The Data Analytics team at the DeVoe Moore Center is examining emails involving Tallahassee’s Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to better understand the economic development decision-making process. The project is an interdisciplinary initiative involving the FSU Department of Computational Science and Askew School of Public Administration.

The Data Analytics team creates algorithms using coding software such as Python and R to extract information from emails regarding court records and budget concerns. Austin Eovito, manager of the Data Analytics team, explained that the process of analyzing emails is complicated and tedious. The team often runs into impediments when using computer language conversion.

“Some emails contain special characters their encoding language cannot interpret,” he said. Redactions from the city have also limited the total number of emails they can analyze. Nevertheless, the team still hopes to generate a better understanding of the decision-making process while developing new techniques for examining communication patterns among principal decision-makers. They also aim to understand how the topics vary over time.

Significant questions of transparency and accountability in local government have emerged as the result of an FBI investigation into CRA-related projects in Tallahassee. The DeVoe Moore Center hopes this innovative project in data analysis will further our understanding of real world policymaking.
Students from various departments at Florida State joined with the DeVoe L. Moore Center to begin their internships. The event began with Director Samuel Staley introducing himself and the DMC mission, and acquainting incoming interns with the center’s goals and policies.

The group managers were then introduced: Austin Eovito with Data Analytics, Abby Swatts with Blog Content, and Megan Boebinger with Public Affairs. After introductions, the interns broke off into their respective groups to discuss semester goals and objectives.

Samantha Handley is a senior studying Editing, Writing, and Media at FSU. She is a writing coach for the DMC and is a peer tutor at the Digital Studio on campus.
The graph above illustrates the media used by the DeVoe Moore Center to reach audiences in 2018. Across various social media accounts like Twitter and Facebook, videos and text posts were the most prominent in reaching audiences. The center's most-reached media, such as video, is dynamic and interactive, which

The graph above shows the level of engagement by audiences across media distribution. The most frequently interacted form across our social media platforms appears to be text statuses, and videos and photos roughly tie for second. For the DMC, more users are coming to our page to interact and engage with our text posts, which means the center is seeing a higher number of users staying on our social media pages.

The DeVoe Moore Center established a new initiative in association with the English department at Florida State in 2018 to improve the writing quality and style of its authors.

The DMC takes pride in its blogs, op-eds, and policy reports, and the writing coach program allows English majors to earn internship credit for reviewing the written work of research assistants during a rigorous editorial review process. The coaches improve writing by noting technical issues like grammar and fluency, but also look at work as it relates to the DMC mission and philosophy.

The DMC’s articles and research often appear in newspapers, including commentary in the Tallahassee Democrat.

Dana O’Halloran is a senior studying Editing, Writing, and Media at FSU. She is a writing coach for the DMC, and she is hoping to move to Boston, MA, after graduation.
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