

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES
University of Alberta

LIS 502
ORGANIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION
FALL 1998

Instructor: Hope Olson
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office hours are posted weekly on a sign-up sheet, *normally* Tuesdays, 11:30-12:30,
Wednesdays, 3:30-4:30 and Thursdays, 8:30-9:00, or by appointment

Calendar description: An introduction to the organization of knowledge and information, including bibliographic control, classification, indexing and abstracting. Required course.

Objectives:

- ★To provide students with an understanding of concepts of knowledge, information and its transmission.
- ★To provide students with an understanding of analytical principles for the organization of the intellectual content of information records.
- ★To acquaint students with methods of creating and providing access to records.

Content: This course surveys theory, principles and applications of organization of information. The structure of the course begins with theoretical background of knowledge, information and communication. The second part of the course covers principles of organizing information as established in the literature of information storage and retrieval. The third part of the course examines specific applications of these principles in the field of LIS. Theory and practice are addressed together. Management and automation issues are integrated into each topic as appropriate. Attention to different library and information contexts is stressed. The course is an introductory course for understanding theory and principles and surveying applications, NOT a skills acquisition course.

Methods: Instruction will combine lecture, discussion and application in class. Students will prepare for and follow up on ideas presented in class through readings and exercises.

<u>Assignments and</u>	Class Participation	10%
	Essay	25%
<u>Evaluation:</u>	Analysis of Information Sources	30%
	Final Examination	35%

Marks are raw scores totalled at the end of the course and converted to the 9-point scale. A distribution of grades in the range of 6 to 9 will be expected with a mean in the range of 7.1-7.5. However, the distribution will not be the ultimate determining factor of grades.

Class participation expectations:

Class participation is individual contribution for the benefit of the class as a whole. Participation is a collective exercise. The purpose is for all members of the class to join comfortably in the process. Factors to be considered in class participation include, but are not necessarily limited to: presence, preparation, attitude, small group interaction, general class contributions, cooperative work outside of class. Students will submit a one-paragraph self-assessment of class participation on or before **DECEMBER 10** by e-mail. The purpose of the self-assessment is to acquaint the instructor with participation not readily visible and to present the student's perspective.

Essay:

The purpose of the essay is to demonstrate the student's grasp of the topic of the first part of the course: theories of knowledge and information as they relate to communication. Content covered in class and assigned readings will be sufficient to complete the essays. The essay should follow the *MLA handbook for writers of research papers*, the *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, or another standard to avoid biased language and cite references. Essays should be in an easily readable 10 pt. font, 1½ line spacing, and margins no wider than one inch. Do not use a separate title page, but put title, course number, date and student ID at the top of the first page. The essay will be 1000-1500 words in length (approximately 3 pages in the prescribed format).

Topic: ***Describe the relationships between knowledge and information. Choose definitions for each that fit your interpretation of the relationships.***

The essay is due in the instructor's mailbox by **4:00 pm, 28 September**. Essays submitted late will normally be penalized 4% for the first day and 2% for each succeeding day to a maximum of 20%.

The essay will be evaluated for:

- 1) Demonstration of an understanding of the concepts presented in the course—50%
- 2) Synthesis of ideas into a cohesive and coherent viewpoint—40%
- 3) Style—10%

Analysis of information sources:

The purpose of the analysis is to apply the theory and principles studied in the first two parts of the course. To complete the analysis the student will:

- 1) Analyze the Edmonton Yellow Pages, the University of Alberta's Gate catalogue (use WWW version <http://gate.library.ualberta.ca/>) and Yahoo! (<http://www.yahoo.com/>) in terms of the principles of relevance, precision and recall, specificity, exhaustivity and consistency. Use examples to illustrate the principles.
- 2) Identify the underlying assumptions about knowledge and information that can be deduced from these sources

The analysis will have the same font, margins, *etc.* as the essay. It will be 1500-2000 words and no more than 4 pages (including examples) in length. The analysis is due in the instructor's mailbox by **4:00 pm, 2 November**. Analyses submitted late normally will be penalized 4% for the first day and 2% for each succeeding day to a maximum of 20%.

The analysis of information sources will be evaluated for:

- 1) Understanding of the principles—30%
- 2) Application of the principles in analysis of the three sources—30%
- 3) Use of theories of knowledge and information—30%
- 4) Style—10%

Final examination:

The examination will cover the entire course content. It will consist of questions requiring short answers. **The EXAMINATION will be 9:00 am, Wednesday, 11 December for both sections of the course.**

Inclusive Language and Equity:

The Faculty of Education is committed to providing an environment of equality and respect for all people within the university community. Accordingly, staff and students should adhere to the principles of inclusive language so that students' experiences and views are treated with equal respect and value in relation to their gender, racial background, sexual orientation, and ethnic background.

Texts: Readings, except those marked *, are included in the custom courseware package available from the University Bookstore.

- Bourne, Ross. (1994). The role of the national bibliographic agency. *International Cataloguing and Bibliographic Control* 23(4), 64-67.
- Cutter, Charles A. (1904). Rules for a dictionary catalog: Selections. In Michael Carpenter and Elaine Svenonius (eds.), *Foundations of cataloging: A sourcebook* (Pp. 62-71). Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1985.
- Dervin, Brenda. (1977). Useful theory for librarianship: Communication, not information. *Drexel Library Quarterly* 13(3), 16-32.
- *Dewey, Melvil. (1996). Introduction to the Dewey Decimal Classification [Sections 1-9, 12-13]. In Joan S. Mitchell *et al* (eds.), *Dewey Decimal Classification and relative index* (Edition 21), (Pp. xxxi-l, liv-lvi). Albany, NY: Forest Press.
- Frohmann, Bernd. (1994). Communication technologies and the politics of postmodern information science. *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science* 19:2, 1-22.
- Harmon, Robert E. (1989). Chapter six: Standards for bibliographies. In his *Elements of bibliography: A simplified approach* (rev. ed.), (Pp. 92-112). Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press.
- Iivonen, Mirja. (1990). Interindexer consistency and the indexing environment. *International Forum for Information and Documentation* 15(2), 16-21.
- **Library of Congress Subject Headings*. Introduction. Any bound copy available in Henderson Hall.
- Milstead, Jessica L. (1984). Chapter 9: Assigned terms; and Chapter 10: Terminology authority design. In her *Subject access systems: Alternatives in design* (Pp. 136-165). Orlando: Academic Press.
- Pao, Miranda Lee. (1989). 7: Information representation. In her *Concepts of information retrieval* (Pp. 98-145). Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited.
- Schamber, Linda, Michael B. Eisenberg, and Michael S. Nilan. (1990). A re-examination of relevance: Toward a dynamic, situational definition. *Information Processing & Management* 36(6), 755-776.
- Sparck Jones, Karen. (1973). Does indexing exhaustivity matter? *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* (September-October), 313-316.
- Svenonius, Elaine. (1986). Unanswered questions in the design of controlled vocabularies. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 37(5), 331-340.

Supplementary readings:

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<http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be:/EPISTEMI.html> Epistemology, an introduction, by F. Heylighen

http://pi0959.kub.nl:2080/Paai/Onderw/Barcpaai/barcpaai_h1.html A concise survey of libraries and Information Retrieval

<http://hertz.njit.edu/~robertso/infosci/index.html> The fundamentals of information science: an online overview

Schedule:

Theory

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|----|-------------|------------------------------|----------|
| 1) | Sept. 8/10 | Introduction
Epistemology | |
| 2) | Sept. 15/17 | Information | Dervin |
| 3) | Sept. 22/24 | Communication | Frohmann |

4:00 pm, 28 September — Theory essay due

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| 4) | Sept. 29/Oct. 1 | Role and functions of organization of information | |
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Principles

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| 5) | Oct. 6/8 | Aboutness
Relevance | Schamber <i>et al</i> |
| 6) | Oct. 13/15 | Vocabulary | Svenonius
Milstead |
| 7) | Oct. 20/22 | Coextensiveness & Specificity | |
| 8) | Oct. 27/29 | Exhaustivity
Consistency | Sparck Jones
Iivonen |

4:00 pm, 2 November— Analysis due

Application

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| 9) | Nov. 3/5 | Elements of bibliographic control
Indexing | Bourne
Pao |
| 10) | Nov. 10/12 | Bibliography
<i>watch for possible scheduling changes for this class</i> | Harmon |
| 11) | Nov. 17/19 | Cataloguing | Cutter |
| 12) | Nov. 24/26 | Subject headings | <i>LCSH</i> introduction |
| 13) | Dec. 1/3 | Classification | <i>DDC</i> introduction |
| | Dec. 10, 9:00 am | Optional question and answer session | |

4:00 pm, 10 December—Self-assessment due

EXAM for both sections DECEMBER 11, 9:00 am