University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Graduate School of Library and Information Science

LIS 518A Community Informatics Fall 2010
Thursdays 9:00-11:50 am, in Henderson Room/LIS 131 (4 credits)
Course docs available via Moodle

Instructors

Dr. Kate Williams
katewill@illinois.edu
Office: LIS 344, (217) 244-9128
Office hours: Tuesdays 11:00-12:00 & by appointment

Aiko Takazawa, Teaching Assistant
aikot@illinois.edu
Office: LIS 345
Office hours: Mondays 3:00-4:00 & by appointment

Course description

A survey of key concepts in an emerging field that studies how local, historical communities are using information and communications technologies. Covers key principles for work in the non-profit/public sector as people harness new technologies and media as individuals, students, families, community organizations, and so on. Overarching ideas prepare both professionals and researchers to understand and master this environment, whatever their technology background. Especially useful for those interested in public or community libraries, youth services, social work, education, and anyone interested in working with or studying underserved communities. The required course for the community informatics specialization.

Course structure

1. Lecture and discussion, LISB 131, Thursdays 9:00-10:50
2. Digital Divide Lecture Series with guest speaker, LISB 131, Thursdays 11:00-11:50

Texts

All texts can be purchased or obtained from the web or the library; interlibrary loan is very effective. The assigned readings per week are also provided as PDF files.
Course requirements and assignments

1. Welcome: Introduce one of the speakers, or else formulate and ask a question to help kick off Q and A.

2. Read, and interrogate the readings: Read the weekly assigned course readings, mark up your printouts and/or bring notes and questions to class.

3. Talk: Present one of the readings, 1) providing a one page summary including three questions for discussion and 2) pointing us to three marked passages you find most interesting; when it isn’t your week to present, speak up too. 20% of course grade.

4. Explore, contribute, analyze: Carry out three field work assignments and bring your experiences into class discussion:
   a. Community in cyberspace (report due to Aiko 5 pm Sep 10). 15% of course grade.
   b. Computer teaching (report due in class Sept 30). 15% of course grade.
   c. A broadband plan for a community based organization (team report due to Aiko 5 pm Friday, Nov 19). 50% of course grade.

5. Optional, extra credit: Publish! Write a book review for Journal of Community Informatics, according to guidelines. Propose your book to instructor first (due to Aiko 5 pm Tuesday, November 23). 10% of course grade.

   Note: Turn in hard copy of assignments single spaced and also post electronic copy to Moodle discussion space.

Weekly schedule

August 26, Introduction: "What is Community Informatics ?"

September 2, Community as history
Friday, September 10, eChicago

This week class does not meet. Instead we'll be on an all-day-friday field trip to eChicago at Dominican University in River Forest (event runs 8:45-4:45). No expenses to you—details of transport to come. Please begin to see about rearranging your schedule.

Students not in Chicago or Champaign-Urbana will arrange alternative activities with instructor.

See http://echicago.illinois.edu for more information about the eChicago series of events from 2007 on to this one in River Forest. This has been an important community informatics intervention in the e-life of Chicagoland and is an example of what a small determined group of scholars (or future librarians) can do in any locale to foster linkages and understanding.

Due September 10: Community in Cyberspace webliography and commentary.

September 16, Community as network


September 23, Virtual community


September 30, Informatics: Early ideas


Due September 30: Computer teaching report.

October 7, The information age: Key concepts


October 14, The network society, the dual city, the space of flows


October 21, Literacy


October 28, Empirical work: Case studies


November 4, Empirical work: Datasets


November 11, Empirical work: Cyberorganizing


***Last Class*** November 18, Empirical work: Cyberpower


**Due Nov 19: Team report: A broadband plan for a community based organization**

**Due Nov 23 (optional): Book review for Journal of Community Informatics**
Third Annual Digital Divide Lecture Series

Thursdays 11:00–11:50 AM, Fall 2010
Henderson Room (LIS 131), UIUC GSLIS

This year’s lectures look at practice, research, and history. Last year’s 50 Years of Public Computing at Illinois event (http://go.illinois.edu/50years) brought to light pathbreaking work; we continue to mine it for insights about today’s digital divide(s). And this year’s broadband stimulus spending is a necessary focus, as in LIS 518 Community Informatics.

August 26  Bridging the digital divide in the U of Illinois Libraries
Beth Sandore, Associate University Librarian for Information Technology Planning and Policy, Associate Dean of Libraries, and Professor of Library Administration

September 2  Bridging the digital divide at Parkland College
Brian Bell, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Grant Coordinator, Computer Science and Information Technology Department, Parkland College

(No lecture September 9)

September 16 Bridging the digital divide in Illinois communities
Frances Roehm, SkokieNet Librarian and Community Liaison, Skokie Public Library, and Member, DCEO Advisory Committee for the Eliminate the Digital Divide Program

September 23 Bridging the digital divide via local/federal broadband construction: UC2B
Michael K. Smeltzer, Director of Networking and Acting Director of Physical Infrastructure

September 30 Reflecting on historical digital divides: Developing the Library Catalog System (1970s) at the University of Illinois libraries
Bernie G. Sloan, Librarian, University of Illinois; Director and later Senior Consultant, Illinois Library Computer Systems Organization/CARLI (retired)

(reset to fall 2011)

October 7  Understanding Illinois’ digital divide via statewide broadband mapping and measurement
Drew Clark, Executive Director, Partnership for a Connected Illinois

October 14 Understanding the digital divide in Germany
Herbert Kubicek, Professor of Applied Computer Science (Telecommunications and Information Management), University of Bremen

October 21  Overcoming digital divides in a college football team
Greg Bruner, Illini Football Video Coordinator, U of I Intercollegiate Athletics

October 28  Reflecting on historical digital divides: Developing software for the early PLATO system
Peter Braunfeldt, Professor of Mathematics (Emeritus), University of Illinois

November 4  Bridging the digital divide at the Illinois State Library
Deb Aggertt, Reference Outreach Coordinator, Illinois State Library

November 11 Understanding the digital divide for social work practice and research
Adrian Kok, Associate Professor of Social Work, Dominican University, Chicago