

INF385T: Community Engagement and Service

DRAFT 1/10/2023

Course Information

Class day and time: Wednesdays 3:00-6:00 pm

Class location: PAR 306

Instructor Name: R. David Lankes

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Full Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with the ability to define and explore the concepts of community, community ownership, and community engagement; situate the library within the ecology of a community to identify existing and potential partners and inform the development of library programs and services; apply principles of message design, marketing, and public relations to the development of professional media and products for outreach and advocacy; and identify theories of interpersonal communication and how these apply to personal growth and the subsequent development of community relationships.

Prerequisites

None

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Define and explore the concepts of community, community ownership, and community engagement
2. Situate information organizations within the ecology of a community to identify existing and potential partners and inform the development of programs and services
3. Apply principles of message design, marketing, and public relations to the development of professional media and products for outreach and advocacy
4. Identify theories of interpersonal communication and how these apply to personal growth and the subsequent development of community relationships

Course Overview: A Unique Point in History

This course is preparing you for a central theme in librarianship: community. In this course we will explore the concept of community in different contexts (cities, colleges, schools, businesses) and how to connect and support that community. We will examine communities through a lens of power, politics, diversity, assessment, and outreach.

Our exploration will take three forms:

1. An examination of the core concepts of librarianship done through critical reading, review, and updating of *The Atlas of New Librarianship*
2. Project work throughout the semester focused on the Jarrell Community Library as a “teaching” library and authentic learning environment.
3. Case studies with experts in the field

The intersection of these forms is informed practice. An examination of not just the who and how of librarianship, but also the why.

As a beginning librarian you will take your most valuable asset – a fresh perspective – and use it to help in your first job, but also the field at large. The advance of librarianship is not simply transferring the work from scrolls to books to ebooks, but in shaping our institutions to meet our ultimate mission: improving society through facilitating knowledge creation in our communities.

Ebooks, buildings, and databases are simply tools to help us make our communities smarter, and helping community members (students, janitors, faculty, principals, lawyers, doctors, children) find meaning in their lives. This class is as much about what that mission means as it is about the means of carrying out the mission.

This course changes a lot from semester to semester, because while it is always about libraries serving communities (be those cities, or colleges, or schools) the great variety of the forms of libraries is vast. However, just because this semester we are focusing our project work on one small rural library, the content of the readings and case studies will link what we learn in Jarrell to all sorts of library types.

So why a rural library in Texas this semester? You are going to see (and hopefully aid) a library seeking sustainability in a time of attacks on libraries and core concepts like intellectual freedom. Where a large urban library fights for budgets in a city bureaucracy, and a university library seeks support to meet the needs of faculty and students, rural libraries are fighting against things like book banning and out of date concepts of what a library is every day- person to person – neighbor by neighbor.

Form 1: Core Concepts of Librarianship Through Critical Reading

A thoughtful practitioner is one whose practice is informed by theory and deeper understanding of the field. Often times these concepts are broad and nebulous. Rather

than spending the semester exploring these ideas through lectures or discussion, we will examine the ideas through text, and then through changing practice in our semester long case study of Jarrell Community Library.

I wrote *The Atlas of New Librarianship* in 2011. It was my attempt to explore what is a librarians defined outside of the context of a building. In essence, what is a librarian without a library. The text is expansive, and you will be reading it as we go through the semester. The text is provided free online. You are welcome to buy a physical copy, but it is not necessary: <https://davidlankes.org/new-librarianship/the-atlas-of-new-librarianship-online/>

The text is now over a decade old, and while the concepts hold up, it could use a refresh. One of your assignments is to critically read through the text and see how it could be more useful for today's librarians. There is also a chance to have your work show up in a published revised version at your discretion.

Required Textbook

Lankes, R. David (2011). *The Atlas of New Librarianship*. Cambridge, Ma: MIT Press

Supplemental Readings

Additional required readings will be available electronically via the Web, or Canvas.

Form 2: Project Work

Practice without theory is like setting sail without a map. Theory without practice is to never sail at all. This semester we will be learning about community engagement – centering library practice in the context of a community – through doing. We will form functional teams to examine and then transform the Jarrell Community Library.

Each class will be a project meeting where we work with the director of Jarrell and in-the-field practitioners to identify needs and opportunities in connecting the library with the community. Librarians from the Austin Public Library and the university library will be joining the class and working with teams to help provide reality and experience, as well as start your professional networks.

Each class will end with a list of tasks and projects to carry out. This work will be a series of ongoing projects, and class time will be where we report on progress, coordinate tasks, and determine new work. There will be some weeks with a lot of work, and some weeks with little.

These tasks will not be on an abstract system or community, but in Jarrell Texas. We will be able to get real impact data (did use of the web site increase? Did donations to operating costs increase? Did we get good attendance at a program?). While we will be working with a rural public library, we will use class time and project work to link these ideas to academic, school, urban, and special libraries. Most of the work in the first

third of course will be doing environmental scans and seeing what peer institutions are doing.

The anticipated teams will be:

- Web
- Sustainability
- Marketing
- Community Portal
- Programming
- Assessment

Note that all meetings and work will be in the classroom, and travel to Jarrell is not required.

Form 3: Case Studies

The goal is to make Jarrell a world class library. Which begs the question – what is a world class library? To answer that question, we will be inviting in outstanding librarians from around the world to find out. As the semester proceeds these visits will be less about listening, and more about inviting in experts to share their experience and ideas on the work we are doing.

Note that me also do a field trip or two during the semester (say to the university library and possibly the Austin Public Library). Students will be given ample notice and sites will be accessible by walking or public transportation. If you cannot make the site, please let the instructor know.

Course Requirements

This course is designed expecting that students will be putting approximately nine (9) hours per week toward mastery of the content, with additional hours in the weeks up until assignment submission. In this course there is an expectation that you will be engaged in reading/viewing/listening to course materials, reading/participating, planning, researching and completing assignments, and reflecting on your own learning.

This is only a guide. Students learn in different ways and at different rates and possess varied learning histories that influence the time required to engage with the learning and assessment activities associated with a subject.

Basic Technical Skills Needed

Basic technical skills are needed in this course. All work in this course must be completed and submitted online through Canvas. Therefore, you must have consistent and reliable access to a computer and the Internet. The minimal technical skills you have include the ability to:

- Organize and save electronic files;

- Use email and attached files;
- Check email and Canvas daily;
- Download and upload documents;
- Locate information with a browser;

Professionals in our field need to be willing to try new technology, so assignments may require you to explore new software and apps for presentations, discussion, and/or professional outputs. Take advantage of these opportunities to try new platforms. It will only be of benefit to you as a professional.

Course Assignments and Grading

General Assignment Information

- All coursework (assignments, exams, etc.) is secured in Canvas with a username and password.
- All assignments are due by the day and time indicated on the course schedule.

Thread Critical Reflections (5 points each – 6 Threads) 30 points

The Atlas of New Librarianship is divided into two main sections: Threads which are the narrative chapters; and Agreement Supplements that expand certain concepts into deeper dives (see the next assignment). For this assignment, you'll read each thread for a class discussion and then write a 2-5 page reaction to the thread. What parts do you agree with, what parts do you disagree, what parts need updating, what parts are confusing? **MUST BE COMPLETE BEFORE CLASS.**

Agreement Supplement 30 points

Each thread (chapter) of the Atlas is a collection of agreements. The second half of the book take some of the key agreements, and add details (a narrative description, conversations starters, and related artifacts/references). You will identify an agreement that has not been expanded yet, and write an agreement supplement of 8-10 pages (longer if you need the space). To see a model of this look for the "Sense-Making" agreement on page 372 of the Atlas.

Team "Bulletin Boards" 40 points

Walt Disney is credited with many things, but one of his creations gets little attention: management by walking around (MWA). At his studio teams working on projects (movies, rides, technologies) would maintain a bulletin board outside their working space. On the bulletin board they would list the project, where they were in their tasks, where they needed to be, and what they needed to make it happen. Disney (and everyone else) were then able to quickly walk from project to project, get a sense of needs and progress, and then connect as needed resources cross teams.

We're going to do something similar, but online. Each week the team will update an online bulletin board with:

- What they are doing?
- Where they are?

- Where they need to be?
- What they need to get there?

Everyone is responsible for reviewing all of these updates before each class. Therefore, be as clear and ***brief as possible***.

The grade comes from your currency on the boards.

Formatting

All written assignments are required to be submitted using Microsoft Word. There are no exceptions to this rule. Documents should be proofread to avoid spelling and grammatical mistakes. Additionally, all written assignments will be evaluated based on “quality” and not simply “quantity.” All written assignments should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Spacing: one and a half or double-spaced;
- Font: either Tahoma or Arial in 10 point or Times New Roman 12 point (size);
- Title of assignment centered on first page, followed by student name in next line;
- Documentation for all references and quotations using APA style; and
- Accurate spelling and grammar.

The final Library Case Study can be formatted to make it more appealing and readable.

Evaluation and Grading Scale

All grades will be posted in Canvas.

Points are awarded for each course product. At the end of the semester, these points will be totaled, and the final grade will be based upon the following scale:

- A 95-100
- A- 90-94
- B+ 87-89
- B 83-86
- B- 80-82
- C+ 77-79
- C 73-76
- C- 70-72
- D+ 67-69
- D 63-66
- D- 60-62
- F 0-59

Course Schedule

This is liable to change as the semester evolves.

Date	Topic	Due	Readings
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Jan 11	Putting the Community at the Center Introduction to the Jarrell Community Library and Resource Center		
Jan 18	Library as platform and movement *		Thread 1: Mission
Jan 25	What is the mission of a librarian? * Guest: Ilona Kish	Thread 1 Reflection Bulletin Board (group)	Thread 2: Knowledge Creation
Feb 1	Knowledge creation in a community. Community Assessment UT Assessment team	Thread 2 Reflection Bulletin Board (group)	Thread 3: Facilitating
Feb 8	Facilitation, the core of community engagement. Methods of facilitation – motivation, access, knowledge building, environment * Guests: Austin Public Library Examples	Thread 3 Reflection Bulletin Board (group)	Thread 4: Communities
Feb 15	Communities and Diversity* Guest: Diane Connery Diversity Residence Program	Thread 4 Reflection Bulletin Board (group)	Thread 5: Improve Society
Feb 22	Values and ethics of librarianship Tour with UT Libraries	Thread 5 Reflection Bulletin Board (group)	Thread 6: Librarians
Mar 1	New models of service – from public service to community engagement, from reference to instruction, from collection development to connection development* Tour of Austin Public Library	Thread 6 Reflection Bulletin Board (group)	
Mar 8	Novel Community Outreach: literacy busses, gaming, library of things. * Guest: Valerie Byrd-Fort (4 pm)	Bulletin Board (group)	
Mar 15	SPRING BREAK		
Mar 22	ONLINE – Team Check ins, and libraries, outreach, and COVID		

Mar 29	ONLINE - Team Check ins, and libraries, outreach, and COVID	Bulletin Board (group)	
April 5	Guest: Jim Neal*	Bulletin Board (group)	
April 12	Prepare Team presentations	Bulletin Board (group)	Agreement Supplement
April 19	Final Presentation*	Bulletin Board (group)	

* Means there will be folks from the Austin Public Library joining us.

IMPORTANT NOTE

This syllabus may be subject to change during the semester. If changes are made, you will be notified and you will be responsible for abiding by the changes. Other class and assignment policies and procedures will be posted in the course site.

Due dates will never be changed to an earlier date.

Required University Statements

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY EXPECTATIONS

Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

GETTING HELP WITH TECHNOLOGY

Students needing help with technology in this course should contact the ITS Service Desk.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence as far in advance as possible of the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

NAMES AND PRONOUNS

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by your chosen name and by the gender pronouns you use. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's chosen (not legal) name, if you have

provided one. If you wish to provide or update a chosen name, that can be done easily at this page, and you can add your pronouns to Canvas.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the Indigenous lands of Turtle Island, the ancestral name for what now is called North America. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge the Alabama-Coushatta, Caddo, Carrizo/Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Kickapoo, Lipan Apache, Tonkawa and Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SSD)

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please refer to SSD's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTER (CMHC)

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. Know you are not alone. If you or anyone you know is experiencing symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, academic concerns, loneliness, difficulty sleeping, or any other concern impacting your wellbeing – you are strongly encouraged to connect with CMHC. The Counseling and Mental Health Center provides a wide variety of mental health services to all UT students including crisis services, counseling services with immediate support and well-being resources. Additionally, CARE Counselors are located within the academic schools and colleges. These counselors get to know the concerns that are unique to their college's students. For more information on CMHC, visit <https://cmhc.utexas.edu> or call 512-471-3515.

UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES (UHS)

Your physical health and wellness are a priority. University Health Services is an on-campus high-quality medical facility providing care to all UT students. Services offered by UHS include general medicine, urgent care, a 24/7 nurse advice line, women's health, sports medicine, physical therapy, lab and radiology services, COVID-19 testing and vaccinations and much more. For additional information, visit <https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu> or call 512-471-4955.

SANGER LEARNING CENTER

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70

courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <https://ugs.utexas.edu/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).”

STUDENT EMERGENCY SERVICES (SES)

Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students helps students and their families during difficult or emergency situations. Assistance includes outreach, advocacy, intervention, support, and referrals to relevant campus and community resources. If you need to be absent from class due to a family emergency, medical or mental health concern, or academic difficulty due to crisis or an emergency situation, you can work with Student Emergency Services. SES will document your situation and notify your professors. Additional information is available at <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/> or by calling 512-471-5017.

Important Safety Information

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or professors, contact BCCAL (the Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line) at <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line> or by calling 512-232-5050. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible, however the university may be required to release some information to appropriate parties.

CLASSROOM SAFETY AND COVID-19

To help preserve our in-person learning environment, the university recommends the following.

- Adhere to university mask guidance. Masks are strongly recommended, but optional, inside university buildings for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, except when alone in a private office or single-occupant cubicle.
- Vaccinations are widely available, free and not billed to health insurance. The vaccine will help protect against the transmission of the virus to others and reduce serious symptoms in those who are vaccinated.
- Proactive Community Testing remains an important part of the university’s efforts to protect our community. Tests are fast and free.
- We encourage the use of the Protect Texas App each day prior to coming to campus.
- If you develop COVID-19 symptoms or feel sick, stay home and contact the University Health Services’ Nurse Advice Line at 512-475-6877. If you need to be absent from class, contact Student Emergency Services and they will notify your professors. In addition, to help understand what to do if you have been had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, see this University Health Services link.
- Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line (BCCAL) remains available as the primary tool to address questions or concerns from the university community about COVID-19.
- Students who test positive should contact BCCAL or self-report (if tested off campus) to University Health Services.
- Visit Protect Texas Together for more information.

CARRYING OF HANDGUNS ON CAMPUS

Texas' Open Carry law expressly prohibits a licensed to carry (LTC) holder from carrying a handgun openly on the campus of an institution of higher education such as UT Austin. Students in this class should be aware of the following university policies:

- Students in this class who hold a license to carry are asked to review the university policy regarding campus carry.
- Individuals who hold a license to carry are eligible to carry a concealed handgun on campus, including in most outdoor areas, buildings and spaces that are accessible to the public, and in classrooms.
- It is the responsibility of concealed-carry license holders to carry their handguns on or about their person at all times while on campus. Open carry is NOT permitted, meaning that a license holder may not carry a partially or wholly visible handgun on campus premises or on any university driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area.
- Per my right, I prohibit carrying of handguns in my personal office. Note that this information will also be conveyed to all students verbally during the first week of class. This written notice is intended to reinforce the verbal notification, and is not a "legally effective" means of notification in its own right.

TITLE IX DISCLOSURE

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, to report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be report it. If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>, contact the Title IX Office via email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419. Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct, including the types of sexual misconduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered "Responsible Employees" or "Mandatory Reporters," which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX-related incidents that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email advocate@austin.utexas.edu For more information about reporting options and resources, visit the Title IX Office or email titleix@austin.utexas.edu.

CAMPUS SAFETY

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767,

- Students should sign up for Campus Emergency Text Alerts at the page linked above.
- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- For more information, please visit emergency preparedness.