

SUBJECT: Computing Everywhere: Preliminary call for workshop instructors

Once again, the Computing Everywhere initiative in the Communication Studies department will be soliciting proposals from graduate students in TSB, MTS, Computer Science, Learning Sciences and related fields to teach workshops as part of our annual computational literacy series to be offered for Northwestern undergraduates with little or no technical experience.

This **preliminary call** describes some changes to the program for 2017-18 and invites input from potential instructors.

For 2017-18 we will be accepting **two types** of proposals, with detailed calls to follow this email:

**Series workshops** will be part of our ongoing zero-credit\*, 5-week course that consists of weekly 2-hour workshops in winter and spring quarters, with graduate students invited in the **fall quarter** to submit proposals. This year, each proposal will be expected to address at least **one** “fundamental concept” (see note below) of computational literacy. Applicants need not coordinate in advance on which concepts to cover, but a Google doc will be available for discussion and some applicants may be asked to modify their proposals slightly to ensure adequate coverage. Instructors may apply as individuals or in pairs, and, if selected, each instructor will be paid \$700 to develop a workshop and teach it twice during either winter or spring quarter.

**One-time workshops** are new this year, need not be part of a series and need not conform to any specific time or curriculum requirements. Some of these will likely be longer-format (i.e., half- or full-day deeper dives on a particular topic) seminars, but innovative proposals for any type of workshop are welcome. While all proposals will be considered, it is generally expected that workshops will be consistent with the Computing Everywhere objectives of being **lightweight, broadly accessible, low-pressure and low-risk**. Applicants to teach tailored workshops are particularly encouraged to discuss ideas well in advance of submission with Jeremy Birnholtz, the Computing Everywhere faculty coordinator.

While there is no explicit threshold for enrollment, workshops that do not draw sufficient interest from students in advance enrollment will not be offered. Compensation for tailored workshops may vary by format and length, but will be roughly commensurate with the rate paid for workshops in the 5-week series.

Applications for one-time workshops may be submitted at any time and will be reviewed on a rolling basis, but must be submitted **at least 8 weeks prior to the desired quarter of instruction** (i.e., roughly by August 1 for fall, November 1 for winter and February 1 for spring). In some cases, instructors who apply to teach in a particular quarter may be asked to defer to a different quarter.

**What’s a “fundamental concept” in computing?** We’re still figuring this out and welcome your input! Past and potential instructors are invited to weigh in on this question in this Google Doc:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/116UPekyhUQIz-tvUkj0MWwrYAMgOF-4IbID7yI6N8cQ/edit>

**Who is eligible?** All enrolled graduate students in good standing and postdocs at Northwestern are eligible to submit proposals, though proposals from students in MTS, TSB and closely related fields will receive priority. Past instructors are strongly encouraged to apply and integrate feedback received on prior workshops, as are past applicants whose proposals were not accepted. Prior to acceptance of any proposal, approval from the instructor’s advisor must be obtained. *It is generally expected that no individual applicant will be involved in more than two Computing Everywhere proposals during any academic year, though exceptions are possible.*

**What's computational literacy?** Exact topics will vary, but the overall goal is for students to be more conversant in computation. Topics could include the role of algorithms in everyday life, elementary programming and computational thinking, how to have conversations with programmers/software engineers, big data, etc. The overall goal is that workshops familiarize students with important computational concepts or ways of approaching problems as a programmer or in working with programmers.

**When will there be more information about proposals?** A detailed call for **series** workshops will be released in early fall 2017, and a detailed call for **one-time** workshops will be released in June 2017.

**What should be in a proposal?** This information will be contained in a formal call for proposals to be released soon (for **tailored** workshops) and in the fall (for **series** workshops).

**What if I have other questions?** Talk to past instructors, your peers and/or contact Jeremy Birnholtz.

**I'm having trouble getting my head around this. Can you point me to some examples?** Yes, of course. Here are the syllabi for the last 3 workshop series, including a list of topics:

[Spring 16](#)

[Winter 17](#)

[Spring 17](#)

\* Zero-credit courses appear on student transcripts as satisfactory/unsatisfactory, but do not carry academic credit. Attendance and active participation are required for satisfactory credit.