Instructor
Assistant Professor Kate Williams
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Office hours 12-1 Thursdays and 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 and assignments
1. DIGITAL DIVIDE LECTURE SERIES: Weekly 11-11:50 September 12-December 5 except Thanksgiving week, Digital Divide Lecture Series with guest speakers. Interested in making a connection to a professional (think jobseeking) or getting on the lecture video to show your family and friends what you’re up to in grad school? Sign up to INTRODUCE a speaker. The lectures are online at http://groups.lis.illinois.edu/cilab/DigitalDivide.html

2. LEADING DISCUSSION. Each student will lead discussion of a reading by identifying three key passages and supplying an drawing/diagram/chart/table about or from the reading and three discussion questions, all on one sheet of paper. Those of you who are looking for a more structured way to participate in class discussion can sign up more than once.

3. CYBERNAVIGATING. Each student will volunteer as a CyberNavigator at Douglass Public Library, Clark Lindsey Village, Urbana Free Library, or some another local institution. 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 help build a localwiki for Champaign-Urbana. It is already launched at http://cuwiki.net. We will plan this together starting week 2. Plan four hours a week for this and cyberorganizing. Also see the assignment instructions.
5. FINAL REFLECTION PAPER. This five page single spaced essay uses ideas from at least three course readings (and anything else you choose) to reflect on and analyze your experience in the field practicing cyberorganizing and cybernavigating. 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, just don’t use them to cut corners on the five page length. Attach as two appendices 1) your field notes from CyberNavigating and 2) a description of what you did for cyberorganizing.

6. ACTIVE LEARNING. 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,” in the course reading collection online.

Texts

Other readings will be available online.

Bring readings to class to refer to. Use the affordances of both paper and computer.

Grading
You will be graded on your active participation in class making use of the literature (this includes presenting on articles and for some introducing a speaker; 20%), your cybernavigating and cyberorganizing (60%), and your final reflection paper (20%).

Schedule
August 29. Getting started; Cybernavigating

September 5. Cyberorganizing


View: Philip Neustrom “Edit your city: Collaborative media in the 21st century” (video and slides) presentation at eChicago 2012. Available at [http://echicago.illinois.edu](http://echicago.illinois.edu) (click on events, find 2012).

Check out: [http://localwiki.org/faq](http://localwiki.org/faq) and [http://cuwiki.net](http://cuwiki.net).

**September 12. What is community informatics**

Read:  *CI in China and the US,* Chapter 8: Williams and Durrance, Community Informatics.  
*CI in China and the US,* Chapter 13: Chen. Informatics of Happiness.

**September 19. Community as history**


**September 26. Community as network**

Read:  *CI in China and the US,* Chapter 1: Wellman and Leighton. Networks, Neighborhoods and Communities.  

**October 3. Community in inforev 1: the Digital Divide**


**October 10. No class**

**October 17. Community in inforev 2: Manuel Castells**

Read:  *CI in China and the US,* Chapter 3: Castells. Dual City.  
*CI in China and the US,* Chapter 4: Castells. Grassrooting.

**October 24. Key theories of the information society**

*CI in China and the US,* Chapter 5: Lévy. Collective Intelligence.
October 31. Virtuality: Early experiments

November 7. Public computing: The place, people, tools
Read: Jack Qiu, Working Class Network Society, Chapter 2 Internet Cafés.

November 14. Public computing: Lessons about literacy

November 21. Cyberpower: Making a difference

No class, Thanksgiving break week

December 5. The Illinois model
Read: CI in China and the US, Chapter 9: Alkalimat and Williams. Social capital and cyberpower.
Lenstra, Noah. Reading TBD