University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign  
Graduate School of Library and Information Science  
LIS 518A Community Informatics Fall 2014  
Meets Thursdays 9-12 and sometimes 9-11 in the Henderson Room (131)  
(course includes Info City Lectures either Thurs 11-12 or Sat/Sun afternoons)  
Course documents and website https://courses.lis.illinois.edu/

Instructors  
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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 9-credit community informatics certificate.

Course structure and assignments  
The course combined seminar, lecture and field work. The weekly two hour seminar calls for active participation by students, bringing questions, experience, and perspective on the readings. The lecture is an opportunity to hear from the actual players to what extent and how key community institutions and sectors are integrating new technologies into its life, work, and culture. The field work puts students on the front line, learning to teach and support people in their everyday lives with 1) one-on-one tech help and 2) an online information source of, by and for the local community. One additional research task connects students with community informatics alumni, helping give a professional orientation to the profession.

1. LEADING. Each student will lead discussion of several readings by supplying for each reading an outline, a drawing/diagram/chart/table about or from the reading, and two discussion questions, all on one side of one page.

2. INTRODUCING. Each student will introduce the speakers for one of the Info City Lectures. Get their email from Noah and contact them for a short bio. Put that in your own words and
shorten if needed, practice reading it. (Yes, bring your text!) Someone else will open and host each lecture, but you will be introduced in order to introduce the speaker.

3. CYBERNAVIGATING. Each student will volunteer as a CyberNavigator at a local institution. (Students will be matched with institutions in class.) Keep structured field notes on each visit and append those to your final reflection paper. Also see the assignment instructions.

4. CYBERORGANIZING. A major project of the class this semester is to contribute to an existing localwiki for Champaign-Urbana: http://cuwiki.net. We will plan this together starting week 2. Also see the assignment instructions.

5. NETWORKING. You will each have eight GSLIS alumni to find and ask what they’re doing and how community informatics helps them.

Plan four hours a week for cybernavigating, cyberorganizing and networking combined, through the week of November 20.

6. REFLECTING. Your 2500 word essay will use as many ideas from the course reading as possible (and any other source you like) to reflect on and analyze your experiences in the field and the lectures. Include answers to: What did you teach? What did you learn? What were the challenges? The breakthroughs? Make sure I can find your answers to those four questions in your essay. Illustrations, for instance photos, are encouraged. Attach as two appendices 1) your field notes from cybernavigating, 2) a list of what you did for cyberorganizing, 3) your results from networking with alumni, and 4) a press release about what you and your CyberNavigating site accomplished this semester, with accompanying photo if possible and a note on where you will submit it. Work on this last one as a team with staff and other students at your site. Due December 8.

7. LEARNING ACTIVELY. All students are expected to be fully engaged, raising questions and contributing to discussion to demonstrate understanding and contribute to the general progress of the class. “Read with a pencil,” that is, mark passages of interest, take notes, make a list of key concepts or questions or ideas, formulate questions to bring to class. For reading help, which is something everyone in graduate school needs, make use of Paul Edwards, “How to Read a Book,” which will be in the course reading collection online.

Texts

Other readings will be available online. Bring readings to class to refer to. Read with a pencil.

Grading
You will be graded on your active participation in class making use of the literature (speaking up, leading discussions on articles (30%), your cybernavigating, cyberorganizing, and networking (40%), and your final reflection paper (30%).
Schedule

Note: The Info City Lectures are part of this syllabus.
A schedule is available at http://go.illinois.edu/digitaldividetalks.

August 28. Context. Cybernavigating

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-4CV05HyAbM
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NLlGopyXT_g
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Us-TVg40ExM
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Pq-S557XQU

Read: Damian Duffy, John Jennings, Kate Williams. Cybernavigator Stories [comic book].
Website at http://www.echicago.illinois.edu/stories.html; same content as pdf at
Kate Williams, “Informatics Moments,” Library Quarterly, Volume 82 Number 1,

Think: What video or other cultural artifact would you add to this collection, to describe more completely this current moment?

September 4. Cyberorganizing


Due September 4: IRB certificate sent to Noah by email. Do this training on your own by logging in, reading, and answering questions. Then send in your certificate (proof that you completed).  
http://www.irb.illinois.edu/?q=education/InstructionsForIRBTrainingModules.html

**September 11. What is community informatics?**

http://echicago.illinois.edu/conferences.html


**September 18. Community as history**


**September 25. Community as network**


http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/journals/library_trends/toc/lib.62.1.html

October 2. Special population: Older adults


Visit: The pictures here go with the article above; scroll down to the bottom of the page: [http://www.tecn.upf.es/~ssayag/TellingOlderPeopleStoryEmailing/](http://www.tecn.upf.es/~ssayag/TellingOlderPeopleStoryEmailing/)


October 9. Community in inforev 1: The digital divide


Explore: Find what Pew Internet and American Life Project has to say about the digital divide. [http://www.pewinternet.org](http://www.pewinternet.org)

October 16. Community in inforev 2: Manuel Castells


View: Greg Bruner, Illini Football Video Coordinator, U of I Intercollegiate Athletics. Overcoming digital divides in a college football team, Digital Divide Lecture Series, October 21, 2010. [http://go.illinois.edu/digitaldividetalks](http://go.illinois.edu/digitaldividetalks)

**October 23. Other key theories of the information society**


View: Project Gutenberg. Panel 3 of “Fifty Years of Public Computing at Illinois.” [http://50years.lis.illinois.edu](http://50years.lis.illinois.edu)

Luis Von Ahn, Massive-scale online collaboration. April 2011. [http://www.ted.com/talks/luis_von_ahn_massive_scale_online_collaboration.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/luis_von_ahn_massive_scale_online_collaboration.html)

Explore: Internet Public Library and the earlier Librarian’s Index to the Internet (LII), [http://www.ipl.org/div/about/](http://www.ipl.org/div/about/)

**October 30. Virtuality: Early experiments**


**November 6. Public computing: The place, people, tools**


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Explore: The Great Good Place author Ray Oldenburg’s site, starting with:

November 13. Public computing: Lessons about literacy


And: This is the last week you are in the field, so that you can shift to writing it up.

November 20: Cyberpower: Making a difference


http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/journals/library_trends/toc/lib.62.1.html


November 27: No class, Thanksgiving

December 5: Applying the Illinois model—Santa Monica and Amsterdam


Bring: Highlights of your final reflection paper to share

Due December 8: Final reflection paper with attachments, to instructors office or mail box and also emailed to instructor.