

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES
University of Alberta
LIS 582: Contemporary Issues In Library & Information Studies:
GLOBALIZATION, DIVERSITY AND INFORMATION

FALL 1998

The following description is specific to this topic and does not relate to LIS 582 in other terms.

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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

Description:

Explores global and local interactions as they affect information access within and outside of libraries, including cultural, ethical, economic, political and institutional discourses.

Objectives:

Upon completion of this course students will appreciate and be able to critique issues of:

- 1) the interaction of global and local discourses in information contexts
- 2) information access services to diverse populations
- 3) globalization as a corporate discourse and its impact on information access
- 4) diversity in information needs and information seeking strategies
- 5) library discourses of cooperation and standardization
- 6) national and transnational information policies

The course will address the following MLIS Program Objectives in particular:

- Students will have an understanding of concepts of knowledge and concepts of information and of the methods of preservation and transmission of cultural records
- Students will be aware of the responsibility of librarians and information specialists with respect to the free flow of ideas and access to information
- Students will have an understanding of the functions of librarians and information specialists within the larger societal framework, and of the factors influencing the creation, dissemination, and use of knowledge and information
- Students will be aware of the culturally diverse composition of society, and of the responsibility to serve all client groups with respect and understanding

Content:

Specific factors addressed are likely to include:

- 1) intellectual property
- 2) information technologies
- 3) information rich/information poor
- 4) the situations of knowledge/information workers
- 5) the relevance of postcoloniality to information access

- 6) marginalized cultures and groups
- 7) information cooptation from and imposition on indigenous cultures
- 8) information and development

Assignments:

class participation — 10%

seminar presentation — 20%

major paper or project to be completed in stages:

- a) discussion paper identifying issues based on relevant literature — 20%
- b) identification of a specific issue and a plan for the paper/project — 10%
- c) final version of the paper/project — 40%

Class participation:

Class participation is contribution to both the content and the inclusiveness of the course. It will include contributions to discussion, cooperation in group work, preparation and attitude and enhancing the experience of the course for other students.

Seminar presentations:

The presentations will be scheduled over three weeks as designated on the course schedule. Each week a group of students will coordinate responsibility for the class. Presentations may be individual, in groups, or some combination thereof. The group will agree on allocation of time and make a schedule for the class session leaving 30 minutes at the end for general discussion of the topic and readings. Presentations will be assessed on the basis of content, plan of presentation, and presentation style (including timing). The session as a whole may give a broad overview or may focus on particular aspects or instances.

Discussion paper:

The discussion paper will be the first phase of planning for the final project/paper. It will describe the general area of interest and define the important issues in that area. It should summarize relevant literature from within and/or outside of LIS. The general area must be confirmed with the instructor. The discussion paper will be made available to the rest of the class in print, on the s:\, or on the WWW.

Plan for the paper/project:

The plan may be in point form and outline the proposed paper or project. It is an opportunity for the student to verify that the final product will take a useful direction. It will focus on some aspect of the area described in the discussion paper.

Final paper/project:

The final assignment may be a traditional paper or some kind of project, such as a web document. It will deal with an issue or topic including some aspect of globalization or diversity AND some aspect of library studies or information. You MUST discuss your plan with the instructor.