1 Course Description

Information professionals play a major role in the information life cycle by facilitating the process of finding what others have created and accumulated. Their role is: to amass collections of information resources; to develop services to help people identify and articulate their information needs; and to enable people to find evaluate and use items of relevance. This course provides students with a basic understanding of the information environment, as well as an understanding of the differences in the information behavior, needs, and uses of various user groups. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to critically evaluate and employ information sources in different formats, and be able to communicate with users to identify and address their information needs.

2 Course Overview and Goals

An important role for information professionals is assisting others in creating searches and finding resources. This course focuses on these roles by exploring

- information behavior and search behavior in both online and in print contexts; and,
- essential information resources and how to use them.

Students who complete this course will be able to use and evaluate a variety of information resources and assist others with information needs.

3 Learning Outcomes

Students who take this course will be able to

- Define information behavior and understand its importance to information services
- Evaluate information resources
- Identify appropriate information resources for different information needs
- Solve information questions with a variety of resources in different formats

4 Required Texts

Other readings available online or through UK’s Online Journals or UK Libraries’ Catalog (Infokat).

5 Grades
Discussion Board 10% 20 points Weekly
Wikipedia Reference Desk 10% 20 points Sept 20
Problem Set 10% 20 points Oct 14
Quiz 10% 20 points Oct 31
Current Events Analysis 10% 20 points Nov 18
Snopes Analysis 10% 20 points Dec 5
Information Problem & Comm Blog 20% 40 points Dec 13
Final Exam 20% 40 points Dec 20

6 Grading Scale
A = 90% – 100%
B = 80% – 89%
C = 70% – 79%
D = 60% – 69%
E = 59% and below

7 Assignments
More detailed information about these assignments will appear on Blackboard under Assignment Information. Assignments are due before midnight (EST) on the date they are due.
7.1 Wikipedia Reference Desk

Find a question that has been asked on the Wikipedia Reference Desk (choose any category that interests you). Answer the question and provide evidence supporting your answer using three free and good-quality online resources. Write a 250 word reflection on the experience and include a brief analysis of how other people answered the question.

7.2 Problem Set

You will complete one problem set where you will identify the answer in two separate online resources.

7.3 Quiz

One quiz will be given through Blackboard to determine understanding of the readings and lectures.

7.4 Current Events Analysis

Identify two different online newspaper (different newspapers, news organizations, etc.) articles that cover the same current event. In 300 words, describe the sources each article used to narrate the event and discuss how the sources contributed to similar or dissimilar versions of the reported story.

7.5 Snopes Analysis

Visit snopes.com and select a random urban legend. Study the claim, the origins, and the sources used to debunk or validate the claim and provide a 300 word analysis of how Snopes accomplished this. Focus on both the narrative and the sources Snopes used in the selection.

7.6 Information Problem and Communication Blog

Write two blog entries that reflect on your own information behavior. This will include the identification of an information problem (e.g., a need to find information or resolve an information dilemma) you have, the actions you took to satisfy or solve the problem, the success you had in satisfying or solving it, and how you felt about the process and the outcome. Conclude with a discussion about how your problem might be generalized to the broader population and, therefore, how it might help you in identifying and addressing the information needs of others. Each blog entry should aim for 400 words.

7.7 Final Exam

The final exam will be a set of questions distributed one week before the due date. For each question, provide a question analysis, your search strategy, the source(s) you found that provided the answer, and the answer.
8 Course Policies

8.1 Attendance and Participation

The focus of this class is on the short assignments (listed in Section 7) but we will rely moderately on class discussion in order to discuss readings, searching methods, as well as sources used to satisfy information needs. You are expected to check the Blackboard site at least three times a week and to be prepared with questions and comments about the readings. Engaged and respectful discussion is necessary for the success of this class.

An absence in this class is a week of no activity on Blackboard. Any student who misses more than 1/5 of the course will automatically fail the course.

8.2 Late Assignments

Assignment due dates are indicated on the daily schedule. Late assignments are not accepted unless arrangements have been made with the instructor prior to the due date.

8.3 Plagiarism

According to Senate Regulation 6.3.1: “All academic work, written or otherwise, submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors, is expected to be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work, they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission.” For specific information regarding the University’s code and regulations on plagiarism and cheating, visit:

http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/
http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html
http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/Plagiarism.pdf

Make sure to properly cite in all your assignments. Plagiarized work may be given a zero. Repeat offenses will result in a failing grade for the course.

8.4

8.5 Posting to the Class Discussion Board

For the discussion board, make the content of the post recognizable through the subject line. For example, if you wanted to refer to a class reading, you could put the author and title of the article in the subject line. If you have a question about a class policy or assignment, please post it in the “Questions and Comments” section so others can benefit from my response.

8.6 Netiquette

All class discussions should be respectful and intellectually stimulating. I don’t expect problems to occur in our discussions, but if someone attacks you on the
discussion board, I would prefer that you allow me to handle the situation. If you must reply, do not attack the individual in turn.

8.7 Class Schedule

Learning does not always happen on schedule, and so changes may be made to meet the individual needs of the class. You will be responsible for checking the online syllabus and schedule before beginning your homework for any changes or updates.

8.8 E-mail Policy

Please allow 24 hours for me to respond to your e-mail during the work week. I ask that before you e-mail me with questions, please read your assignment information and syllabus carefully. If you have not heard from me within 24 hours, please send a follow-up e-mail or speak with me in person.

9 Grading

All exercises and quizzes will be graded within a week of submission. Major assignments and exams will be graded within two weeks of submission.

9.1 Submission of Assignments

All homework must include your name, my name, the course, and the date. When submitting assignments on Blackboard, make sure to give your work a document name to indicate what the item is. For example, you may title your resource review “Last Name Resource Review.” You are responsible for keeping back-up (I recommend several) copies of all your work since electronic texts can be lost.

9.2 Course Format

The course will be split into Modules that will last varying times. Each Module will contain readings and one or two Discussion Board questions. Modules may also contain tutorials and lectures that you must view, exercises, quizzes and/or tests. Go to “Course Modules” on Blackboard for details. You will be expected to complete all required readings and assignments during the Module time frame. You will also be expected to respond to the Discussion Board questions for the Module and respond to a peer within this time frame. You should be posting three days a week to the Discussion Board. Click on “Start Here” in the Blackboard course for more information about the format.

9.3 Self-Discipline

Distance learning courses require self-discipline and patience. Since technological issues can and will occur, do not wait until the last minute to work on your assignments. Schedule time to check Blackboard three times a week and to spend at least ten hours a week on course work for this class.
9.4 **Office Hours**
Office Hours may be face to face or virtual. Virtual meetings can chat, Skype, or Google Hangouts.

9.5 **Reference Librarians**
The reference librarians on the 2nd floor, North Wing of W.T. Young Library are more than happy to help you with your research for this class and any class you have. Please feel free to visit, call, e-mail, or chat with them, unless your assignment requests that you do not seek their assistance. See the Libraries’ Homepage for more information.

9.6 **Academic Ombud**
The Academic Ombud will assist you with a variety of issues, including grade disputes. You can e-mail the ombud at ombud@uky.edu.

9.7 **Disability Services**
If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (Room 2, Alumni Gym, 257-2754, email address jkarnes@email.uky.edu.) for coordination of campus disability services available to students with disabilities.

9.8 **My Duties**
My goal is to make you more sophisticated thinkers and researchers. Don’t hesitate to come to me for help.

I also have a duty to never discriminate based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender expression, sexual orientation, creed, background, or any belief or value. I hope that you will help me in creating a class environment where everyone feels free to share his or her thoughts.

10 **Technology Requirements**
To test your browser’s compatibility with Blackboard, please visit http://wiki.uky.edu/blackboard/Wiki%20Pages/Browser%20Eye%20Chart.aspx

All students should have access to a computer with a secure Internet connection, Adobe Acrobat Reader, and word processing software that allows them to save files as .DOCX, preferably, but also .doc, .odt, or .rtf files. I cannot view .pages files, so Mac users will need to save their assignments in a different format. Microsoft Office and other software is available from https://download.uky.edu/. For more on technical requirements, visit the Distance Learning web site’s Technical Requirements and Recommendations.
Please let me know when you are having technical issues first. For more assistance, contact the following:

**Information Technology Customer Service Center (UKIT)** at 859-257-1300

**Help Desk** at 218-HELP (4357)

Distance Learning Programs Office at 257-3377

Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning at 257-8272

**Library Services**

**Distance Learning Services**

Carla Cantagallo, DL Librarian

Local phone number: 859 257-0500, ext. 2171; long-distance phone number: (800) 828-0439 (option #6)

Email: dllservice@email.uky.edu

**DL Interlibrary Loan Service**

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13 Module Schedule

13.1 Module 1 - Information Behavior
Dates: Aug 28 – Sept 9 (Labor Day, September 2)
Readings:
- Kuhlthau - Information Search Process
- Cassel and Hiremath - Chapter 2, Determining the Question

13.2 Module 2 - Organization and Retrieval of Information
Dates: Sept 10 – Sept 16
Readings:
- Gilliland - Introduction to Metadata - Setting the Stage
- Lesk - The Seven Ages of Information Retrieval
- Arms -- Information retrieval and descriptive metadata

13.3 Module 3 - Bibliographies, Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, and Ready Reference
Dates: Sept 17 – Sept 30
Readings:
- Cassell and Hiremath - Chapters 4 – 7


13.4 Module 4 - Health, Law, Business, and Government
Dates: Oct 1 – Oct 14
Readings:
- Cassell and Hiremath - Chapters 9 and 12
- Evaluating Health Information on the Internet - FactSheet - US Dept of Health and Human Services
- MLA - A User's Guide to Finding and Evaluating Health Information on the Web
- University of Washington Libraries - General Business Resources on the Web
Due Oct 14: Assignment 7.2: Problem Set

13.5 Module 5 - Geography, Travel, and People

Dates: Oct 15 – Oct 31
Readings:
- Cassell and Hiremath - Chapters 10 and 11
- Library of Congress- Government Web Resources

Due Oct 31: Assignment 7.3: Quiz

13.6 Module 6 - Databases and Constructing Searches

Dates: Nov 1 – Nov 11
Readings:
- Cassell and Hiremath - Chapter 8
- Search Strategy Techniques

13.7 Module 7 - Search Engines and Searching Online

Dates: Nov 12 – Nov 18
Readings:
- Cassell and Hiremath - Chapter 13
- Evaluating Web Information
- Baker - Helping Computers Understand Language
Due Nov 18: Assignment 7.4: Current Events Analysis

13.8 Module 8 - Media Retrieval

Dates: Nov 19 - Nov 26
Readings:

Due Dec 5: Assignment 7.5: Snopes Analysis

13.9 Module 9 - Special Issues in Information Services

Dates: Dec 2 - Dec 13
Readings:
• Copyright
  ◦ University of Maryland University College - Copyright and Fair Use in the UMUC Online or Face-to-Face Classroom
  ◦ Templeton - 10 Big Myths about Copyright Explained
  ◦ Suber - Very Brief Introduction to Open Access
  ◦ Creative Commons – About
• Internet Use
  ◦ Jansen - Use of the Internet in higher-income households (Pew Internet Report)
  ◦ Smith - Home Broadband 2013 (Pew Internet Report)
• Reflections

Due Dec. 13: Assignment 7.6: Information Problem and Communication Blog Entry

Due Dec. 20: Assignment 7.7: Final Exam