Jackson Maxfield Brown

Faculty and Research Interests

General Interests

I am interested in how civic technology can remove barriers that limit access to government resources and enable civic participation for every member of our diverse communities. While civic technology and social good applications are most generally what I am interested in, my interests in civic technology are rooted in a desire to research novel data and information access and storage mechanisms, equitable access to technology and information, and sustainable, reproducible science and software.

Faculty Advisors

1. Bill Howe

   Bill Howe has consistently produced research analyzing technology as it relates to public interest infrastructures. Additionally, when creating tools through applied research and analyzing novel techniques for general applications, much of his work, such as DataSynthesizer, has direct implications as to how the work could be utilized in the public information and technology domain. Outside of social good applications and research, Dr. Howe researches general methodologies for data management, open information access, and distributed computing, all of which I am interested in, I have experience in, and I believe have applications in public interest technology. Finally, as co-founder of Urban@UW and leader of UrbanAnalytics, Bill Howe's guidance and ability to connect me to resources across domains would be invaluable.

2. Nicholas Weber

   Understanding how data access, data curation, and software sustainability are used in civic technology is central to my research interests. Acting as co-technical director of the Qualitative Data Repository, Prof. Weber has shown expertise in all of these areas while additionally understanding the challenges in creating large-scale access infrastructures. Additionally, his work as co-principal investigator of the US Research Software Sustainability Institute (URSSI) fits with my previously stated research interest in software sustainability. Specifically, the intersection of civic technology and software sustainability through open collaboration. Nicholas Weber's prior guidance and mentorship has helped me produce novel research and civic technology infrastructure, and his serving as advisor would allow me to further grow as a researcher.

3. Emma Spiro

   Dr. Spiro's work directly addresses political and civic mis-information. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach to analyze online communication, and specifically

communication that affects democractic discourse, is deeply tied to what I am interested in studying: information access and civic engagement. Further, Emma Spiro's research and expertise in Crisis Informatics would allow for my understanding and research in the complex dynamics of how governments and their populace exchange information during a crisis through their shared use of technology. As co-founder of the Center for an Informed Public, Dr. Spiro would be able to effectively advise my research in direct-to-populace information systems as they relate and affect civic participation and a populace's interactions with a government.

4. Jevin West

A unique intersection of my research interests is understanding reproducible research and how science, and scientific communication, is delivered to elected officials and the public-at-large. In some cases, elected officials have used non-reproducible research as the basis for sweeping policy changes. In others, elected officials and the general public have been misled with poorly communicated or deliberately mis-communicated science for public opinion shift. Jevin West's prior research and current work as the Director of the Center for an Informed Public in understanding science communication and mis-information would help my research in understanding and creating systems for government and civic engagement related mis-information detection and resolution.