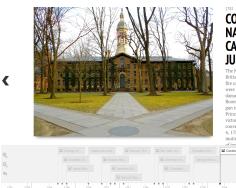# Quickstart Guide to TimelineJS

TimelineJS is an online tool for generating visually-appealing multimedia timeline visualizations developed by the Knight Lab at Northwestern University. The tool is completely online, does not require an account, and uses Google Sheets as a data store.

The tool can be found at:
http://timeline.knightlab.com/

After visiting the website, click the green, "make a timeline' button. This will take you a section further down the same page that outlines instructions for creating a timeline. Basically, the process involves making a copy of a Google Sheets (spreadsheet) template, populating that template with your own information such as titles, descriptions, dates, and links to media, and then providing TimelineJS with the URL of your spreadsheet so that TimelineJS can generate the timeline. TimelineJS allows you at any time to preview your work and provides an embed code that can be copied and pasted into a course blog or other website.

1. Make a copy of the Google sheets template provided by TimelineJS. You will be prompted to save a copy to your Google Drive. After creating this copy, you can share it wil classmates if you are working on a group project.
2. Set the spreadsheet to be 'published to the web'. This will allow TimelineJS to access the information contained in the sheet.
3. Let TimelineJS know the URL of your spreadsheet. Make sure you read the highlighted note about using the URL from the browser's address bar rather than from the Publish to the web popup window.
4. Preview your work either as an embed on the TimelineJS website or fullscreen in a new browser tab.

To add a finished timeline to a McGraw Commons course website, copy all the text from the section labeled 'Embed'. Open the Wordpress editor for the page in which you would like to embed the timeline, switch the editor to plain text with the tab in the upper right, and paste the embed code into the page.

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