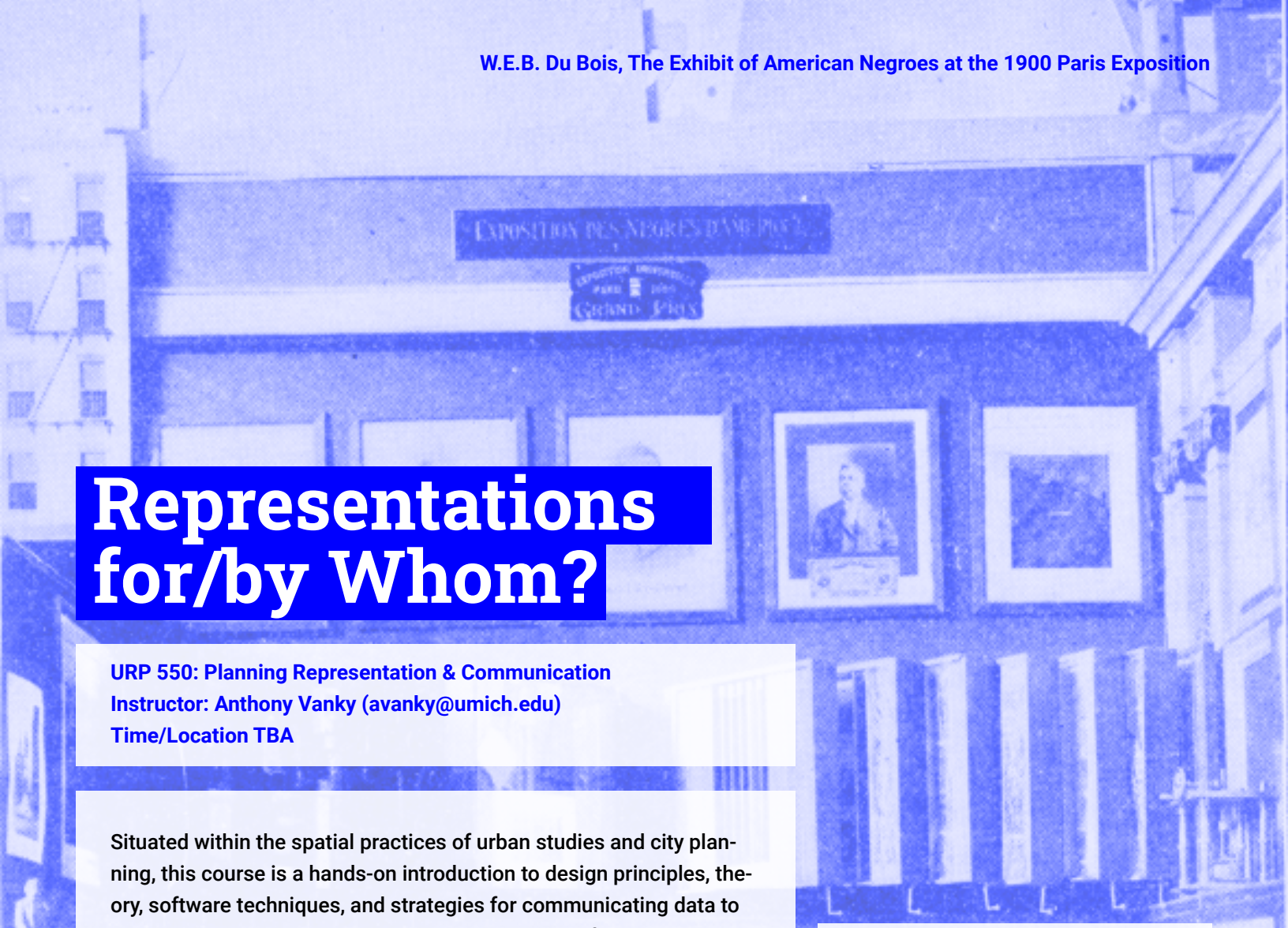

W.E.B. Du Bois, The Exhibit of American Negroes at the 1900 Paris Exposition

Representations for/by Whom?

URP 550: Planning Representation & Communication
Instructor: Anthony Vanky (avanky@umich.edu)
Time/Location TBA

Situated within the spatial practices of urban studies and city planning, this course is a hands-on introduction to design principles, theory, software techniques, and strategies for communicating data to various audiences. Classes will be a combination of lectures, design workshops, and labs. Through readings, design critique, and code assignments, students will learn how visual representations can help understand complex data and design, and evaluate visualizations for analysis or communication. Topics include visual perception, exploratory data analysis, task analysis, graphic design, narrative, etc.

The course will not only introduce a suite of programs and skills, as visual languages play a much larger role in mediating our interactions, facilitating, and constraining our awareness of the systems we are embedded in. This course will actively maneuver through the inequal agency afforded by (and limitations to) visual and narrative representations for different communities. The course will ask in what ways is representation an act of advocacy or disenfranchisement. *What are the effects of inequities in indexical data collection manifested in visual and narrative communication?* More specifically, the course engages with how representation—in its practice of describing existing conditions or proposing imagined possibilities—can transcend supposed neutrality and promote the inclusion of communities otherwise excluded or counterweight the underlying data's biases.

Course Outcomes:

Given a dataset, students will be able to understand the dimensions, qualities, and limitations of the dataset, and to decide on best approaches and visual representations:

- Students will understand basic programming concepts, able to build basic visualizations, but most importantly know how and where to look to learn more.
- Students will be aware of best design practices, and able to think critically about when and where to use or not use them.
- Students will come away with a set of visualizations, including static, narrative and interactive.