

LIS 630 - Community Engagement

librarian.net/tools/lis630

Instructor: Jessamyn West

Semester/Year: Spring 2018 (Jan - May)

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Office Hours: by arrangement (email/Skype/phone/Slack)

Time Zone: EST (five hours later than HI - OK to email/text any time)

KOKUA Program

If you need reasonable accommodations because of the impact of a disability, please contact the Kokua Program to register; they are located in the Queen Center for Student Services. Let me know your needs related to your documented disability within the first week of the semester and we'll work together to find ways to make the class work for you.

Course Description

This course explores how information professionals in libraries and other settings collaborate with community members and organizations. We also explore online communities and differences in engagement strategies between online and offline communities. Provides an overview of theory and practice emphasizing critical analysis of policies, services and trends.

Community engagement requires efficient and effective communication about issues that affect libraries, as well as analysis to come up with appropriate responses to those issues. This analysis combines original research, synthesis of existing research, opinion canvassing, and speaking to local and broader-based stakeholders. All of this information must be collated and presented in ways that make a strong case for the desired result.

This course will examine techniques for doing, communicating, and presenting this sort of research to support a particular population, library program, or social issue. Students will learn to use online tools to collect and display data and to interleave statistics and storytelling to provide a compelling case for support of their chosen topic. They will also learn an overview of community engagement techniques and strategies for both online and offline communities.

Sample topics can include the digital divide, early childhood education, makerspaces in libraries, copyright reform, the library bill of rights or other topics of the students' choosing.

Course Objectives

Students taking this class will learn to

- Select and support an engagement campaign.
- Prepare written responses to engagement campaigns.
- Participate in a few specific online community projects.
- Evaluate and assess existing advocacy and engagement campaigns.
- Collect and evaluate statistics and other quantitative data in their topic area.
- Select and utilize traditional and "new" media to support engagement efforts .
- Assess well- and poorly-designed print materials.
- Create and present an engagement campaign for a chosen topic.

Recommended Readings

Text for this class is selections from the first edition of David Lankes' *Expect More*, which is available in the Readings section of the course website. Other readings will be from current professional periodicals, websites, and other resources. A list of these will be provided at the beginning of class and will expand as the course progresses.

Teaching Methods & Locations

This course does not use Lulima.

- Course is a 14 week course (one break week, one finals week) with weeks alternating between reading/writing and fieldwork/discussion weeks.
- Short videos will kick off each week, available by noon HAST Mondays. Links for assignments and readings will be emailed to you, will be on the syllabus, and will be made available in Slack.
- Class discussions will take place in the class Slack channel at <jessamyn.slack.com> You will all be sent invites on the first day of class; part of the first week is learning to use this tool, so don't be concerned if you are not familiar with it.
- Students will be assigned field observation/research assignments and will be expected to report back on their findings.
- Students will write short response essays on weekly topics.
- Final project will be a full-fledged topic-based community engagement plan including print media, slide presentation, and social media campaign, all of which will be scaffolded in building blocks as the course progresses and presented at the end of the semester.
- Updates will be sent to all students via email. Please make sure I have accurate contact information for you and that you check your preferred email at least a few times during the week.

Please note: I am a distance lecturer at UH Mānoa teaching a single class. I welcome the opportunity to get to know each of you and help make this class function as well as possible, but I have limited time available outside of scheduled course times.

Research Methods

The following research methods are incorporated in assignments: Information retrieval, content analysis, ethnomethodology, evaluation research, critical and cultural analysis, and needs assessment.

Students will evaluate engagement campaigns currently working, get an overview of engagement campaigns as well as the individual pieces that make up community engagement. We'll be reading the comments, and making some of our own!

Assignments

Class updates, resources, and assignments are on the website for the course. Written assignments should be proofread and spellchecked. Slack chats will be more informal. Your final grade is calculated as follows:

- Weekly assignments for 14 weeks (one break week, one final week) which will be either reading responses or topic-focused. Writing responses to assigned readings will be short and informal. Data-gathering assignments will be crafted to the week's theme. (55 points)
- Participating/leading discussions based on readings and bi-weekly theme topics. (20 points)
- Final Project: Ten-ish page Community Engagement Plan using provided template. This will be a specific engagement plan, can be for a library but does not need to be, which "makes a case" for a specific advocacy effort, community interaction or library program. Students are expected to work from their topic to present a packaged engagement strategy which includes a designed presentation and an associated paper. (25 points)

With the exception of the final project which is graded using a rubric, all other assignments are evaluated on a +/- basis where on-time, satisfactory work receives a +, late or partial work receives a 0, and missing work receives a -.

Course Schedule

Day of the Week Breakdown

- ❖ **Monday** - Weekly outline video/email available by noon, assignments given
- ❖ **Tuesday** - work on assignments, questions
- ❖ **Wednesday** - Slack discussions, reminder email by noon
- ❖ **Thursday** - writing assignments due end of day (midnight HST)
- ❖ **Friday** - grading and follow-up

Theme Breakdown

Please note: This is just a general outline. The current version of the syllabus will be on the class website. Refer to it for all assignments and readings.

Week 1 - Intros, setting up documents, Slack, library access, etc.

Week 2 - What is a community, definitions and examples and discussion

Week 3 - Choosing topics, define and narrow & looking at local community engagement

Week 4 - Community analysis. List generating: who is in the community?

Week 5 - List generating: social & stats. People & numbers. Who to follow.

Week 6 - Getting started with stories. Looking at how communities tell their stories

Week 7 - Stories, telling our own. How do stories work in libraries?

Week 8 - Numbers & stats. Collecting and presenting.

Week 9 - Social & visual. Numbers into UX and infographics.

Week 10 - BREAK - Research and reading week.

Week 11 - Design concerns. Accessibility and usability.

Week 12 - Crafting your community. Inclusion and diversity & effective engagement.

Week 13 - Topic pitch & how to influence and lay groundwork before you need it.

Week 14 - Final project drafts, peer evaluations and presentations

Week 15 - Revision and community feedback.

Week 16 - Grades and adjustments and evaluations.

Grading

Copied from UH's Academic Policies. Student achievement is designated by: A+, A, A- (high achievement), B+, B, B- (meets expectations), C+, C, C-, (below expectations), D+, D, D- (inadequate performance), F (failure), CR (credit), NC (no credit), NG (no grade and work in progress), S (satisfactory), and I (incomplete). L is the designation given to audited courses. Grades lower than C may not be used to fulfill requirements for advanced degrees.

Number grade to letter grade conversation is as follows: A grade in the top 30% gets a plus. A grade in the lower 30% gets a minus. So an 88 is a B+ and a 72 is a C-.

A 90 - 100 points

- B 80 - 89 points
- C 70 - 79 points
- D 60 - 69 points
- F less than 60 points

I will be happy to provide ongoing grade information for students who want it. Nothing in class is graded on a curve.

Technology Requirements

This class is designed to be accessible to anyone with access to a computer or mobile device that can run any current web browser and has a broadband internet connection fast enough to stream YouTube types of videos.

I will work with you to make sure you can interact technologically with the assignments and with the other students. Please let me know if you encounter difficulties.

UH Specific Information

Student Learning Outcomes

These specific Student Learning Outcomes will be the focus of this course.

SLO3 Resources: Create, organize, manage and discover information resources.

SLO5 Cultures: Analyze and apply knowledge about information needs and perspectives of indigenous cultures and/or diverse communities.

Student Expectations & Responsibilities

Students are responsible for both reading and following all university policies, including those on registration, attendance, plagiarism, etc. Please keep yourself informed!

[<hawaii.edu/lis/resources/professional-expectations/>](http://hawaii.edu/lis/resources/professional-expectations/)

Plagiarism will not be tolerated—cite all sources using standard formats. Using sources to inform your writing in this course is encouraged, copying others' words verbatim is not!

I look forward to working with you and learning with you.