LIS 600: Information in Society, Fall 2013 (v. 8/31/2013)

Format: BlackBoard online class
Instructor Information: Dr. Donald O. Case. Office Hours: Wednesday & Thursday 1-4
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Official Course Description: An introduction to the nature of information (both utilitarian and aesthetic) in contemporary society, and to the role played by libraries and other information organizations in disseminating that information. Emphasis is on developing perspective.

Course goals: LIS 600 addresses the “Foundations of the profession” core competency area, as approved by the ALA. The course provides the following content: the history of human communication and its impact on libraries; the history of libraries and librarianship; types of libraries and related agencies; the importance of advocacy for libraries, librarians and their services; the ethics, values and foundational principles of the profession; the role of LIS professionals in promoting democratic principles and intellectual freedom; the legal framework within which libraries operate (e.g., laws respecting copyright, intellectual property, privacy, equal rights, and certification/licensure); and social, economic and cultural trends and policies of significance to the profession.

Assignments and Grading. The grade is decided according to the following percentages:
- Research Papers/Essays (3): 60%
- Final exam: 20%
- Participation in Online Discussions: 20%

One text contains about a third of the required readings:

We will read a few chapters from this book:

Grading Policy. All grading is comparative and on a curve. Papers are assigned points in comparison with each other, based on quality of thought and of writing style, thoroughness of research and of references, length and originality. Papers or quizzes received after the due date will be assigned a lower grade than would otherwise be received. Only exceptional work will receive an "A" grade. There is no fixed boundary between grades; in the past "A" grades have typically required 185 out of 200 points.

Attendance, etc.: Each classmember must contribute regularly (i.e., at least 4 postings) to each set of Discussion Board questions—the equivalent of a "B" grade for "participation." Less participation will lower the grade; frequent, informed participation will raise it. Acceptable reasons for an excused absence from course activities include serious illness or bereavement; it is UK policy to grant incompletes (I grade) only for such reasons; see the UK Student Code for details (www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/). Students with documented disabilities must contact the instructor and the Disability Resource Center in advance of requests for accommodation. Papers for this class require original research and writing. Quotation of others' work without full attribution is a violation of ethics and UK policy; Academic Senate rules stipulate an E grade, or worse, in instances of plagiarism.

Integration of Syllabus with UK Educator Preparation Unit Themes:

This course will address the four themes of the conceptual framework for the UK professional education unit: research, reflection, learning, and leading. Students will be given the opportunity to review, analyze, discuss, and apply research from diverse perspectives in education and information seeking environments. Reflection will also be integrated into students' learning opportunities through the production of written work. This course emphasizes the commitment of the professional education unit to assure that its graduates move into their professional lives equipped for life-long learning as educators who will be active in leading colleagues in their schools and/or professional organizations. The ultimate goal in addressing these four themes is to produce leaders who work together to improve service and learning among diverse populations and improve education in Kentucky and beyond.

Integration of the Syllabus with the Themes of Diversity, Assessment, and Technology: All UK professional education programs address and affirm the value of diversity in education, the use of technology to support all aspects of instructional programming, and the importance of attaining high levels of skill in assessing the outcomes of instruction. This course provides students an opportunity to demonstrate attention to these themes and reflect on the mechanisms that this course has provided to demonstrate improved skills in these areas.
LIS 600: Tasks by dates. The definitive schedule is Blackboard Course Documents; this printed syllabus does NOT reflect all web materials, such as PowerPoints and optional readings. Course weeks start on Mondays and end on Sundays, except for week One, which runs from Wednesday to the following Sunday. All written work is due by Friday evening, while Discussion posts are due by Sunday night.

WEEK 1 (8/28-9/1): Introduction to course.  [No reading due for this week]

Tasks: Buy text books, login to BlackBoard, describe yourself and your interests, and start reading.

WEEK 2 (9/2-9/8): History of libraries and information technology.


WEEK 3 (9/9-9/15): The sociology of professions. The profession of librarianship.


WEEK 4 (9/16-9/22): Defining “information” and “Information science.”


DUE Friday, Sept. 20: Essay #1. Read and cite at least three sources (e.g., articles, reports or book chapters) related to roles taken on by librarians, other information professions, or by institutions like the library. Examples of roles (these are broader than job titles) include educators of children and adults, disseminators of scholarly and scientific research, or advocates of intellectual freedom. Review and discuss the sources in an essay. The resulting paper should be about five (5) pages in length, and about 2,000 words.
WEEK 5 (9/23-9/29): information seeking and information services.

Buckland, Michael. (1988). Chapter 6, Inquiries; Chapter 9, Becoming Informed; Chapter 10, Demand. Available at: http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/Literature/Library/Services

Case, D. (2008). Information seeking (Chapter manuscript attached to Week 5).


WEEK 6 (9/30-10/6): The Information Society: Implications for libraries.


WEEK 7 (10/7-10/13): Libraries by type/organization: Public and School libraries.


**DUE Friday, Oct. 18:** Essay #2. Read and cite at least three sources (e.g., articles, reports or book chapters) related to policies OR theories relevant to libraries, and/or the information professions in general. Review and discuss the sources in an essay. The resulting paper should be about five (5) pages in length, and about 2,000 words. (If you have any doubts about the scope of “policy,” see the Case, 2012, article from Week 7.)

**WEEK 9 (10/21-10/27): Issues: Technology and organizational change.**


Lenhart, A., Horrigan, J. Pew Internet and American Life Project. [NOTE: Click on the links about "Who's online" and "What Internet users do . . ." and read what you see there.] Available at: http://www.pewinternet.org/Trend-Data.aspx


**WEEK 11 (11/4-11/10): Issues: Copyright and intellectual property.**


Henderson, Carol. Libraries as creatures of copyright: Why librarians care about intellectual property law and policy. Available at: http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/copyright/copyrightarticle/librariescreatures.cfm


Templeton, B. Ten big myths about copyright explained. Available at: http://www.faqs.org/faqs/law/copyright/myths/part1/


ALA. Facts about libraries and filtering. Available at: http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=cipa&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=44278


Alire, C. (2009). Ideals keynote, parts 2, 3, 4, 5 (four 9-minute videos of a speech by ALA President). Available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8TbPx_0IF0&noredirect=1


Video (requires RealPlayer): Dr. Ling Hwey Jeng, University of North Texas.

WEEK 14 (11/25-12/1): Image and status of the information professions

Dupre, Deirdre. The perception of image and status in the library profession. [The following URL takes you to a page on the U. of Oregon website. Near the bottom is a link, "View/Open," to the actual article. The article is preceded by a commentary from someone else, so read carefully to see where Dupre’s text begins.] https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/dspace/handle/1794/1109

Engle, Michael. Remythologizing Work: The role of archetypal images in the humanization of librarianship. Available at: http://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/3902


NOTE: Nov. 28-31 are officially UK Thanksgiving Break academic holidays.

WEEK 15 (12/2-12/8): Image and film portrayals


*Borrow, view, and discuss on BlackBoard, one of the following films from a library, Netflix or a video rental store:*

- Desk Set
- Foul Play
- Goodbye Columbus
- Major League
- The Music Man
- Gun in Betty Lou’s Handbag
- Party Girl
- Where the Heart is
- The Name of The Rose

**DUE Friday, Dec. 6:** Essay #3. Read and cite at least three sources (e.g., articles, reports or book chapters) related to ethical issues that affect libraries and/or the information professions in general. Review and discuss the sources in an essay. The resulting paper should be about five (5) pages in length, and about 2,000 words.

WEEK 16 (12/9-12/15): Prepare and post a 200-400 word comment on the sources you used for the three essays this semester. At the least, identify what you thought was the most interesting article you found overall, and what you learned from it. Respond to all questions by other classmates.

*The final exam is to be taken between 9AM Monday Dec. 16 and 11PM Tuesday Dec. 17 – the last week of the UK semester. This is the final requirement of the course.*
Guidelines for Writing Essays (about 5 pages, or 2,000 words, each)

These are intended to be scholarly papers that demonstrate your ability to:
1. Read and understand the professional and scholarly literature of LIS.
2. Evaluate, contrast and synthesize what you read.
3. Form your own opinions and arguments.
4. Synthesize the above into a well-written essay that demonstrates your grasp of the material and your ability to communicate clearly.

All of the abilities above (and the essays themselves) are evidence of the ALA competencies that you will discuss in your portfolios at the end of the degree program.

The literature potentially relevant to library and information science (LIS) is vast. By the “professional and scholarly literature” of LIS we refer mainly to journals like these:

- Bulletin of the Medical Library Association
- College and Research Libraries
- Information Research (http://informationr.net/ir/)
- Journal of Academic Librarianship
- Journal of Information Ethics
- Journal of Library Administration
- Journal of the American Society for Information Science & Technology
- Law Library Journal
- Library & Information Science Research
- Library Quarterly
- Library Trends
- Public Libraries
- School Library Journal
- School Library Media Quarterly

Directions: Identify a topic of interest that falls within the three broad themes indicated in the syllabus. Identify at least three relevant publications and cite them in your essay. The sources may include one from the required reading list, but must include additional publications that you find on your own, which could include non-bibliographic sources (e.g., interviews, or websites). Concentrate on those sources you consider most important. I prefer (but do not require) that you use citations in APA format for citing books and journals, and cite “author (year)” in the text, e.g., “. . . Johnson and Case (2012) and Chatman (1990) point out that . . .” would be listed in the references as:


Notes on style:
- WHICHEVER CITATION STYLE YOU USE, THE REFERENCES MUST BE CONSISTENT AND COMPLETE
- When quoting an author, include the author’s name, year and page number, e.g., “(Smith, 1999, p. 8).”
- Punctuate properly: in citations like the above, the period goes after the right paren, not before the left paren.
- Print your paper out and proof it before submission: One or two typos are tolerable but if there are many typos, words missing and/or incomplete citations, the score will be lowered.
- Write in a scholarly manner, without extreme statements or opinions. Try to cite evidence for your statements.
- Please do not include a cover page or an abstract, but do PUT YOUR NAME on the paper & in the filename.
Specific Guidelines for the Three Essays

Essay One
• Satisfies ALA Core Competencies 1.2.1.3 (Students will examine the roles of information agencies in curating and preserving the cultural record), 1.2.5.1 (. . . interpret and evaluate research), and 1.2.5.2 (. . . apply research to the analysis of professional problems).
• Addresses roles taken on by librarians, by other information professionals, or by institutions such as libraries. You must focus on one role for this paper.
  o Roles are broader than job titles.
  o A role will likely encompass several job duties, be applicable to different types of libraries, and be performed by multiple librarians.
  o Examples of roles: educators of children and adults, teachers of information literacy, disseminators of scholarly research, or advocates of intellectual freedom.

Essay Two
• Satisfies ALA Core Competencies 1.2.2.1 (Students will critically evaluate key philosophical concepts and principles of librarianship through an examination of the history and context of librarianship, and alternative theoretical perspectives), 1.2.3.1 (. . . examine major information policies and policy theories impacting the national and global information society), 1.2.3.2 (. . . identify and evaluate key issues that lie at the intersection of librarianship and information policy), 1.2.5.1 (. . . interpret and evaluate research), and 1.2.5.2 (. . . apply research to the analysis of professional problems).
• Addresses theories or policies relevant to information professionals and/or organizations.
  o Case (2010) examines the breadth and diversity of information policies.
  o Focus only on a single theory, or a single policy, not more than one.
  o Examples include the Patriot Act, and policies supporting information infrastructure, or theories about learning, communication, social capital, or information seeking.
  o The paper should explain how or why this policy/theory is relevant to information organizations and some of the potential implications of the policy/theory.

Essay Three
• Satisfies ALA Core Competencies 1.2.2.2 (Students will examine ethical issues and describe how they should be applied to the practice of library and information science), 1.2.2.3 (. . . define their ethical responsibilities as information professionals . . .), 1.2.5.1 (. . . interpret and evaluate research), and 1.2.5.2 (. . . apply research to the analysis of professional problems).
• Addresses one ethical issue faced by librarians or other information professionals. Examples: patron privacy, copyright, collection development, and censorship.
• Ethical issues are not simply matters of right or wrong, or of following rigid rules. Individual decision is essential to discussing ethics. Ethical decisions involve tradeoffs based on principles and evidence. E.g., every time a library acquires something it means that they will not acquire something else, because resources are limited. That means they have reduced access for patrons wanting that non-acquired item. Presumably collection development is made on the basis of some judgments about the quality and popularity of the materials – the principles invoked. The point is that someone has to decide, but how?
• The topic can be one addressed in class or a topic not covered; if the latter, you should request approval by the instructor, to ensure it fits the criteria of the paper.
• Be sure to explain why the topic is an ethical issue and address responses to this issue.