

“Big Data for Justice” Summer Institute

Sponsored by UCLA CityLab, UCLA Digital and Urban Humanities Programs, and the UCLA Bunche Center for African American Studies

University of California Los Angeles, Summer 2022

6 units course credit (DH 151 and DH 199)

*Possible future cross-listing with African-American Studies.

*No prior experience or coursework is necessary.

*Both the seminar and the studio/lab are required for the learning experience generated by this summer institute.

(PLEASE NOTE: ISNTRUCTORS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE THE SYLLABUS.)

The “Big Data for Justice” Summer Institute is returning to the UCLA campus for 2022! Scheduled for one-month during July of 2022, this unique institute offers a curriculum at the intersection of African-American Studies and the Digital Humanities. Specifically, “Big Data for Justice” (DH 151 + DH 199) is an interdisciplinary study of how urbanism, data science, and critical concepts related to race and criminal justice intersect in the lived city-space of Los Angeles. The institute has a dual focus: in addition to deepening knowledge of racial and social justice frameworks, the institute gives students the opportunity to develop practical digital technology skills. Through both a seminar course (DH 151, 4 units) and a studio/laboratory component (DH 199, 2 units), for example, students will learn critical data analysis, visualization, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to research and map urban experiences.

Students will also gain familiarization with a wide-range of digital tools and methods used to study and analyze criminal justice and will participate in the collection, curation, and presentation of important digital data related to Los Angeles’s communities. The concrete digital technology skills students will acquire over the course of institute include: Tableau, ESRI Storymaps, Google Earth, as well as statistical methods, critical GIS, and data visualization. Students will then think about how to employ these cutting-edge tools, while also learning about sources for collecting and analyzing data to address social, racial justice, and criminal justice issues.

Moreover, we will move from the campus to the lived spaces and built environment of Los Angeles. For example, the course introduces methods of fieldwork research through fieldtrips to downtown Los Angeles and other key neighborhoods. For example. the “Big Data for Justice” Institute will host a number of speakers and leaders from community organizations active in enacting social change in Los Angeles. Through direct community-engaged learning, students will deepen their knowledge of social issues and spaces in key neighborhoods. For example, the institute will engage the space of Los Angeles to teach about how communities are impacted by

punitive laws and infrastructures. Then, students will connect data technologies to contextualizing the lived reality of key neighborhoods. In sum, the institute offers a learning experience that gives students concrete digital tools to further a better understanding of social justice and this (post)metropolis.

Course Objectives

- Learn to use and critically assess a suite of digital tools, spatial and quantitative datasets, and mapping/visualization/data analysis software technologies for studying criminal justice in Los Angeles.
- Combine urban, social, computational, statistical and humanist perspectives to investigate data related to criminal justice.
- Understand how the history of Los Angeles is intimately and unevenly linked with race, policing, and power; learn how this is manifest in built spaces, urban infrastructures, and communities.
- Learn transferable technology skills through collaborative, project-based research, while engaging in multidisciplinary inquiry.
- Learn to work in research teams in order to conceptualize, design, carry out, and deliver persuasive arguments through writing, data analysis, mapping, and data visualization.

Schedule:

- > Morning seminars: 10 AM - 12 PM, followed by lunch.
- > Studio or lab work: 1 PM - 4 PM
- > Site visits/fieldwork are on Fridays
- > Periodic evening activities (portfolio workshops, film screening): approx. 5 PM-7:30 PM

Note: Once a week we have a field trip or fieldwork. On these days, you should plan to depart from Westwood in the morning (9am) and return by approximately 5 PM. If you live off campus, you may also meet us on-site at the specified time.

Classroom spaces:

- Rolfe Learning Lab (Rolfe Hall, room 2118): Monday (all day); Tuesday (10-1); Wednesday (all day); Thursdays (10-1)
- Perloff Hall, Room 1209B (afternoons, Tues/Thurs)
- Haines 153 for special events/panel discussions

Primary Co-Instructors :

> Munia Bhaumik/Danielle Dupuy

Additional Guest Faculty and Staff:

- > Prof. Kelly Lytle Hernandez (History, Bunche Center for African American Studies)
- > Prof. Todd Presner ((Digital Humanities, Urban Humanities): presner@ucla.edu)

- More guest faculty and activists-in-residence are expected.

Requirements and Evaluation:

Students are required to attend all seminars, studios, workshops, and fieldwork sessions each week. Projects will be team based, collaborative undertakings. Students will be asked to upload the material they create to a digital portfolio website that will document the learning process and serve as a research archive. Note: **All assignments are in red font in the syllabus.**

10% = **Digital data project** (due Thursday of week 2)

10% = **Thick mapping project** (due Thursday of week 3)

30% = **Final project presentation consisting of digital data/visualizations in StoryMaps (Thursday of week 4) and a 6-page report in Google Docs** (due Friday of week 4, 4 pm)

25% = **Web portfolio** of all digital work, book reviews, field notes, research methodologies, documentation of skills/research interests, individually written analyses, professional ambitions (due on Friday, August 2nd, 4pm)

25% = Preparation and participation in class, fieldwork, and studios

Note: The projects are intended to build on one another in sequence, leading to a final project

SAMPLE READINGS/FILMS

* Effort will be made to provide books to students. All other readings will be made available through PDFs.

- Whitney Battle-Baptiste and Britt Rusert, *W.E.B. Du Bois' Data Portraits: Visualizing Black America* (2018)
- Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles* (2017)
- Patrisse Khan Cullors and asha bandele, *When they Call you a Terrorist* (2018)
- Laura Pulido, *A People's Guide to Los Angeles*

Films:

***The 13th*, Directed by Ava DuVernay (1 hour 40 minutes)**

FERGUSON RISES by Mobolaji Olambiwonnu , David Oyelowo, and Kai Bowe

SAMPLE DISCUSSION SESSIONS/LABS

1: BIG DATA & CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN LOS ANGELES

"COMING TO LOS ANGELES": INTRODUCTIONS

CRITICAL QUESTIONS: Where do you call home? What does the city of Los Angeles mean to you? What does justice in Los Angeles mean to you?

- Overview of curriculum and schedule; Discussion of “big data” and “justice”
- Context and Concepts: “What is Big Data, Criminal Justice, and Urbanism?”

Afternoon Session: Introduction to Criminal Justice in L.A.

2:15-4 pm: Talk/Panel or Interactive Discussion - Justice LA

Readings (to be completed before Institute begins)

- Max Felker Kantor, *Policing Los Angeles: Race, Resistance, and the Rise of the LAPD* – Introduction and Chapter 1
- Excerpt from: Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, “Let’s Talk about Race- Resisting the Temptation of Colorblind Advocacy” (pgs 236-248)

2. DATA, DATA VISUALIZATION, and RACE

Morning Seminar: W.E.B Du Bois and Digital Humanities

Readings:

- Whitney Battle-Baptiste and Britt Rusert, *W.E.B. Du Bois’ Data Portraits: Visualizing Black America* (focus on the “Introduction” if time is short, and look through the data portraits).
- Kim Gallon, “Making a Case for Black Digital Humanities,” in *Debates in Digital Humanities*

Questions: What is “Digital Humanities” and “Black Digital Humanities”? How can quantitative and qualitative analyses be brought together? How can knowledge be designed to bring about change? How can “data” and “visualization” be used to advance critical race studies?

3. “Telling a story with Statistics”: COMMUNITY-ENGAGED DATA ACTIVISM

Introductions to Million Dollar Hoods Project at UCLA

Million Dollar Hoods Story Map- <https://arcq.is/19jW8W>

DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING LAB:

Descriptive statistics vs statistical tests

- Proportions, rates, averages, and medians
- Cross tabs & association; correlations vs. causation
- What is “significance”?
- Review and discussion of assignment

4. MAPPING RACE IN THE CITY: URBANISM, INFRASTRUCTURE, and LOS ANGELES AS A CASE-STUDY

Check out the [historical maps of Los Angeles](#) (type “Los Angeles” in the search box). Look at Los Angeles (especially Wilshire corridor to downtown LA) in the [racial dot map](#).

- Los Angeles as “ghost metropolis” and the many hidden histories of the city
- Overview of Los Angeles through the lens of transportation infrastructures, policing, and racial politics: What is visible and what is invisible? What histories are marked and what histories are not inscribed in the urban landscape?

Readings:

- Laura Pulido, selections from: *A People's Guide to Los Angeles* (Introduction, pp. 1-13, and learn about the parts of North LA which we will visit on Thursday: pp. 16-71: Intro, Bidy Mason Park, Calle de los Negros, Chinatowns, Downey Block, La Placita, LAPD Headquarters, Pershing Square, America Tropical Mural, Yang-Na)
- Kelly Lytle Hernandez, "Introduction" from: *City of Inmates*

5. HISTORY, CRMINALITY, AND STORY AS DATA

- **LA City data:** <https://data.lacity.org/>
- **Quick Visual Guide to Visualizing Data on the Los Angeles Open Data Portal** <https://docs.google.com/document/d/140rq7sU548VdtYMkiQ8SLIMDLI7smoJE/edit>
- Learn what data is available and how to work within the LA city portal
- > Focus on "arrest" data and how it's structured, how to filter data, & how to visualize data

6. MASS INCARCERATION, POLCING, and the POWER OF PLACE IN LOS ANGELES

Film: *The 13th*, Directed by Ava DuVernay (1 hour 40 minutes)

- Discussion of *The 13th*
- Discussion of Kelly Lytle Hernandez, "Introduction" from: *City of Inmates*
- [Link to Blue Ribbon Panel for evaluating prop 47 and prop 57](#)

Preparation for fieldwork and discussion of Dolores Hayden, "Power of Place" project

- Discussion of fieldwork methods and praxis: Spatial ethnography (developing ways of observing, documenting, writing, and listening ethically in the urban landscape).
- Discussion of data collection in the field (for ne: Where will you go? What will you plan to collect and how? What ethical considerations do you foresee?)
- Development of research ideas in group: What are you interested in finding/documenting/visualizing/mapping? What kind of data will you need?

DIGITAL HUMANITIES SKILLS LAB:

- LEARN TO LOAD DATASETS
- LEARN TO RUN CROSS-TABULATIONS