

Sylvia Simioni

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Research Interests

My research explores migrants' use of technology for clandestine border crossing in Central America and sociotechnical strategies for supporting their safety, privacy, and human dignity on the migrant trail. I use participant observation and in-depth interviews convey the experiences of communities in Latin America and the United States impacted by transnational violence.

Education

2018 — 2023 **PhD in Information, University of Michigan**
School of Information
Advisor: Dr. Kentaro Toyama

2012 — 2014 **BA in Anthropology and Latin American Studies, University of Virginia**
College of Arts and Sciences, Graduated with Distinction

Awards

2019 ACM CHI Best Paper Award
2018 ACM CHI Best Paper Award
2017 Eli Segal AmeriCorps Education Award
2014 Phi Beta Kappa, University of Virginia

Publications

Dillahunt, T.R., **Simioni, S.**, Xu, X. (2019). Online Grocery Delivery Services: An Opportunity to Address Food Disparities in Transportation-scarce Areas. *Proceedings of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (CHI '19). **Best Paper Award.**

Simioni, S., Martell, A., McDonald, A., Mhaidli, A., Guberek, T., Toyama, K., Schaub, F. (2018). Designing Digital Literacy and Security Trainings for Latinx Immigrants in the United States. In *Fourteenth Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security* (SOUPS '18). Workshop Paper.

Guberek, T., McDonald A., **Simioni, S.**, Mhaidli, A., Toyama, K., Schaub, F. (2018). Keeping a Low Profile?: Technology, Risk and Privacy among Undocumented Immigrants. *Proceedings of the 2018 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (CHI '18). **Best Paper Award.**

Funding

- 2019 U-M International Institute, Tinker Field Foundation Research Grant
- 2019 U-M School of Information Research Mini-Grant
- 2019 U-M Rackham Conference Travel Grant
- 2019 U-M School of Information PhD Travel Grant
- 2019 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program, Honorable Mention
- 2018 U-M School of Information Merit Scholarship
- 2018 SOUPS, National Science Foundation, Student Grant
- 2018 U-M School of Information MSI Travel Grant
- 2017 U-M School of Information Achievement Fellowship
- 2012 University of Virginia Access UVa Scholarship

Presentations

- 2019 Researching Digital Tools to Explore Opportunities for Social Impact. Invitation by Prof. Jasmine Jones for Guest Lecture at Berea College, Kentucky. November 2019.
- 2019 Online Grocery Delivery Services: An Opportunity to Address Food Disparities in Transportation-scarce Areas. ACM CHI, Glasgow, Scotland, UK. May 2019.
- 2018 Designing Digital Literacy and Security Trainings for Latinx Immigrants in the United States. USENIX SOUPS, Baltimore, Maryland. August 2019.

Teaching

Graduate Student Instructor

- FA 2019 SI 501 Contextual Inquiries and Consulting Foundations, University of Michigan

Related Professional Experience

2020 Research Collaborator

UMSI School of Information, with Dr. Michaelanne Dye

Conducts semi-structured interviews with communities in Havana, Cuba to learn how the Spanish concept “resolviendo” is manifest on the island as a cultural ideology in efforts to understand sociotechnical innovations borne from widespread economic constraints. Co-leads participant recruitment, interviewing, and analysis of qualitative data.

2018 Graduate Student Research Assistant

U-M School of Public Health, under Drs. Paul Fleming and William Lopez

Liases among immigrant rights grassroots organizations, social service providers, and mixed-status families in Washtenaw County in support of developing a Block Captain model for facilitating advocacy leadership positions for members of the Latinx community. Co-develops

strategies for lateral Block Captain–social service provider relationships and self-acquisition of information relating to social service needs.

2018–2019 Research Assistant

UMSI Research Experience for Master's Students, under Dr. Tawanna Dillahunt

Conducted semi-structured interviews and a field experiment with individuals living in transportation-scarce and low-income areas in southeastern Michigan to observe grocery selection behaviors and explore design opportunities to enable compatible payment methods and engender health empowerment. Led onboarding and analysis of qualitative data and assisted in recruitment and analysis of quantitative data.

2017 Research Assistant

UMSI Digital Privacy for Vulnerable Communities, under Dr. Kentaro Toyama

Transcribed, translated, and assisted in conducting semi-structured interviews with members of vulnerable communities to observe technology practices. Co-led digital security trainings geared toward enabling better access to and knowledge of technological benefits and risks. Edited recruitment forms, interview protocols, and assisted in inductive coding of qualitative data.

2017–2018 Information Mentor

U-M School of Information, Office of Academic and Student Affairs

Served as student liaison for prospective students and increased knowledge of UMSI programs and admissions through engagement in blogs, social media, webinars, and email. Supported outreach efforts for existing partners and explores opportunities for new partnerships aligned with UMSI goals and priorities. Led diversity initiatives to promote recruitment and provide resources for first-generation and otherwise nontraditional students.

2016–2017 Refugee AmeriCorps Service Member

Episcopal Migration Ministries, Miami Office

Founded volunteer program with positions in employment readiness, social services support, cultural integration, ESL tutoring, financial literacy, and donations assortment for refugee clients. Managed 70+ volunteers and in-donations inventory to assist in the arrival and housing setup for incoming refugee families. Ran monthly orientations that introduced the public to the geopolitical context of refugee resettlement and trained volunteers in developing cross-cultural skills and sensitivity to diverse backgrounds.

Memberships

Association for Computing Machinery, Student Member

American Anthropological Association, Student Member

Cornell University Designing Technology for Social Impact, Inaugural Cohort

Digital Privacy for Vulnerable Communities Research Lab, Student Member
Health Inequities and Immigration Research Lab, U-M School of Public Health, Member
Information Communication Technology for Development Research Lab, Student Member
Michigan Interactive Social Computing, Member
Social Innovations Group, Student Member
U-M Rackham Institute for Social Change, Cass Commons, Detroit
Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights, Communications Committee Volunteer

Languages

Spanish (Spain; Honduras), fluent
'Spanglish' (Miami), fluent