Digital Community Engagement at SIUE

How a Regional University can have a Global Impact

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Interdisciplinary Research and Informatics Scholarship

Founded in 2009 by Drs. Jessica DeSpain and Kristine Hildebrandt

Designed to support individual and collaborative scholarship that applies digital content as a primary methodology

Attempt to address and remedy the digital divide

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

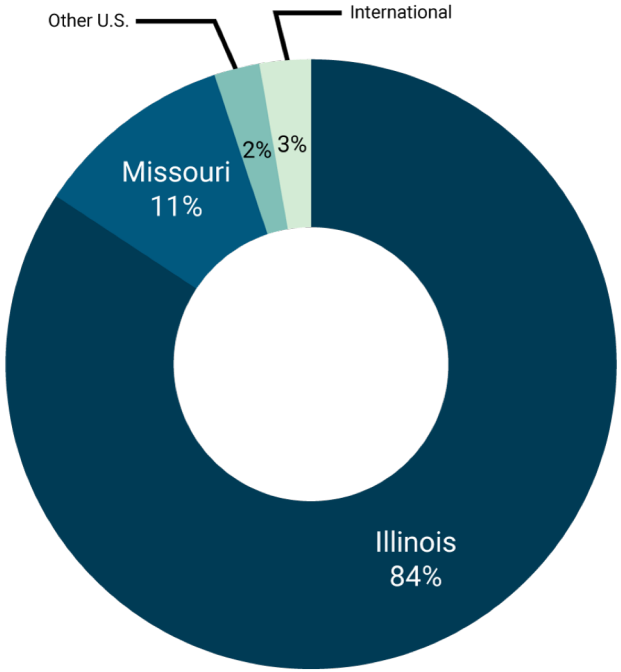
Public, 4-year, regional university

Located in the Metro East across the Mississippi River from St. Louis

Numerous rural and urban local communities are underserved and underrepresented



Where SIUE Students Come From



13,796 total

More than 60% are first generation college students

Of Illinois students, 45% come from Madison County or St. Clair County

Source: Office of Institutional Research and Studies, Factbook: 2018 Edition, 44 - 45, available online at http://www.siue.edu/inrs/factbook/index.shtm.

The Digital Divide at a Regional University

"The digital divide isn't just experienced by students; the concentration of informatics scholarship at research universities has cordoned off access to this scholarly practice so that it may be difficult for some scholars to establish or maintain a foothold in the field. At these teaching intensive universities, bringing faculty and students together may be the best method for addressing [this] digital divide."

- Jessica DeSpain and Kristine Hildebrandt

Source: Jessica DeSpain and Kristine A. Hildebrandt, "Informatics Scholarship: Beyond The Research University," *Polymath: An Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Journal* 3, no. 3 (2013): i, accessed March 22, 2018, https://ojcs.siue.edu/ojs/index.php/polymath/issue/view/70/.



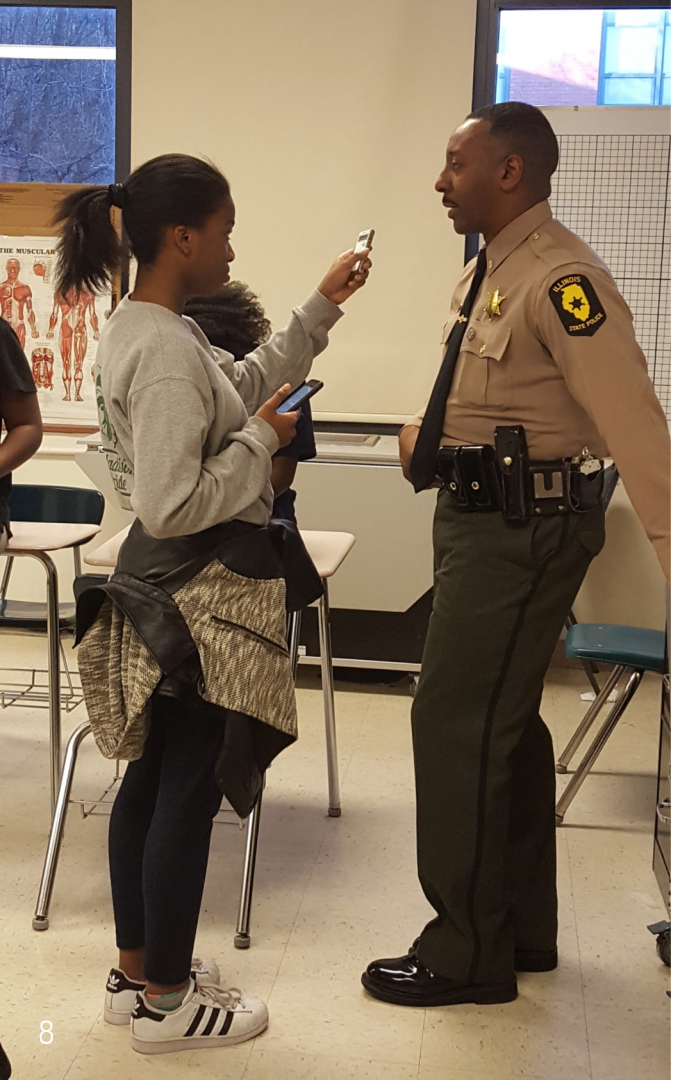
Creating Communities at SIUE

- Student recruitment based on interest over technical experience
- Encourage participation through engagement with project, not grades
- Treat students as research colleagues



Engaging K-12

- Buy-in from teachers and administrators
- Student interest and peer social engagement
- Specialized recruitment
- Clear communication between collaborators



Partnering with a Local Humanities Center

- Humanitarianism vs. academic humanities
- Public programming for audiences of all ages
- Recognize different priorities of individual collaborators
- All participants receive the same training and resources through the project



Collaborating with Cultural Institutions

- Clear communication of our intentions and process
- Ensure institution benefits from relationship
- Willingness to adjust digitization plans to meet their needs



International Community Engagement

- Awareness of technology obstacles
- Importance of field work and community input
- Access to skills training and equipment
- Process of data collection vs. analysis, translation, and interpretation

Looking Forward...

- Create infrastructure to encourage reciprocal partnerships between the university and Metro East communities
- Develop connections through the Digital Community Engagement Pathway
- Recruitment of underserved students to use digital humanities methodology to address local problems

THANKS!

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widewideworlddigitaledition.siue.edu

Digital Humanities Clubs and CTBF Sites - Coming Soon!