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.

Assignments and Evaluation:
Class Participation 10%
Essay 25%
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.
Readings, except those marked *, are included in the custom courseware package available from the University Bookstore.


Supplementary readings:

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

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

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

Principles

5) Oct. 6/8 Aboutness Relevance Schamber et al
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

9) Nov. 3/5 Elements of bibliographic control Indexing Bourne Pao
10) Nov. 10/12 Bibliography watch for possible scheduling changes for this class Harmon
11) Nov. 17/19 Cataloguing Cutter
12) Nov. 24/26 Subject headings LCSH introduction
13) Dec. 1/3 Classification DDC 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