University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
Graduate School of Library and Information Science
LIS 502 Libraries, Information, and Society, Spring 2014
Meets in LIS 341, Thursdays 4-5:50 except Friday, March 28, 9-4
Course documents and website https://courses.lis.illinois.edu/

Instructor
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Office hours by arrangement

Course Description
Explores major issues in the library and information science professions as they involve their communities of users and sponsors. Analyzes specific situations that reflect the professional agenda of these fields, including intellectual freedom, community service, professional ethics, social responsibilities, intellectual property, literacy, historical and international models, the socio-cultural role of libraries and information agencies and professionalism in general, focusing in particular on the interrelationships among these issues. Required M.S. degree core course.
Pre- and Co-requisites: LIS Masters student status or consent of instructor.

Course structure and assignments
1. Lead discussion (25% of course grade). Each student will lead discussion of several readings. For each reading, create a one-sided, one-page handout about the reading that includes a drawing/diagram/chart/table about or from the reading and three discussion questions. Email to instructor the night before class for duplication.
2. Participate (25%). For every reading you’re not leading discussion on, prepare to discuss. This can mean preparing a question or comment in advance, or jumping into discussion as it unfolds. To help with this, read with a pencil. Relate the reading to something else you read or saw. Bring a drawing or diagram inspired by the reading. Your choice. Just do not remain silent.
3. Wiki (25%). Make two substantial contributions, one to Wikipedia and one to the local wiki cuwiki.net. Talk with two people about what you did. Summarize and reflect on the experience by answering four questions: What did you do? What reaction did you get? What did you learn? What suggestions do you have for the future of these two wikis? ~500 words. Due Sunday, March 9 to moodle.
4. Policy briefing memo (25%). Choose a burning issue facing information organizations; research it; develop your point of view as to a policy recommendation; and argue for it in a
~3000-word memo aimed at the information organization of your choice. Further instructions will be provided. Due April 3 to moodle and hard copy in class.

5. Research paper/presentation for four credit students. (50% of your course grade, and other assignments are worth half as much as noted above). The research paper is an original analysis of an issue or issues related to the course content that you would like to investigate in more detail. If you collect new data in addition to using the literature, consider submitting it to a professional journal. 5000-6000 words not including the bibliography, and a class presentation. Paper and short presentation due May 1 to moodle and hard copy in class.

- Propose your topic in an email to me by March 13.
- If you want early feedback, email me a draft by April 17.
- 15-20 minute presentation in class on May 1. Slides optional.

Attendance and participation
This is a seminar course, so speaking up is required, as is doing the reading in advance so that you can speak about the readings and the topic. Class participation is required. If you have to miss a class for any reason I appreciate an email as far in advance as possible.

Library resources
Make use of Daniel Tracy and Sandy Wolf, UIUC’s two LIS librarians, ready to help you. http://www.library.illinois.edu/lis/, phone 217-333-3804, lislib@library.illinois.edu

Inclusion
As the state’s premier public university, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign’s core mission is to serve the interests of the diverse people of the state of Illinois and beyond. The institution thus values inclusion and a pluralistic learning and research environment, one which we respect the varied perspectives and lived experiences of a diverse community and global workforce. We support diversity of worldviews, histories, and cultural knowledge across a range of social groups including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, abilities, economic class, religion, and their intersections. http://www.inclusiveillinois.illinois.edu/chancellordivstmtnf.html#ValueStmt

Disability
To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities can contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603 (V/TTY), or e-mail disability@uiuc.edu.

Schedule and readings
January 23: Collections
Today we’ll work at a high level of abstraction. Libraries and other collections of information are specifications of the phenomenon of Collection. To balance the abstractness, bring details on a very real collection you know well. Other readings help us think about collections of text and of data.
Bring:
Choose a collection of items that you know pretty well: something of your own, from your family, your youth, a friend or relative. Answer six questions in note form so that you share in class:

1. What is in the collection and how much?
2. How was it built?
3. Why was it built?
4. Who built it and or uses it?
5. What did/does the collection do?
6. How has all this changed over time? (Any crisis moments?)


January 30: Economics
Economics underpins conditions facing collections, libraries, archives, museums, and all information organizations.
University of Illinois, 2010. Stewarding Excellence@University of Illinois: University Library and Law Library. Read the conclusions and the tables.

February 6: Ethnicity and Eurocentrism
The US was born as a settler colony practicing genocide and discrimination again people who weren’t “white”—the definition of which shifts over time. Past and continuing struggles have envisioned transformation; today population shifts are also pushing. Public cultural or information institutions such as libraries, archives and museums have to chart their course. Blaut’s critique is a starting point. Census numbers and measurements speak volumes. Wolfe explains the influential policy writer Samuel P. Huntington. Chu and Honma present a detailed case of how a library responded.
February 13: Wikis

Peer production is a broad phenomenon rising on the affordances of the internet age. Libraries are impacted and are also participants. We’re looking closely at two examples of wikis – the local wiki movement and Wikipedia. Shachaf is asking for useful theory to guide practice. Kukso and Neustrom have (re)discovered librarians. Can we move forward faster without reinventing the wheel here? What theory or ideas do we find useful?


View: Philip Neustrom “Edit your city: Collaborative media in the 21st century” (video and slides) presentation at eChicago 2012. [http://echicago.illinois.edu](http://echicago.illinois.edu) (click on events, find 2012).


Check out: [http://localwiki.org/faq](http://localwiki.org/faq) and [http://cuwiki.net](http://cuwiki.net).

February 20 and 27: No class, see February 28

Friday, February 28: Older people

Library patrons are not a homogenous mass. To serve any community or population, you need to learn about them. This week class is an entire day (9-4) of practice and discussion devoted to a particular and growing population: old people. You and the LEEP community informatics class will help two groups of seniors learn and use digital devices, one group in the morning and another in the afternoon. You’ll finish by talking about the experience and the readings. You can also decide to join your LEEP classmates for lunch (10$). Senior Tech Day (as it is billed to our community partners) starts at Champaign Public Library at 9 am.

If you can drive, you may be asked to give rides to LEEPers.
If you can bring a phone, laptop, tablet, camera, and even cables to teach people about, please do.


Visit: The pictures here go with the article above; scroll down to the bottom of the page: http://www.tecn.upf.es/~ssayag/TellingOlderPeopleStoryEmailing/


**March 6: No class, see February 28**

Due SUNDAY, MARCH 9 to Moodle: Wiki paper.

**March 13: Literacy**

Due: MARCH 13 by email to instructor: 4 credit paper topics

As we read in Scribner (January 23) literacy is not a “state of grace” that makes the reader a better person than someone who cannot read. But whatever type of literacy is the basis of culture, a person’s literacy, degree of literacy, or the lack thereof very much determines one’s freedom to act. So what is literacy? Finn examines what children bring to school and what US schools teach. Radway looks closely at women reading romances to reject class and gender stereotypes and rethink reading as liberation. Williams surveys what we know about the newest form of literacy, digital literacy.


**March 20: Intellectual property**

Intellectual property has always changed along with technology and formats, but not without debate and conflict. Lessig recaps this and proposes a solution. Schiller summarizes the state of things – for most people, it’s not information overload but data deprivation. Emily Walshe challenges us to interrogate our newest devices. What do librarians and their patrons need to know?

Read: Lessig, Lawrence. *Free Culture*. Preface, intro, and Chapter 1. [http://www.jus.uio.no/sisu/free_culture.lawrence_lessig/sisu_manifest.html](http://www.jus.uio.no/sisu/free_culture.lawrence_lessig/sisu_manifest.html) Also see: [www.free-culture.cc](http://www.free-culture.cc)

Explore: Creative Commons, the movement and “copyleft” system that Lessig’s book jumpstarted: [http://us.creativecommons.org/](http://us.creativecommons.org/)


American Library Association. [http://www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org) then search for “Copyright”
Cornell University Law School, Copyright. [http://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/copyright](http://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/copyright)

**April 3: Intellectual freedom**

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<th>Due APRIL 3 to Moodle and hard copy in class: Policy briefing memo.</th>
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Intellectual freedom has been the foundational idea underpinning the library in the US and elsewhere. Generations of US library students read Asheim. Ranganathan generated his five laws to implement intellectual freedom. The ALA has adopted a short Bill of Rights and published a big book looking at intellectual freedom from many angles. Dresang proposes a theory to help us maintain course in the confusing digital environment.


April 10: Government

This week we consider various aspects of the relationship between information and government. Most librarians are government employees at some level, yet their profession locates them in a particular relationship with government policy.


Peruse: Jacobs et al’s follow-on project http://freegovinfo.info/


April 17: Library roots

Due APRIL 17 by email to instructor, if you want feedback: draft of 4 credit paper

Roots n: 1) the basic cause, source, or origin of something. 2) the essential substance or nature of something.

This week we read Lowell Martin’s summation and synthesis, written near the end a lifetime of library innovation and research at Chicago Public Library and elsewhere. Everyone gets to lead discussion of one chapter.

Read: Martin, Lowell A. Enrichment: a history of the public library in the United States in the twentieth century. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press, 1998. This book is out of print, but will be available at cost ($10) from the instructor.

April 24: Library shoots

Shoots n: new branches and their leaves on an established plant.


May 1: Scholarly communication

Due in class: 4 credit students turn in their papers and present their research findings.

This week we consider how scholarly communications are navigating changes that we have already read about along with new ones.


http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/chapters/0262232421chap1.pdf