

Tools for Community Advocacy

Instructor: Jessamyn West

Semester/Year: Summer 2016 (May 23 - July 1)

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:30 HST & Thursday 12:30-1:30 & 4:30-5:30 HST

Any other day by appointment (email/skype/phone/Slack)

Time Zone: EDT (five hours later than HST)

Course website: <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~jess3000/>

Course Description

Community advocacy requires efficient and effective communication about issues that affect libraries. This 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. 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 advocacy topic
- Prepare written responses to advocacy topics
- Evaluate and assess existing advocacy campaigns
- Collect and evaluate statistics and other quantitative data in their topic area
- Select and utilize traditional and "new" media to support advocacy efforts
- Assess well- and poorly-designed print materials
- Create an advocacy campaign for a chosen topic

Recommended Readings

Text for this class is the first edition of David Lankes' *Expect More*, which you can get 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

- Short videos will kick off each week, available by noon HST Mondays. Links will be emailed to you 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).
- Class resource list-generating will take place inside of Lulima using the **Wiki** tool.
- Updates will be sent to all students **via email**. Please make sure I have accurate contact information for you and that you check your student email at least daily.

Research Methods

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

Assignments

Class updates, resources, and assignments are on the website for the course. See Grading section for specifics about grades. Written assignments are expected to be proofread and spell checked. Slack chats can be more informal. Percentage of your grade is as follows:

1. Weekly **Write** assignments (20%)
2. **Final Project** proposal & approval (10%)
3. Weekly **Make/Research** assignments as outlined on the course page (20%)
4. Taking turns leading and participating in **Share** discussions based on readings and weekly theme topics. Participation means at least 2-3 substantive comments in each topic channel. (20%)
5. **Final Project**: Community Advocacy Plan using plan template to be provided in Week 3 (30%)

Course Schedule - Day of the Week Breakdown

- ❖ **Monday** - weekly outline video up by noon, reading assignments given
- ❖ **Tuesday** - discussion time
- ❖ **Wednesday** - research assignments due
- ❖ **Thursday** - discussion time
- ❖ **Friday** - writing assignments due (except for Week 3)

Course Schedule - Theme Breakdown

Please note: the current version of the syllabus is the one on the class website. Refer to it for all assignments and readings.

Week 1 - Intros, outlines, choosing topics

- Make - Skype introductions with me.

- Research - Learn and practice Slack.
- Read - ALA OLOS Outreach Issue Briefs, *The Political Librarian* Volume 2 (each person will be assigned a chapter for discussion)
- Write - What brings you to this topic? Do you have an interest area you are passionate about?
- Share - Introductions and interactions with other students in the Slack channel. Social media survey.

Week 2 - Research

- Make - Bibliography of key writers/agencies and their publications about your topic using the provided template.
- Research - Locate people and groups working on your interest area.
- Read - *"If it is too inconvenient I'm not going after it" Convenience as a critical factor in information-seeking behaviors & The Convenience Factor in Information Seeking*
- Write - How is Googling different from finding information in a library? Is it different for you as a (burgeoning) information professional?
- Share - How was it getting access to those two documents? Let's discuss how the library worked for you?

Week 3 - Assembling Data

- Make - A list of useful statistics about your own topic, shared with the class
- Research - Pew Research Center Reports
- Read - How to Talk Back to a Statistic (Chapter Ten of *How to Lie with Statistics*)
- Write - Think of a notable statistic that you remember. It could be one you heard recently. Explain the effect it's had on your thinking about that topic.
- Share - TBD

Week 4 - Telling stories

- Make - Create a profile of someone affected by your topic area.
- Research - Generate a list of "This is so-and-so..." pages from non-profits, libraries and other do-gooder organizations to use as models for the Make assignment.
- Read - Journey maps and customer hacks: redesigning services at the State Library Victoria, this comment about a digitally divided public library user, on MetaFilter
- Write - Everyone has their "Why I decided to go to library school" story. I'd like to hear yours.
- Share - Elevator pitches, let's talk about your topic in 30 words or less!

Week 5 - Social Media & Design

- Make - Infographic about your topic including facts, illustrations AND citations
- Research - Social media approaches, good bad and ugly.
- Read - Buzzfeed on Snapchat, How to Create Infographics (and resource list) by Library Research Service
- Write - Tell me about a non-human you have interacted with on social media and the positive and negative aspects of that interaction.
- Share - Let's look at UH databases and compare/contrast/critique their user interfaces

Week 6 - Finishing Touches, Peer Review & Evaluation

- Make - Final Project Due - based on template provided in Week Three.
- Research - TBD
- Read - Other students' projects
- Write - Course evaluation.
- Share - Give other students feedback on their final projects.

Grading

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 that can run any current web browser and has a broadband internet connection. I will work with you to make sure you can interact technologically with the assignments and the other students.

UH-Specific Information

Student Learning Outcomes

These are the SLOs that will be the focus of this course.

SLO 1: Understand, apply and articulate the history, philosophy, principles and ethics of library and information science and the related professions.

- 1c) Develop and apply critical thinking skills in preparation for professional practice
- 1d) Craft and articulate a professional identity

SLO 2: Develop, administrate, assess, and advocate for information services by exercising principled communication, teamwork and leadership skills.

- 2d) Create instructional and outreach programs
- 2e) Demonstrate the ability to advocate effectively for information services

SLO 3: Organize, create, archive, preserve, retrieve, manage, evaluate, and disseminate information resources in a variety of formats.

- 3c) Search, retrieve and synthesize information from a variety of systems and sources

SLO 4: Evaluate and use the latest information technologies, research findings and methods.

- 4b) Integrate emerging technologies into professional practice
- 4c) Apply current research findings to professional practice

SLO 5: Engage in projects and assignments dealing with multicultural communities and representing diverse points of view.

- 5a) Communicate and collaborate with diverse colleagues, information seekers and community stakeholders
- 5b) Demonstrate understanding of the social, cultural, political, and economic context of information services and systems

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. Please let me know your status and needs related to your documented disability within the first week of the semester and I'll be happy to work with you to find suitable accommodations.

<http://www.hawaii.edu/kokua/about.htm>

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!

<http://www.hawaii.edu/lis/students/professional-expectations-notice>

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!