

Creating an infrastructure for GIS instruction at an academic library

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THE LAY OF THE LAND

Abstract

The Resident Librarian for GIS at the University of Chicago Library was determined to find out how an academic library resident create successful, new instruction for geographic information systems (GIS). This poster outlines that journey: from getting a lay of the land (seeking out guidance from UChicago campus stakeholders and scanning peer institutions' workshops), to charting a course into unknown territory (how careful planning can help a new librarian create effective instruction), and finally, seeing efforts come together as new library instruction for GIS.

Campus stakeholders:

GIS faculty & staff

- Complement but don't duplicate what is already being taught
- Receptive to classroom introduction and communication but not in-class instruction

Students

- Finding, opening, and saving data
- Managing projects
- Prefer workshops or help in late afternoon

Peer institution workshops:

Compared 10 peer institutions' GIS workshops both in and out of library settings.

- No workshops were exactly alike
- Sessions reviewed: 37
- Median length: 2 hours
- Average length: 2.7 hours

Instructor(s)	Count
GIS Librarian*	16
GIS Specialist	6
GIS Manager	6
Fellow/Intern	3
Professor	1
NA	8

Semester taught	Count
fall	20
spring	5
NA	12
Grand Total	37

*Generalized term to include similar librarian titles

CHARTING A COURSE

TIMELINE

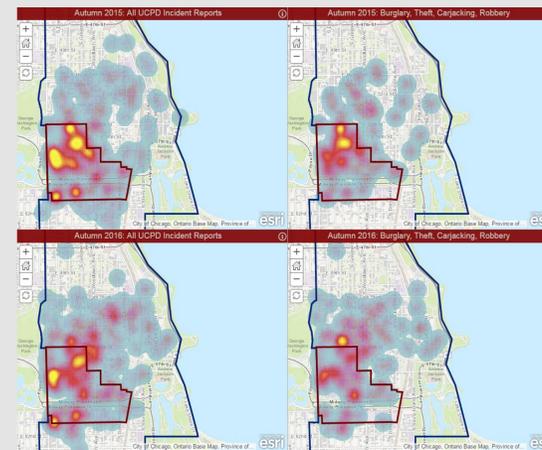


Passive instruction with Lynda

While working on instruction outlines, referred workshop inquiries to a curated Lynda playlist "GIS from the Ground Up."
Link: bit.ly/LyndaGIS

Create data for instruction

Created data for instruction that can be tailored to appeal to a mass or niche audience at UChicago. Workshop attendees will learn about point, line, and tabular data and simple analysis. Below is an example of one of the maps workshop attendees learn to make.



Trial and error

Held two workshops for librarians to provide feedback on my outlines as well as teach them more about GIS:

- Introduction to ArcGIS Online
- Spatial Data & Project Management

SPRING WORKSHOPS

Spatial Data Literacy

This introductory workshop will cover what makes something spatial data, spatial data files that are compatible with geographic information systems (GIS), and best practices for keeping GIS projects organized.

Link: bit.ly/2qFSjAS

Introduction to ArcGIS Online

This hands-on workshop will give a basic introduction to the ArcGIS Online platform, including adding data to a map and creating web apps. If you've wanted to learn how to make an interactive map but don't know how to code, don't miss this workshop!

Link: bit.ly/2plqbj8

Finding Spatial Data

Thousands of resources exist online for finding spatial data, but finding the right resource can be a challenge. This workshop will focus on techniques for finding spatial data, the top free and open resources online, and resources available through UChicago.

Link: bit.ly/2p0CyYg

REFLECTIONS

All spring workshops were on a waitlist two weeks after the first announcement went out. Success suggests 1) topic is of interest and 2) 1-1 ½ hour workshops in the late afternoon worked for attendees. Though the workshop registration was successful, 25% of registrants actually showed up on the day of the workshops.

Continuing research and work may include increasing workshop attendance, building new campus partnerships for targeted instruction, and incorporating GIS survey results into fall quarter instruction.