

## Digital Community Geographies: Scholar-Activism and Defense of Place in a Gentrifying Miami Neighborhood

### General Information

---

### Professor Information

Dr. Genevieve Reid  
E-mail [greid@fiu.edu](mailto:greid@fiu.edu)  
Office Hours Tu/Th 2-3 PM

Office: SIPA 309  
phone (305) 348-0352

Dr. Kevin Grove  
E-mail [kgrove@fiu.edu](mailto:kgrove@fiu.edu)  
Office Hours Th 1-2 PM or by appointment

Office: SIPA 311  
phone (305) 348-3343

### Course Description and Purpose

Digital Community Geography is an interdisciplinary course designed to explore the intersections of digital tools and geographic principles in supporting advocacy for resistance and change, particularly within urban environments. This course introduces students to community geography, emphasizing the collaborative process between academics and non-academic actors, such as local non-profit organizations, community members, or local officials in knowledge production. Collaborators can build evidence-based narratives highlighting local resources and challenges by leveraging data and digital tools such as web maps, visualizations of spatial analysis, digital storytelling platforms, multi-media, and digital archives. The course will also delve into the practice of scholar activism, where academic research intersects with community-based initiatives to support resistance against socio-political challenges, including disinvestment, gentrification, climate change, and socio-economic inequalities.

Miami serves as the primary case study, offering a rich and complex urban landscape characterized by historic ethnic neighborhoods and ongoing struggles with gentrification and data-driven urban development. The city provides an ideal context for students to examine the intersection of community resistance, digital geography, and social justice. In this course, students will not only learn about these concepts but also apply them in a practical

## Digital Community Geographies: Scholar-Activism and Defense of Place in a Gentrifying Miami Neighborhood

setting. They will engage deeply with one historic neighborhood in Miami, Allapattah, applying ethical, theoretical, and technical concepts to a digital community geography research project in collaboration with a local community organization. This hands-on project allows students to participate in the co-creation of knowledge that is both academically rigorous and socially relevant.

A key component of the course is the exploration of the dual effects of datafication on society and cities. On the one hand, the literature on critical data studies and platform urbanism demonstrates how digital platforms perpetuate socio-political inequalities. On the other hand, community groups can also reappropriate digital platforms to produce counter-narratives and reshape the socio-political landscape that historically oppressed them. Students will learn about the power dynamics in contemporary cities by exploring notions of data politics, digital governance, and resisting algorithms.

To guide students in these endeavors, the course incorporates feminist research methodologies, which emphasize reflexivity—encouraging critical self-examination of one’s positionality, assumptions, and the ethical implications of research practices. By adopting this reflexive approach, students will be better equipped to collaborate ethically and effectively with community partners within an interdisciplinary research team, ensuring their work contributes positively to the communities they engage with.

### Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and understand significant contemporary changes in community geography in a datafying and digitizing world.
2. Analyze urban issues from a critical geographical perspective, applying concepts like data politics and digital governance to understand the uneven adverse effects of datafication in historically underrepresented communities.
3. Demonstrate a commitment to engaging in local and intercultural problem-solving, particularly regarding the political, economic, cultural, and environmental processes that shape cities. Students will have practical experience with the potential of mobilizing digital tools and geographic methodologies to support community-based initiatives and address the complex socio-political challenges facing urban areas today.
4. Engage in practical applications of theoretical concepts in real-world situations and everyday life. Students will produce original work through a group research project and a final individual reflexive essay that reflects a deep understanding of community geography. Students will consult directly with a community organization to co-produce knowledge to advance their causes. Students will also learn practical skills for using a digital platform to communicate research projects and findings to a wide audience.

## Digital Community Geographies: Scholar-Activism and Defense of Place in a Gentrifying Miami Neighborhood

### Important Information

---

#### Policies

Please review FIU's Policies webpage. The webpage contains essential information regarding guidelines relevant to all FIU courses and additional information about acceptable netiquette for online courses. For additional information, please visit [FIU's Policy and Procedure Library](#).

As a member of the FIU community, you are expected to be knowledgeable about the behavioral expectations set forth in the [FIU Student Conduct and Honor Code](#).

#### Accessibility and Accommodation

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190.

For additional assistance, please contact FIU's [Disability Resource Center](#).

#### Academic Misconduct Statement

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct that demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the University's educational mission. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Conduct and Honor Code. Academic Misconduct includes:

##### Cheating

- The unauthorized use of any materials, information, study aids, or assistance from another person on any academic assignment or exercise unless explicitly authorized by the course Instructor;
- Assisting another student in the unauthorized use of any materials, information, or study aids, unless explicitly authorized by the Instructor; and
- Having a substitute complete any academic assignment or completing an academic assignment for someone else, either paid or unpaid; and

## Digital Community Geographies: Scholar-Activism and Defense of Place in a Gentrifying Miami Neighborhood

### Plagiarism

- The deliberate use and appropriation of another work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the Student's own.
- Assisting another student in the deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own.

### Policies on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and plagiarism verification with Turnitin

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in writing will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, **AI-generated submissions are not permitted** and will be treated as plagiarism. Ethical academic behavior is an important expectation in this course and plagiarism is a serious offense.

**Turnitin will be used through the Canvas platform to verify originality and plagiarism.** The plagiarism checker tool checks against multiple online sources to produce a similarity score. There is also a new AI-generated content score.

Suppose we see a Turnitin score of 25% or greater for the first time. In that case, your work will receive a very poor evaluation of authenticity and originality and criteria such as the ability to use sources and citations. AI is good at mimicking the style of academic essays but is usually extremely bad at producing substance. You will most probably also receive a bad score on the content and substance criteria. Typically, together, these criteria can represent as much as 80% of your grade in the rubrics for paper assignments. This means that there is an extremely high chance that you will fail the assignment. The second time you submit an assignment with a Turnitin score greater than 25%, **we will report a concern of academic misconduct to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.**

Learn more about the [academic integrity policies and procedures](#) as well as [student resources](#) that can help you prepare for a successful semester.

### Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have for the classmate's well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with [FIU's Panthers Care website](#).

[Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don't wait to call (305) 348-2277 to set up a time to talk or visit the online self-help portal.

## Digital Community Geographies: Scholar-Activism and Defense of Place in a Gentrifying Miami Neighborhood

### Inclusivity Statement

This course will serve to embrace the diversity and inclusivity found within Florida International University. We appreciate and respect diversity, equality, equity, cooperativeness, community, and sustainability within our online courses. We are committed to the ongoing education of our students and their participation within the course regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, geographical location, religion, and disability. We strive in encouraging collaboration by preparing our students to value the differences in others. At the core of our intentions is the encouragement of acceptance and appreciation of differences within our student population and community.

### Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

### Textbook and Course Materials

There is no textbook for this course. Weekly reading material will be posted on Canvas.

### Course Detail

---

### Assignments and Grading

#### Late Policies

The submission deadline for written assignments is 11:59 pm on every day on which an assignment is due.

**No late work will be accepted in this course.** If an unforeseeable situation, such as a medical emergency, prevents you from submitting an assignment, you must contact the instructors as soon as possible. We will require formal documentation of extenuating circumstances (e.g., medical emergency, jury duty, etc.).

#### Attendance (10% of final grade)

Attendance is essential in the course due to the large amount of group discussions and group work. Attendance in class every week or during lab field visits is also important.

#### Reflexive journal and in-class discussion (10% of final grade)

The seminar is based on a reflexive pedagogical approach. Students are also expected to adopt reflexive methods in their research projects. Reflexivity means that students learn and conduct research by engaging in a reflexive thinking practice to document their progress, interrogate their learning process, reflect on the significance of topics learned, set their objectives, goals, and expectations, and shed light on their lived experiences. A reflexive approach is also based on feminist research methodology. It highlights that knowledge

## Digital Community Geographies: Scholar-Activism and Defense of Place in a Gentrifying Miami Neighborhood

is always partial and situated, which means that the research is influenced by the researcher’s positionality—their identity in relation to others in terms of race, gender, class, ethnicity, and education level. Acknowledging these dynamics throughout the semester in the learning and research processes will hopefully improve your critical thinking, make you more aware of how to minimize harmful power dynamics in research, and shed light on beneficial practices in learning, teaching, and collaborating.

Most of the reflexive process is personal; students are expected to write at least one page of a reflexive journal each week. However, students will only verbally share collectively extracts of the reflections they wish to mention to enrich the group discussions.

A detailed rubric will be uploaded to Canvas.

### Collaborative Research Project (30% of final grade)

The whole class will co-produce a StoryMap for and with ACDC. To achieve this, the class will be subdivided into smaller groups, each addressing a specific StoryMap component while contributing to a coherent overall product. Research projects could focus, for example, on analyzing surveys collected by the ACDC with business owners, doing archival work, conducting an ethnographic study, or spatial analysis highlighting a topic of their choice, such as placemaking and branding, artistic performances of place identity, or local resistance to urbanizing forces.

Students will continue the weekly reading/journaling/discussing practice but select the relevant literature themselves. During in-person lab sessions, they will discuss their project's advancements and relevant literature. If necessary and approved by the instructors, some lab sessions might be used to conduct fieldwork in Allapattah or at the archive instead of meeting on campus.

A detailed rubric will be uploaded to Canvas.

### Group Presentations (25% of final grade)

There are two group presentations scheduled. The first presentation will occur in person at FIU during the usual class schedule on Week 12, during which students present an outline of their proposed work to the community organization and gather feedback. Students will lead the conversation and potentially workshop with ACDC to engage in a knowledge co-production process. The second presentation will be online via Zoom during the usual class schedule on Week 15 when students present the final product to the community organization.

A detailed rubric will be uploaded to Canvas.

### Final reflexive essay (25% of final grade)

Based on the practices of reflexive journaling and group discussions each week, students will write a reflexive essay that captures the main themes that emerged from the journals. This means that students will analyze their



## Digital Community Geographies: Scholar-Activism and Defense of Place in a Gentrifying Miami Neighborhood

journals using a qualitative analysis of their choice. They will then write a 4000-word essay that discusses their experiences during the course and in their research project. The essay is due before midnight on Dec 13.

A detailed rubric will be uploaded to Canvas.

### Course Schedule

Week	Module	Reading/Material	Assignments due
1 – Aug 26-Sept 1	Introduction		
2 – Sept 2-8	Critical data studies (Reid)	Iliadis and Russo, 2016 Elwood and Leszczynski, 2018 Wilson, 2021 Maalsen, 2024	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion
3 – Sept 9-15	Contextualizing Miami (Grove)	Tardanico, 2024 Grove et al., 2023 Wakefield et al., 2023	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion
4 – Sept 16-22	Allapattah (Reid)	“En Nuestras Palabras” Documentary <a href="https://allapattahcdc.org/">https://allapattahcdc.org/</a> <a href="https://plusurbia.com/project/allapattah-17th-avenue-survey/">https://plusurbia.com/project/allapattah-17th-avenue-survey/</a> Schuch and Wang, 2015 Heitz, 2024	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion
5 – Sept 23- 29	Power and resistance 1 (Grove)	Thatcher et al, 2016 Dalton et al., 2020 Kitchin and Dodge, 2014	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion
6 – Sept 30 - Oct 6	Power and resistance 2 (Reid)	Ettlinger, 2018 Suárez Val et al, 2023 Carraro, 2023	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion
7 – Oct 7- 13	Knowledge co- production (Reid)	Scheba and Scheba, 2023 Patel, 2022 Kanngieser, 2024	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion
8 – Oct 14-20	Digital counter-narratives (Grove, virtual, w/Reid)	Tutorial on using ArcGIS Online and StoryMap Derickson, 2022 Derickson, 2024 <a href="https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/on-collaborative-research-in-gullah-geechee-nation">https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/on-collaborative-research-in-gullah-geechee-nation</a>	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion

## Digital Community Geographies: Scholar-Activism and Defense of Place in a Gentrifying Miami Neighborhood

		<a href="https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a73616da14944289ae1c832d5fe3bd1a">https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a73616da14944289ae1c832d5fe3bd1a</a>	
9 – Oct 21- 27	Meet with ACDC/Tour of Allapattah (Reid and Grove)		Reflexive journal
10 – Oct 28- Nov 3	Lab session/group work	Student’s selection or readings	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion
11 –Nov 4 – 10	Lab session/group work	Student’s selection or readings	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion
12 – Nov 11- 17	Mid-point presentation to ACDC at FIU		Group presentation
13 – Nov 18-24	Lab session/group work	Student’s selection or readings	Reflexive journal/ in-class discussion
14 – Nov 25-Dec 1 (Thanksgiving break)			
15 –Dec 2-8	Wrap-up with virtual final product presentations to ACDC		Group presentations (on Zoom)
16 – Dec 9-14 <i>Exam Week</i>	(no exam)	Student’s selection or readings	Final essay

### Reading List

- Carraro, V. (2023). Of fixes and glitches: Mixing metaphors for platform urbanism. *Digital Geography and Society*, 4, 100056. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.diggeo.2023.100056>
- Dalton, C., Wilmott, C., Fraser, E., & Thatcher, J. (2020). “Smart” Discourses, the Limits of Representation, and New Regimes of Spatial Data. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 110(2), 485–496. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2019.1665493>
- Derickson, K. D. (2022). Disrupting Displacements: Making Knowledges for Futures Otherwise in Gullah/Geechee Nation. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 112(3), 838–846. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2021.1996219>
- Derickson, K. (2024). Building Response-able Abstractions with Gullah/Geechee Nation. *The Professional Geographer*, 0(0), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00330124.2024.2324258>
- Elwood, S., & Leszczynski, A. (2018). Feminist digital geographies. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 25(5), 629–644. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2018.1465396>



## Digital Community Geographies: Scholar-Activism and Defense of Place in a Gentrifying Miami Neighborhood

- Ettlinger, N. (2018). Algorithmic affordances for productive resistance. *Big Data & Society*, 5(1), 2053951718771399. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951718771399>
- Grove, K., Reid, G., Molinari, S., Falcon, J., Mehta-Kroll, A., Sosa El Fakih, E., Sepulveda-Reyes, A., & Ortiz, D. (2023). Absurd geographies of resilience and justice. *Climate and Development*, 0(0), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2023.2255566>
- Iliadis, A., & Russo, F. (2016). Critical data studies: An introduction. *Big Data & Society*, 3(2), 1–7.
- Kanngieser, A. M., Soares, F., Rubis, J., Sullivan, C. T., Graham, M., Williams, M., Palis, J., Tynan, L., Daley, L., Blacklock, F., Greenhough, B., Suchet-Pearson, S., Wright, S., Lloyd, K., & Marshall, U. B. (2024). Listening to place, practising relationality: Embodying six emergent protocols for collaborative relational geographies. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 50, 101000. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2024.101000>
- Kitchin, R., & Dodge, M. (2014). Introduction. In *Code/space: Software and everyday life*. MIT Press. [https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=JLgkEAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=dodge+and+kitchen+geography&ots=CgfT1F\\_QH2&sig=rBjzoWOkD4Ecf46K-dDRQzGG0Lg](https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=JLgkEAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=dodge+and+kitchen+geography&ots=CgfT1F_QH2&sig=rBjzoWOkD4Ecf46K-dDRQzGG0Lg)
- Maalsen, S. (2024). Digital geographies 1: Reality bytes. *Progress in Human Geography*, 0(0), <https://doi.org/10.1177/03091325241273906>
- Patel, Z. (2022). The potential and pitfalls of co-producing urban knowledge: Rethinking spaces of engagement. *Methodological Innovations*, 15(3), 374–386. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20597991221129779>
- Scheba, S., & Scheba, A. (2023). Co-producing just geographies: Resourcing, bridging, and critical crossings in engaged scholarship. *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 20438206231178810. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20438206231178810>
- Tardanico, R. (2024). Fractured Mobilization: Miami’s Little Haiti Confronts Mega-Real Estate Speculation. *Critical Housing Analysis*, 11(1), 127–136. <https://doi.org/10.13060/23362839.2024.11.1.570>
- Thatcher, J., O’Sullivan, D., & Mahmoudi, D. (2016). Data colonialism through accumulation by dispossession: New metaphors for daily data. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 34(6), 990–1006. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775816633195>
- Wakefield, S., Molinari, S., & Grove, K. (2023). Crypto-urban statecraft: Post-pandemic urban governance experiments in Miami. *Urban Geography*, 44(8), 1816–1824. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2022.2125664>
- Wilson, M. W. (2021). GIScience I: Social histories and disciplinary crucibles. *Progress in Human Geography*, 45(1), 166–177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132520936741>