

Professional Development Statement

When I began my MLIS degree at UCLA with a focus in informatics, my interests revolved around the relationship between information infrastructures and users. Through my studies I aspired to investigate the hegemonic nature of information systems design. These interests were informed by my experience working as an administrator in higher education for several years, primarily with the design and implementation of learning technologies for online distance learning. Among my driving concerns were the neoliberal and neocolonial trends I observed while supporting the university mission, carried out as a matter of policy and enforced through technology.

As I progressed through the program, my interests in power shifted from the design of information technologies to how these technologies are embedded in the mundane and everyday activities of individuals and communities. Systems such as information retrieval and media delivery platforms shape and are shaped by existing power structures such as race and capital. Through exploring this embeddedness I hope to properly understand and theorize the relationship between information, identity, and power. For these reasons I will be continuing my education by pursuing a PhD in Information Studies at UCLA after completing my MLIS where I will be studying what surveillance sees and how its data capture affects identity formation and social relations.

Throughout my MLIS degree I strove to integrate the knowledge and theory I gained in the classroom with all of my practices, whether they be work, extracurricular activities, or everyday behaviors. I worked several jobs and internships as an MLIS student. As a lab employee in the Information Studies Research Lab I assisted the lab director in rethinking the lab space as a place of applied informatics and media preservation techniques. In the Digital Humanities program I assisted with the taxonomization and visualization of the curriculum. At the Digital Library Program I worked closely with digitized ephemera and the creation of metadata for the online presentation of digital collections. Presently I work as a Research and Instructional Technology Consultant where I provide technical and pedagogical support to Humanities Faculty and research assistance to faculty in the Digital Humanities Accelerator program. This coming summer I will work with the National Park Service to migrate digitized archival records onto Calisphere.

I focused on applying my theoretical investigations to a professional context with an emphasis on the digital dimensions of information in all of my student jobs and internships. Working in both libraries and archives, I strived to explore as many information institutions as possible. In the same vein my work in the Information Studies Lab and the Scholarly Innovation Lab provided me with an opportunity to expand my research literacy and engage with faculty and students as they sought out technologies for research. My work with the Digital Humanities Program encouraged exploration of digital tools to explore data sets and texts and offered an opportunity to engage with humanities content. Finally, my work supporting technology and instruction

furthered my knowledge of digital learning tools, giving me a critical perspective into how information is created and delivered in an educational sense.

I assumed several responsibilities as a student, including co-chairing the Student Governing Board, where I contributed to updating the Department of Information Studies' Strategic Plan and served on a hiring committee for the MLIS Program Manager position. Outside of the department I acted as the liaison between Information Studies and the Social Sciences Council as well as the liaison between the Social Sciences Council and the larger Graduate Student Association, attending forums as a voting member. I also held the position of Vice President of the UCLA ASIS&T student group where I helped set up workshops as well as the Webmaster for the Artifacts student group, managing updates to the group site. Extending my practice beyond the university, I volunteered at the Conference of the Art Libraries Society of North America as well as the Archives Bazaar, both in 2019.

As a PhD student I will continue engaging multiple professional organizations and workspaces with an emphasis on academic community building. To this end intend to publish academic papers, attend and present at conferences, and perform research within the realm of information studies, digital humanities, and new media studies. In particular I am interested in involving myself with organizations such as the Society for Social Studies of Science (4S) and the Association for Information Science & Technology (ASIS&T), both of which are interdisciplinary societies focused on issues broadly dealing with science, technology, and society (STS). Relately I aspire to publish in journals related to these organizations such as

Science, Technology, & Human Values (ST&HV) and the Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology (JASIST).

While my PhD aspirations are the most immediate plans for my professional and educational future, I intend on continually growing and contributing to the field of Information Studies beyond my schooling. During my studies it became apparent that information in all of its forms and the structures that impact it are constantly changing. From the institutions that house information resources such as libraries, archives, and museums, to the values that impact how these institutions operate and are perceived, to the technologies that shape how we engage with information, scholarship and critical awareness are necessary in order to not only understand these shifts but also for critiquing how we understand these shifts through these means. As private sector technology firms, with opaque information practices and values driven by capital, continue to encroach on the public domain it is critically important to remain engaged as an information studies scholar.

After completing my PhD I aspire to remain in academia. While I am realistic about the contemporary state of higher education and faculty tenureship, I am also dedicated to research in the field and values that promote dismantling the pervading culture of Whiteness and commodification of self. By being in a position to continually learn and teach I hope to continue striving towards these goals. Whether this be as an academic, an academic librarian, or a decision making in one of these institutions, I intend to remain engaged in the information community throughout my professional life.