2022-2023 Praxis Program Charter

# 2022-2023 Praxis Cohort Charter

### About the charter

This document intends to lay out the values and practices most important for us as a cohort. It is a living document to be revised at least once per semester. During the Praxis learning process, we hope to grow comfortable with engaging play as a critical practice through our interactions with techniques and technologies of DH. We aim for our time together to be a lab for generating collaborative work strategies that rise against the alienating lone-wolf scholar tradition so common within the humanities and social sciences.

To us, critically engaging play means exploring unfamiliar topics, making arguments collaboratively, studying digital tools, and practicing how to trust the process as endgoal in itself. We want the fellowship to be a space for generating effective non-traditional avenues of scholarship.

### Cohort Culture

* Have lunch together every Wednesday after Code Lab.
* For group tasks, always discuss what structure would best suit our abilities and schedules. Never assume.
* Be aware of your colleagues; don’t wait for them to share discomfort or any kind of difficulties. Reach out and offer your help regularly.
* Don’t let problems bottle up. It’s better to nip issues in the bud. Similarly, you’re likely to spend less time stuck on a particular task if you ask for help. If you are still very stuck after 30 minutes, it’s time to ask for help.
* Have social events to celebrate milestones. It’s important to pause and have fun.
* Following Katherine McKittrick’s interdisciplinary anticolonial methodology, cultivate a spirit of curiousity and wonder as we tackle our tasks collectively and individually. In Dear Science she reminds us, “The method is rigorous too. Wonder is study. Curiousity is attentive” (5).
* Remember that mental and physical health are priorities.

### Values

* We understand, as scholar Joy James has noted, the limitations of the academy. However, as others have encouraged, we aspire to use the resources afforded us as privileged scholars, plus our training in the humanities and digital humanities skills/expertise, for good cause and where possible in service of historically marginalized communities.

### Accountability

* Break your goal into itemizable tasks that you can assign cohort members.
* Have weekly check-ins through Slack regardless of whether you we were able to complete your tasks or not. It’s important to know what is truly achievable!
* It’s okay to backtrack, don’t feel bad about it. Just be sure to constantly share your process with your colleagues.
* Eveything is negotiable except communication. If all fails, good communication will be the key to get back on track or reassess a common goal.

### Conflict Solving

* Always assume that the other person means well and is doing their best.
* Do not gaslight yourself. If you’re feeling uncomfortable in a particular task or interaction, reflect on the reasons why this may be rather than spending time assesing whether your feelings are valid or not.
* If you’re struggling to work with a particular member of the cohort, speak to them directly as soon as you are aware of your feelings and have reflected on them. It’s best to address issues as early as possible to avoid unnecessary complications.
* If you feel like you’ve tried all you could and the issue with your colleague isn’t getting any better, consider speaking to another member of the cohort or a member of the Scholar’s Lab for fresh eyes and advice. Sometimes reaching out to members of the SLab will be a better option to avoid tensions within the group.
* If you are uncomfortable with a decision made by two or the other three members of the cohort, do make sure to express your feelings honestly so we all can work to find a scenario that better suits the entire cohort. We are in this together. If one member is not on board with an idea or activity at least 1/4 of the cohort will not enjoy or benefit from it.

### Personal Goals

##### Winnie

1. Learn how to ask good digital humanities questions.
   * Always ask questions during meetings, do all the readings and explore 1 new digital project per week.
2. Sketch out ideas for how to integrate DH as an applied practice in my research.
3. Develop good habits for overcoming frustration when coding.
   * Code 30 minutes daily.
   * Describe my coding ideas well by writing them out 1 hour/weekly.
4. Learn (or start to learn) how to make visual stories with data.
   * Read a data viz article per week.
5. Attend as many SLab events as you can and reach out whenever you are stuck. Do not suffer in silence.

##### Samantha

1. Be open to where this process leads me.
2. Immerse myself fully into coding as a practice.
3. Tell good stories with my work.
4. Embrace failure. Be honest when I am struggling.
5. Improve my digital artistic skills.
6. Better understand landscape of DH job opportunities.
7. Connect to the larger DH community.

##### Malcolm

1. Practice generosity, reciprocity, vulnerability, and mutuality with members of my cohort and folks in the Scholar’s Lab
2. Cultivate a growth mindset, ask for help, and become more comfortable with failure and frustration. With Katherine McKittrick in mind “practice curiousity, over knowing all things.”
3. Become proficient in Python, Git, GitHub, HTML, CSS, and other programming languages and tools
4. Become more familiar with the digital humanities (DH) and its opportunities and limitations in addition to alt-ac and DH career opportunities
5. Learn with and from the members of my cohort
6. Leverage opportunities and community in the Scholar’s Lab to visualize, outline, and develop a mapping and storytelling component to my research

##### Caroline

1. Learn new digial skills, namely: coding, photogrammetry, 3D modeling, and GIS.
2. Always be thankful for the opprotuniy to learn new things, even coding! ;)
3. Enhance my professional development in new ways, such as digital pedagogy, how to converse about DH, and enhance my CV/website.
4. Make strong connections in the Scholar’s Lab.
5. Explore DH jobs opprotunities.
6. Write at least 2 blog posts.

### References

* McKittrick, Katherine. Dear Science and Other Stories. Duke University Press, 2021.
* McKittrick, Katherine. “Curiosities, Wonder, And Black Methodologies” (Dean’s Forum Inclusion + Equity Lecture, University of Virginia School of Architecture, September 14, 2020), http://www.arch.virginia.edu/events/katherine-mckittrick.