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SI 575: Community Information Corps Seminar

School of Information, University of Michigan
Fall 2009

Websites:

<http://cic.si.umich.edu/>
SI 575 CTools Site

Instructors:

Daniel E. Atkins (faculty coordinator)

Steven Jackson
Joan C. Durrance
Tiffany Veinot

Student Program Coordinator:

Emily Petty Puckett

Course Overview and Objectives:

Overview:

This course brings together students and faculty who are engaged in diverse community and public interest work to learn from each other and a wide range of guest visitors. Readings include those recommended by guests and a selection of articles focusing on core concepts of community information work. Students learn the roots of community informatics -- how it is practiced and where public interest information professionals work -- and consider citizenship, opportunity, and the public good in an information society.

This semester we will focus on four broad topics of activity in the field of community information: 1) Information and Development, 2) Community Inquiry: Methods, Ethics, and Evaluation, 3) Information Movements, Openness, and Social Change, 4) Organizations and Institutions. Six speakers will visit the U-M campus to share their experience in one of these areas of study and to discuss their profession with students and interested community members. Interspersed with these talks will be discussion sessions at which students are expected to participate in critical examination and dialogue with topics and issues presented in the assigned readings and to reflect on the speaker presentations. Additional fields of inquiry relating to the field of community informatics will be posted on the CIC website for further engagement.

Learning Objectives:

During this course, students are expected to 1) Engage with core concepts and underlying theories of community informatics; 2) Develop a sense of the professional responsibilities for

information and communication technologies and knowledge management in the public interest;
3) Connect with like-minded people and resources for doing community and public-interest oriented information work.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to identify community and social information practices, methodologies, professionals, and research that will inform their programmatic decisions while at the School of Information. This course is intended to propel student engagement in activities and with individuals at SI and beyond that will foster their growth and interest in public-interest information work.

Speaker Engagement:

Enrolled students are expected to ask questions during or after any presentation, as the speaker designates. Speakers are invited to the School of Information to share their experiences and engage with students and the U-M community. If you are interested in a particular speaker's work, their background, the organization they work for, or any element of their presentation or publications, you are encouraged to contact Emily Petty Puckett (epuckett@umich.edu) to set up a visit with the speaker during their visit to campus.

Lunch:

Students and visitors are invited to bring their own lunch to speaker events and student and faculty provided potlucks will be appropriate during discussion sessions.

Course Requirements:

Members of the U-M and local community are invited to attend any or all of the seminars and discussion sections. However, if you are a University of Michigan student taking this course for credit, you are required to complete the following activities and assignments to receive credit for the term.

Course Participation 85%

Students taking this course for credit will be required to participate in reflective and critical engagement of the topics and information presented in this seminar over the course of the term. Two avenues for discussion are required: blogging /on-line discussions and in-class discussion.

To facilitate these activities, group leaders will be designated for each discussion session at the beginning of the term using a randomized system. Groups will self-designate around a leader for the discussion session but students can interact with each other's blogs freely through the term. Group leaders are required to post their blogs by 5 pm on Tuesday with the goal of introducing self-designated topics or questions for the upcoming discussion session to prepare students for appropriate dialogues. Leaders are encouraged to examine links or discrepancies between readings, speaker presentations, or their own experiences and to discuss potential avenues for the development of community information in the week's themes.

Blogging 25%

Due to technical constraints, blogging will not be required; student leaders should submit their questions to Emily by the Wednesday prior to their discussion section to post on Ctools.

Students will be required to blog on either the 575 Ctools site or the CIC website (<http://cic.si.umich.edu/>) on the readings, speakers and topics presented in class. Potential topics of discussion (see below for blogging priorities) will be presented Monday by 5 pm for students to discuss, however students are encouraged to develop independent lines of inquiry as desired. Students submitted blogs are to be posted no later than the following Wednesday (5 pm) of speaker presentations or discussion sections. Enrolled students are expected to contribute to the CIC Fall 2009 Seminar blog at least three times during the term but may contribute as many times as they would like.

The purpose of blogging is to allow a platform for continued examination and discussion of the topics, research, viewpoints, and practices students and guests are exposed to during this seminar. It is also meant to:

1. Stimulate in-class discussion of core readings by generating questions and comments.
2. Host online discussion for core readings that extends this conversation beyond the classroom and allows for larger CIC community engagement of community information related topics.
3. Generate questions and comments for the upcoming speaker.

Group Discussion 35%

Each discussion session will involve a mixture of classroom-wide discussion and smaller self-designated groups that will be driven by student leaders. The purpose of these discussions is to allow students to engage with the topics, ideas, and theories presented by the speakers and by the material in class. NOTE: There will be additional readings required of students if there are two discussion sessions in a row. Students will be expected to discuss the speaker topics and readings of the previous week during the first discussion session and will be required to read additional material for the second discussion session to incorporate into their conversations. Readings will be posted on the Ctools site in the appropriate folders. The purpose of this activity is to broaden the range of exposure students are given to the topics addressed in this seminar.

Depending on class enrollment, two to three student leaders will be designated for each discussion sessions. Student leaders will be expected to summarize the readings, engage fellow students in discussion of the topics through prepared questions or thought-starters based on your experience, perspective, or online comments from your fellow students.

Speaker Q&A Participation 25%

Enrolled students will be expected to actively engage with the speakers' presentation if and when Q&A sessions are presented. You may post potential questions or comments for the speaker based on background materials on the blog in addition to being prepared to ask questions and engage with the speaker during their presentation.

Reflective Paper 15%

Students will be required to turn in a 2-4 page single spaced reflective paper on the seminar at the end of the term, Friday December 11. This paper should reflectively examine one of the themes presented by a speaker, a discussion, or reading during the seminar that sparked your professional interest. This includes appropriately linking and synthesizing material presented in class including speaker presentations, readings or student discussions and can also include outside sources. Students should consider how the seminar has changed their perception of community information work and how they plan to use the knowledge and insight they have gained from the seminar. Students are also encouraged to suggest additional topics of exploration for future 575 seminars.

A NOTE ON THE READINGS: Some of the readings we assign to you are provided as background material to introduce to you to a speaker and their work prior to their presentation. This is to introduce you to their activities and work and to encourage student questions at the end of the speaker's presentation. Please familiarize yourself with these readings before the speaker's presentation. Please see the "Background Readings" folder in the Ctools site.

Academic Integrity:

Unless otherwise specified in an assignment, all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. Any violation of the School's policy on Academic and Professional Integrity (stated in the Master's and Doctoral Student Handbooks) will result in severe penalties, which might range from failing an assignment, to failing a course, to being expelled from the program, at the discretion of the instructor and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Please see the Rackham Graduate School's Policy on Academic and Professional Integrity and Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Academic & Professional Misconduct at: <http://www.rackham.umich.edu/policies/gsh/appb/>

Students with Disabilities:

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let Dan Atkins know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way we teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make Dan Atkins aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; <http://www.umich.edu/sswd/>) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. He will treat any information you provide as private and confidential.

Weekly Schedule:

Friday, September 11th:

Short introductions to faculty doing social impact work across SI specializations, facilitated by Dan Atkins. Group leader assignments will be held at the end of class if time allows.

Topics to be addressed and SI professors to speak:

1. Information and Development

- Steve Jackson
- Michael Cohen

2. Community Inquiry: Methods, Ethics, and Evaluation

- Joan Durrance
- Tiffany Veinot

3. Information Movements, Openness, and Social Change

- Paul Resnick
- Mick McQuaid

4. Organizations and Institutions

- Elizabeth Yakel
- Paul Edwards

Friday, September 18th:

CIC Project: Developing the President's Higher Education Technology Policy and Associated Research Agenda

Dan Atkins available through teleconferencing

Friday, September 25th:

CIC Project: Developing the President's Higher Education Technology Policy and Associated Research Agenda

Assignment: DRAFT OF PRESIDENTIAL STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS SENTENCE AND KEY POINTS FOR THIRTY MINUTES WITH THE PRESIDENT DUE BEFORE CLASS (1-2 PAGES TEXT, SINGLE SPACED)

Friday, October 2nd:

Information Movements, Openness, and Social Change

Speaker: Dr. Keith Hampton, Penn School of Communications

Moderator: Steven Jackson

Keith N. Hampton is an Assistant Professor in the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. He received his PhD and MA from the University of Toronto in sociology, and a BA in sociology from the University of Calgary. His research interests focus on the relationship between information and communication technologies, social networks, and the urban environment (<http://www.mysocialnetwork.net/>).

Friday, October 9th:

Discussion session: Please see the CIC website for posted blog questions and topics to discuss.

Moderator: Steven Jackson

Friday, October 16th:

Organizations and Institutions

MIX co-sponsored Panel: "The Diversity Difference: Providing Information Services to Diverse Audiences"

Speakers:

- Terry Soave, Ann Arbor District Library, Manager of Outreach and Neighborhood Services
- Eli Neiburger, Ann Arbor District Library, Associate Director of IT & Product Development
- Lucy Roehrig, Ann Arbor District Library, Access & User Services Librarian -selector for the World Languages collection
- Vivanne Schnitzer-Hendrickson, University of Michigan Hispanic Communications Manager

Friday, October 23rd:

Community Inquiry: Methods, Ethics, and Evaluation

Speaker: Dr. Tim Rogers, Director of Knowledge Exchange for the Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE)

Moderator: Tiffany Veinot

CATIE champions and supports innovation and excellence in knowledge exchange for the prevention of HIV transmission, and the care, treatment and support of people with HIV by:

- collaborating with and building the capacity of front line organizations to use knowledge effectively to respond to the HIV epidemic;
- supporting and connecting people with HIV, other individuals, and organizations to develop, synthesize, share and apply HIV knowledge;
- acting as a central contact point for the flow of comprehensive, accurate, unbiased, timely and accessible HIV information and community-based knowledge.

See also: <http://www.catie.ca/eng/AboutCATIE/AboutCATIEIndex.shtml>

Friday, October 30th:

CIC Project: Student Presentations on Developing the President's Higher Education Technology Policy and Associated Research Agenda

Moderator: Dan Atkins

Assignment: PRESIDENTIAL STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS SENTENCE AND KEY POINTS FOR THIRTY MINUTES WITH THE PRESIDENT DUE THURSDAY, OCT 29 at 5:30 PM. PLEASE READ OTHER STUDENT SUBMISSIONS BEFORE THIS CLASS (1-2 PAGES TEXT, SINGLE SPACED)

Friday, November 6th:

Information Movements, Openness, and Social Change

Speaker: Liz Keith LawHelp Program Manager

Moderator: Dan Atkins

Liz joined Pro Bono Net in December 2004, working first as a LawHelp Circuit Rider and now as the LawHelp Program Manager. She received a self-tailored master's degree in community informatics from the University of Michigan School of Information, where she was a consultant to community information projects for the Digital Partners Social Enterprise Laboratory and the Alliance for Community Technology in Haiti and Chile. Prior to graduate school, Liz served as Director of Communications and Development at the Maine Women's Policy Center. She lives in the San Francisco Bay area. (<http://www.probono.net/about/item.pbn-staff>)

Friday, November 13th:

Infrastructure, Openness, and Social Change

Speaker: Kerry McNamara, Scholar-in-Residence at the School of Communication at American University

Moderator: Steve Jackson

Kerry McNamara is a Scholar-in-Residence at the School of Communication at American University in Washington D.C. Being an expert on the impact of information and communication technologies on economic and social development and poverty reduction, he served from January 2004 to January 2008 as chief knowledge officer of the Information for Development Program (infoDev), a public multi-donor research and advisory facility on technology and development at the World Bank. He led infoDev's work on mainstreaming new technologies in core development sectors (such as education, health, rural development and governance). From 2004 to 2006 he also managed infoDev's program of grants and technical assistance to technology business incubators in 10 African countries.

Previously, at the World Bank Institute, he was a principal architect of several innovative programmes focused on the impact of information, communication and knowledge on poverty and development, including the Global Knowledge Partnership and the Development Forum, the World Bank's first public online discussion facility. He also served on the expert Secretariat of

the Digital Opportunity Task Force (DOT Force) convened by the G8 Heads of State in 2000-2001. In 2001 he was invited by the UK Government's Department for International Development to serve as the external member of a small team that developed DFID's strategy paper on "The Significance of Information and Communication Technologies for Reducing Poverty". (<http://www.iicd.org/about/organisation/profiles-members-of-international-advisory-board>)

Friday, November 20th:

Discussion Section: Please see the CIC website for posted blog questions and topics to discuss.

*****No Seminar Friday, November 27th*****

Friday, December 4th:

Information and Development

Speaker: Kate Williams, Assistant Professor, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

Moderator: Joan Durrance

Kate Williams is an assistant professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign Graduate School of Library and Information Science and a graduate of the School of Information at the University of Michigan. Her research interests focus on the relationship between social networks, social capital, and the use of information and communications technology, particularly ICT use in low-income communities and public computing (<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~katewill/>). She is also the co-chair of eChicago, a multidisciplinary conference that brings in multiple stakeholders in the Chicagoland area to discuss and address issues of information technology and its use in diverse populations (<http://www.echicago.illinois.edu/>).

Friday, December 11th:

(Dan Atkins not present)

Seminar wrap-up: reflective papers due, discussion and reflections on seminar and course evaluations.

Steve Jackson will lead the students in a discussion about the "Information, Development and Social Change Programs in Information Schools" created by Lisa McLaughlin in 2009 and a review of the course and take suggestions for future developments.