

I ILLINOIS

School of Information Sciences

IS 594 Community Data Spring 2022

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This syllabus may be obtained in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the instructor.

Course Information

4 Credit hours
Thursdays 2-3:50p
Online

Instructor Information

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Canvas Site: <https://canvas.illinois.edu/courses/17530/pages/welcome-to-is594>

Course Description

The ongoing crisis of the pandemic has exposed numerous vulnerabilities inherent in the technological and political infrastructures in cities and towns. In response to many societal challenges faced by communities, emerging regimes of AI-driven surveillance and knowledge systems have claimed to make various urban problems governable in new ways. In the wake of national reports that demonstrate rising gun violence, many local communities have considered turning to technological solutions – including Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR) and other digital monitoring and surveillance systems – designed to enhance the capacity of law enforcement to respond, but that have also been critiqued for increasing risks of racial discrimination and erroneous profiling of citizens.

For the Spring 2022, this lab-based seminar and class will explore terms and methods to critically examine the claims about data-driven technologies that have been projected as “solutions” to community problems. We’ll engage new methods and models of community data to diversify and historicize the conditions in which such forms of technological solutionism arise. These tools will enhance students’ ability to interrogate data and discern how data are used to inform civic decision making, public policy, community engagement, and the design of infrastructures for public participation. Key to the course will be engagement with distinct civic sectors involved in designing local programs to build skills in collecting, assessing, evaluating and communicating insights drawn from diverse forms of data.

The course will involve reading discussions, research and data collection, and a final project in collaboration with the City of Urbana. We will begin with the introduction of inter-

disciplinary literatures to examine mixed methods in data analysis and communication, critical information studies, science and technology studies, and communications and media studies. Students will use these methods to compile data resources on various case studies from local regions that have demonstrated measurable successes in developing such community-run models. Toward the end of the course, students will communicate their research with the local stakeholders and present their findings in a form of a white paper. Throughout this course, students will share an explicit objective of assessing, collecting, and curating data for building sustainable infrastructures for accountability and community relationships.

Pre- and Co-requisites

None.

Student Learning Outcomes

This seminar consists of four inter-linked units — Introduction, Research, Analysis, Presentation — that build on top of one another to guide you through the development of a semester-long research project. The main objective of our course is to develop case studies on several local regions that have demonstrated measurable successes in developing community-run models for combatting gun-violence. Such projects have involved bridging collaborations between health and social service agents, law enforcement, civic organization networks, and community leaders. Research for this project will involve compiling data resources around individual cities' projects, and outreach to/data collection with individuals representing distinct sectors involved in such collaborations to assess the unique roles developed for each sector, and that have allowed collaborations to build sustainability and grow relationships across the network.

Throughout the course, students will be able to:

- Practice basic ethnographic and qualitative approaches to identifying and researching community-based data, such as interviews, observations, and media analysis;
- Learn analytical frameworks to theorize the broader context within which data-driven solutions for gun violence are embedded;
- Use evidence-based strategies to create support for our community (data for public good);
- Leverage skills in research, analysis, and communication to make a real-world impact at a local governance level.

Course materials

All required reading and viewing materials will be provided on our Canvas website, except for the title below:

Lareau, A. (2021). *Listening to People: A Practical Guide to Interviewing, Participant Observation, Data Analysis, and Writing It All Up*. University of Chicago Press.

Please note that due to the experimental nature of the seminar that co-evolves with the progress of our project, the assigned readings are subject to change.

Course Structure

We'll engage both synchronous and asynchronous activities:

- Asynchronous

You'll complete readings, screenings, and listening exercises on your own time.

You'll complete individual assignments on your own time.

You'll occasionally be asked to use our Canvas site to engage in asynchronous discussions.

- Synchronous

Most weeks we'll meet as a full group on Zoom during our officially scheduled class time. But because two hours is a long time on Zoom, we'll break our class into multiple sessions with breaks in-between. We'll typically start with students' progress report on the project, then engage in lecture/reading discussion, and end with a hands-on workshop.

Assignments and Methods of Assessment

Grade breakdown

Project proposal memo (due by Feb 16 th)	10%
Weekly assignments (due by midnight before our class)	35 %
Discussion lead/kickoff	10%
Final paper (due by April 27 th)	25%
Participation	20%

Project proposal memo

From the very beginning of the semester, you will be thinking about a city or a town in the US to focus on as your primary project site. What you are looking for is a city or a town that has demonstrated relative success with implementing community-driven models to combat gun-violence. The proposal memo (1-2 pages in length) requires that you do further readings and investigations into as many relevant sources as possible to identify the city/town, key stakeholders, and research their history and background with gun violence. The memo will describe the project's rationale, approach, and tentative schedule for the research project that will eventually turn into your final paper.

Weekly assignments

Weekly readings will be posted to our Canvas site. The assignments will entail reading reactions that briefly (1 single-spaced page) identify key terms, arguments, themes, or methods that would be useful for your project. You are encouraged to use any related visual or audio materials. No incompletes/makeups are assigned. Weekly assignments will also entail varied forms of qualitative data collection, interview protocols, notes on conversations with the local spokespeople, and journal/news article surveys. These write-ups can make connections to current events, links to other archives or digital media, and should aim to extend insights and questions that emerged from the readings assigned for that week.

Discussion lead/kick-off

Once during the semester, you will lead discussion of one of the assigned readings. You will prepare a ten-minute presentation walking us through the summary of the paper, author's framing of the issue, your individual curiosity about the topic, how it informs our project, or any further points worthy of our discussion. Prepare a few slides or any other visual aids to share with the class. Feel free to add up to 2 articles for us read.

Final paper and presentation

You will write a carefully researched final paper of about 5 - 10 pages due by late April. It is not a conventional academic paper but a "white paper" that presents an evidence-based case study on an alternative, community-driven model to prevent gun violence. If you completed previous assignments (proposal memo, weekly assignments, and interviews), this will not be very difficult thing to do, as it synthesizes all the works you have previously done. More guidelines and templates for the paper will be provided later in the semester during class. Toward the end of the semester, we will practice your final presentation informally as a group to exchange feedbacks. The final in-class presentation will be about 10 minutes in length and delivered in such a way that it is interesting and accessible to our community groups beyond our campus, integrating a clear and well-defined audience and sets of goals in mind.

Note: In addition to the regularly scheduled class session, you will participate in one Urbana Council Meeting during the final week (either **2nd or 3rd Monday of May, in the evening at 7PM**). In the meeting, you will present a shorter version of your final project (of about 3 to 5 mins) to our local community leaders. More concrete information about this meeting will also be provided in class.

Participation

Due to the collaborative nature of the course, your active participation is absolutely necessary — our class's success depends on it! Your timely arrival at our synchronous meeting is appreciated. To actively "participate" in class means you read the assigned readings actively, take notes, ask questions, and form opinions. Listen to the experiences and perspectives of your colleagues and share your own. All members of this class are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive class environment. It is important to engage with the new perspectives, listen to and respect one another, even if we disagree. Also, remember to keep confidential all issues of personal or professional nature that are discussed in class.

Please turn off your cell phones or set them to quiet mode during our synchronous class time.

Statement of Inclusion

As the state's premier public university, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's core mission is to serve the interests of the diverse people of the state of Illinois and beyond. The institution thus values inclusion and a pluralistic learning and research environment, one which we respect the varied perspectives and lived experiences of a diverse community and global workforce. We support diversity of worldviews, histories, and cultural knowledge across a range of social groups including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, abilities, economic class, religion, and their intersections.

Accessibility Statement

To ensure disability-related concerns are properly addressed from the beginning of the semester, I request that students with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this class contact me as soon as possible to discuss your needs and any concerns you may have. The University of Illinois may be able to provide additional resources to assist you in your studies through the office of Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES). This office can assist you with disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids. Please contact them as soon as possible by visiting the office in person: 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign; visiting the website: <http://disability.illinois.edu>; calling (217) 333-4603 (V/TTY); or via e-mail disability@illinois.edu. NOTE: I do not require a letter from DRES in order to discuss your requested accommodations.

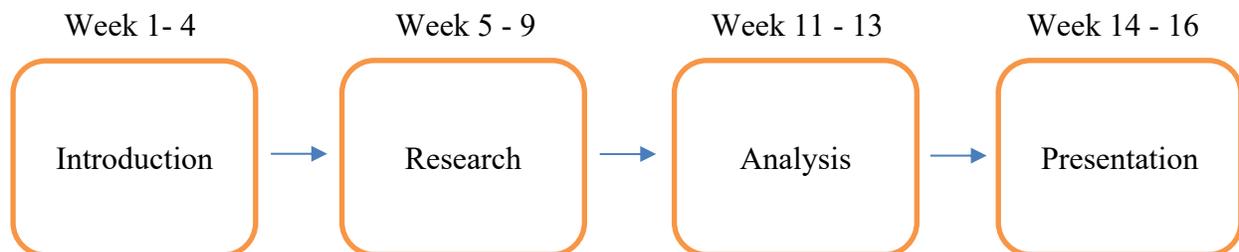
Land acknowledgement Statement

We would like to begin today by recognizing and acknowledging that we are on the lands of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands were the traditional territory of these Native Nations prior to their forced removal; these lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

As a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution for the past 150 years. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward for the next 150 years.

Week-by-Week Topic and Assignment Schedule

This course overall consists of four units (Introduction, Research, Analysis, Presentation). Each of the unit is integral for the completion of our semester-long project and the weekly assignments are designed to be compiled later for the final paper. In the first half of the semester toward Spring break, the class will be dedicated to reading modules, discussions, and individual student implementing their research projects. The second half of the semester is structured around development of case studies and presentation strategies for our community groups.



[Unit 1]

Introduction

Week 1 (1/20) Introduction

Welcome

Course overview and project introduction

Supplementary resources:

- (Video) Urbana City Council's Meeting on Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) Technology (2021.09.20). (85 mins)
https://www.city.urbana.il.us/Scripts/CouncilVideo/Video.asp?v=/_Video/City_Council/2021/20210920/03_Gun_Violence_Investigation_Tools.mp4
- Smile Politely, On Building a Fence of Technology Around our Black and Brown Neighbors.
https://www.smilepolitely.com/opinion/on_building_a_fence_of_technology_around_our_black_and_brown_neighbors/
- Urbana Police Department ALPR Policy Draft
https://urbanaininois.us/sites/default/files/attachments/ALPRs__DRAFT%2010142021.pdf
- Flock Safety: <https://www.flocksafety.com>

Week 2 (1/27) Mixed Methods — History

- Halpern, O. Mitchell, R. & Geoghegan, B. D. (2017). The Smartness Mandate: Notes toward a Critique. *Grey Room* 68, 106-129.
- Mattern, S. (2015). Mission Control: A history of urban dashboards. *Places Journal*. March 2015. <https://placesjournal.org/article/mission-control-a-history-of-the-urban-dashboard/?cn-reloaded=1#0>

Supplementary resources

- (Video) Urban City Town Hall Meeting on ALPR (2021.10.28). (Watch the Q&A from around 00:45:00 to 1:07:00). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqXJxIXZFbQ>
- Giffords Law Center. (2019). *A Case Study in Hope: Lessons from Oakland's Remarkable Reduction in Gun Violence*. <https://giffords.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Giffords-Law-Center-A-Case-Study-in-Hope.pdf>

Assignment: Reading notes.

Week 3 (2/3) Mixed Methods — Ethnography

- Low, S. (2003). *Behind the Gates: Life, Security, and the Pursuit of Happiness in Fortress America*. Routledge. Chapter 1 & 5.
- Lareau, A. (2021). *Listening to People*. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1 & 2.

- Stakeholder identification

Supplemental Resources

- (Video) Urbana City Council's Meeting on Public Safety Evaluation (2021.11.15). (17 mins)
https://www.city.urbana.il.us/Scripts/CouncilVideo/Video.asp?v=/_Video/City_Council/2021/20211115/02_Public_Safety_Evaluation.mp4
- US Department of Labor, Adult and Youth Workforce Development Program's Role in Supporting Community Violence Interventions (see page 14-16).
https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_18-21.pdf

Assignment: Reading notes.

Week 4 (2/10) Mixed Methods — Discourse Analysis

- Packer, J. (2008). *Mobility Without Mayhem*. Duke University Press. Selections.
- (Video) The Mean World Syndrome: Media Violence & the Cultivation of Fear. Media Education Foundation. (51 mins). Available through UI Catalog. https://i-share-uiu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma99650476812205899&context=L&vid=01CARLI_UIU:CARLI_UIU&lang=en&search_scope=MyInstitution&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=LibraryCatalog&query=any,contains,mean%20world%20syndrome&offset=0.
- Visits from Urbana City Council

Supplemental Resources

- Advance Peace: <https://www.advancepeace.org/about/learning-evaluation-impact/>
- Annie E. Casey Foundation (2015). Creating Safer Communities: Lessons on Violence Prevention. <https://www.aecf.org/blog/creating-safer-communities-lessons-on-violence-prevention>
- Matsakis, L. (2019). Flock Safety says its license plate readers reduce crime. It's not that simple. *Wired Magazine*. <https://www.wired.com/story/flock-safety-license-plate-readers-crime/>

Assignment: Reading notes, Project proposal memo

[Unit 2] Research

Week 5 (2/17) Surveillance, Risk, and the City

- Gates, K. (2010). The Tampa “Smart CCTV” Experiment. *Culture Unbound*. 2, 67-89.
- Lareau, A. (2021). *Listening to People*. Chapter 3 & 4.
- Visits from Urbana City Council

Supplementary resources

- Foucault, M. (2007). *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France 1977-1978* (G. Burchell, Trans. M. Senellart Ed.): Picador. Selections.
- Atlas of Surveillance.
<https://atlasofsurveillance.org/search?location=&page=3&technologies%5B%5D=85>

Assignment: Reading notes.

Background research on the city and the organization.

Draft interview questions.

Week 6 (2/24) Intermission – no class this week

- (Video) *They Ain't Ready For Me*. Menemsha Films. Available through Kanopy.
<https://illinois.kanopy.com/video/they-aint-ready-me>
- Write up interview questions and send interview requests.

Week 7 (3/3) CPTED: Environment/Security

- Rentschler, C. (2003). Designing Fear: How environmental security protects property at the expense of people. In Bratich, J., Packer, J., & McCarthy, C. (Eds.). *Foucault, Cultural Studies, and Governmentality*. SUNY Press.
- Cozens, P. M., Saville, G. And Hillier, D. (2005). Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): A Review and Modern Bibliography. *Journal of Property Management*. 23(5), 328-356. *recommended from Urbana police department

Supplementary resources

- LAPD, Design Out Crime. <https://www.lapdonline.org/design-out-crime/>

Assignment: Reading notes.

Week 8 (3/10) Security and Circulation

- Gilmore, J. & Durant, M. (2021). Emergency Infrastructure and Locational Extraction: Problematizing Computer Assisted Dispatch Systems as Public Good. *Surveillance and Society* 19(2), 187-198.
- Adey, P. (2009). Facing Airport Security: Affect, Biopolitics, and the Preemptive Securitisation of the Mobile Body. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27, 274-295.

Assignment: Reading notes. Schedule and conduct interviews.

Week 9 Spring Break

Week 10 (3/24) Violence as Public Health Problem

- Mol, A. (2006). *The Logic of Care: Health and the Problem of Patient Choice*. Routledge. Chapter 1 & 2.
- (Video) Curbing gun violence: strategies for change, Harvard University School of Public Health. (61 mins). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=35lcFUKoQX8>

Supplementary resources

- Annie Casey Foundation, Preventing Gun Violence with a Public Health Approach. <https://www.aecf.org/blog/preventing-gun-violence-with-public-health-approach> — Atlanta and Milwaukee

Assignment: Conduct and transcribe interviews. Report back.

Week 11 (3/31) Safe Spaces: Education and Art-based Interventions

- Weis, L. & Dimitriadis, G. (2008). Dueling Banjos: Shifting economic and cultural contexts in the lives of youth. *Teachers College Record*, 110(10), 2290-2316.
- Dell’Aria, A. (2020). Loaded Objects: Addressing gun violence through art in the gallery and beyond. *Palgrave Communications* 6, 15(2020). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-020-0391-x>

Supplementary resources

- DuBois, R. L. (2016). Insightful human portraits made from data. TED Talk. https://www.ted.com/talks/r_luke_dubois_insightful_human_portraits_made_from_data
- Clifton, B., Lavigne, S., & Tseng, F. (2017). White Collar Crime Risk Zones. *The New Inquiry Magazine*. <https://whitecollar.thenewinquiry.com/>
- Williams, L. (2020) Escaping Erasure. <http://www.williamslaurenm.com/escaping-erasure>

Assignment: Conduct interviews, transcription reports.

[Unit 3] Analysis

Week 12 (4/7) Accounting for Diverse Stakeholders

- Young, M., Lagassa, L., & Friedman, B. (2019). Toward inclusive tech policy design: A method for underrepresented voices to strengthen tech policy documents. *Ethics and Information Technology* 21, 89-103.

Assignment: Interviews and transcription complete.

Week 13 (4/14) Reflections on Ethics

- Asaro, P. (2019). AI Ethics in Predictive Policing: From models of threat to an ethics of care. *IEEE Technology and Society Magazine*. June 2019.
- Lareau, A. (2021). Listening to People. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 8 & 9. “Writing for/about/with the community”

Assignment: Reading notes. Interview analysis.

[Unit 4] Presentation**Week 14 (4/21) Presentation**

*Informal visits from the Community Data Clinic and Urbana City Council

Week 15 (4/28) Presentation

*Informal visits from the Community Data Clinic and Urbana City Council

Week 16

No class. Final paper due by May 1st.

Urban City Council Meeting on May 9th or 16th