

University of Kentucky
School of Information Science (SIS)

LIS 634: Information Architecture

Fall 2016 (August 24 to December 9)

Instructor

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Assistant Professor

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Response Time: Within 24 hours during weekdays (expect a delay during weekends and holidays)

Office Hours

Wednesdays: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

and by appointments

Virtual office hours are available during the regular office hours via Zoom

Course Information

This is an online course. Please visit <https://uk.instructure.com> (Canvas) for course homepage.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course introduces the concepts and practices of Information Architectures (IA) for a website within the context of the organization it serves. It aims to acquaint students with principles and process of information architecture for user-centered design of websites. It also provides students the opportunity to develop practical skills related to the design of information organization and navigation systems. The course prepares students for the companion technical course of “content management systems” where they will apply the theories and techniques studied in this course to the implementation of a fully functional website.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- (1) Identify principles of Information Architecture for Web design
- (2) Use research methods to better understand user needs and behaviors
- (3) Develop navigational systems, labeling systems, and taxonomies for websites
- (4) Create personas and scenarios describing the key aspects of a website as well as the interactions between the user and the functional modules in the solution
- (5) Create design details (i.e., blueprints and wireframes) depicting elements on the main page and other Web pages of a website
- (6) Evaluate a website’s design from an Information Architecture perspective
- (7) Create a report describing or making recommendations for a website design.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Textbook:

Morville, P. and Rosenfeld, L. (2007). Information Architecture for the World Wide Web. 3rd edition. O’Reilly. (4th edition is fine; however, it is not necessary for the Fall 2016 semester.)

Additional readings:

There will be additional readings to the textbook, and they will be made available on the Canvas course site.

COURSE CONDUCT

The course includes *online* lectures (PPT slides), *online* discussions and exercises, case studies, assignments, project and presentation, and exam. As this is an online course with no set meeting times, the question arises when are assignments due each week. For the purposes of this class we will treat Monday as the first day of class each week. Also, readings should be completed by at least Wednesday in order to participate in online discussions. I will put up course notes (PPT slides) no later than midnight on Sunday of each week. Regarding the weekly discussion, you need to answer some discussion questions and discuss them (see more information below). The discussion board is asynchronous, meaning that you can join in the discussion whenever it is convenient for you to do so.

Canvas as the Main Platform of the Course

This class uses Canvas as a required and main part of the course. Teaching materials (syllabus, course notes, discussions, assignments, resources, etc.) will be made available in the Canvas. All assignments should also be submitted to the Canvas. Students can check grading status and progress in the Canvas. Please visit the Canvas Information Pages at <http://www.uky.edu/canvas/> to learn about the Canvas. For technical support, call the UKIT Service Desk at (859) 218-HELP (4357) or email helpdesk@uky.edu.

Communications:

All course related communications (online discussions, queries on assignments, etc.) will occur within the Canvas. Please post your questions on the Canvas discussion board because other students may have the same questions and receive the benefits from answers. Important announcements will be made inside the Canvas. Students thus are required to check Canvas on a regular basis. Failure to receive such announcements cannot be used as an excuse for not being informed.

I welcome emails sent to my UKY.EDU email account. Please do not expect an immediate response on your email message. However, in ordinary circumstances, it is expected that the instructor will respond within 24 hours during weekdays. Please expect a delay during weekends and holidays.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Your final grade is determined by your performance on the items in the table below. Assignments and individual project (with three installments) will be assigned as the course continues. There will be a final exam at the end of this course. Lastly, we will have a weekly online discussion.

Each assignment and each project installment will be posted at least two weeks before its due date, and the final exam will be posted at least one week before its final submission. Please submit your assignments and project installments through Canvas assignment drop-box. The table below shows the list of assignments, project installments, participation, and exam and the points for each component.

Type	Topic	Points	Sub Total
Assignments	Assignment #1: IA Awareness	10.0	25.0
	Assignment #2: Topical Presentation	5.0	
	Assignment #3: IA Critique	10.0	
Individual Project	Installment #1: Project Selection / User & Task Analysis	10.0	35.0
	Installment #2: System Analysis / Design & Documentation	10.0	
	Installment #3: Final Prototype and IA Strategy	15.0	
Participation	Online Discussions (2 points per each week)	30.0	30.0
Exam	Final Exam	10.0	10.0
		Total: 100.0	

Online Discussions:

Students are expected to participate in the weekly discussion (or exercise) via the Canvas Discussions. I will pose several discussion questions (and/or one or two exercises), so you can have the discussions based on the questions (and/or exercises). In addition, there will be a course content discussion thread, where you can talk about each week's course material.

The discussion will start on Monday morning, and it will end on the following Sunday night. I will leave the discussion forum open later, but I am going to evaluate your postings during the week **ONLY**. You can earn up to 2.0 points for each week's discussion (and/or exercises). You can earn up to 0.5 point for any valuable posting regarding the discussion questions which are posed for each week, your own question regarding each week's course content, answers for the questions posed by other students. This means that you need to post at least 4 posting a week in order to get 2.0 points for that week.

A valuable posting or quality posting includes a substantive and thoughtful contribution to each week's discussion topics, during that week. No credit will be given for posts that occur after the week. A quality posting is both substantive (in most instances this means at least 100 words) and thoughtful ("I agree with the author" only is not a credit-worthy response). Also, please write each discussion posting concisely (100 to 200 words – 1 or 2 paragraphs). I encourage you to complete your discussion posts and other work in Word and then paste it to Canvas. If you compose online and there is a technology-related failure, you will likely lose your work.

Grade Expectations:

Grades are based on the quality of the submitted work, not upon how well others performed. The following are grade expectations and divisions.

Grade		Expectation
A	90% - 100%	Exceptional Achievement
B	80% - 89%	High Achievement
C	70% - 79%	Average Achievement
E	0% - 69%	Failing

Very often in the assignments and project, you need to offer opinions. Simply stating your opinion does not constitute a complete response. You must support any opinion with arguments and evidence. For example, the question "compare and contrast different organization structures" might be interpreted by a student as follows (note the associated grades A, B, C, or E):

- A: Describe commonly used organization structures, noting where they are similar and different. Identify the important characteristics of an organization structure and systematically evaluate each of the listed organization structures on these dimensions. Suggest situations in which each might be most or least appropriate.
- B: Describe commonly used organization structures, noting where they are similar and different.
- C: Describe commonly used organization structures, one at a time.
- E: Write down anything you can think of about organization structure in no particular order. Avoid giving conclusions, but if you do, be sure they are not supported by anything you have written.

Submission of Assignments:

Please submit your assignments and final paper through Canvas assignment drop-box. Some of the assignments will be discussed in following week's online discussions after the assignments are due. Most assignments will help build a base for future assignments and the final paper. Thus all assignments should

be turned in on time as specified. An overdue assignment will get a penalty of 20% of total points for each day late except for excused absences. No assignment will be accepted after five days except for excused absences.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This class is a community whose success depends on everyone's participation, and it is vital for you to attend class online in order to be successful. If you miss any assignment or weekly discussion, you will be allowed to make up that work only if the absence is officially excused. You will be asked to provide official written documentation for excused absences in order for your absence to be excused. If you know ahead of time that you will be absent from class with an excused absence, please discuss this with your instructor and turn in any assignments ahead of time. Excuses for university-sponsored activities must be made prior to such absences. For any emergency situation that arises, email your instructor as soon as you know about the situation when possible. No make-up work is available for online discussions or assignments unless approved in advance by your instructor. Students have one week to complete a missed assignment or online discussion due to an excused absence upon their return without penalty. If you know ahead of time that you will be absent from class with an excused absence, please discuss this with your instructor and turn in any assignments ahead of time. Excuses for university-sponsored activities must be made prior to such absences. For any emergency situation that arises, email your instructor as soon as you know about the situation when possible. Students have one week to complete a missed assignment or online discussion due to an excused absence upon their return without penalty.

Excused Absences:

Students need to notify the professor of absences prior to class when possible. Senate Rules 5.2.4.2 defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: (a) serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (c) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays, and (e) other circumstances found to fit "reasonable cause for nonattendance" by the professor.

Students anticipating an absence for a major religious holiday are responsible for notifying the instructor in writing of anticipated absences due to their observance of such holidays no later than the last day in the semester to add a class. Two weeks prior to the absence is reasonable, but should not be given any later. Information regarding major religious holidays may be obtained through the Ombud (859-257-3737, http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/ForStudents_ExcusedAbsences.php).

For the withdrawal recommendation (students missing a majority of coursework, over one-fifth), Students are strongly encouraged to withdraw from the class if more than 20% of the scheduled classes for the semester are missed per university policy. Please reference the definition of excused absences in the current edition of Student Rights and Responsibilities or on the web at http://www.uky.edu/Faculty/Senate/rules_regulations/Rules%20Versions/MASTER%20RULES%20from%20February%202012_clean.pdf

Per Senate Rule 5.2.4.2, students missing any graded work due to an excused absence are responsible: for informing the Instructor of Record about their excused absence within one week following the period of the excused absence (except where prior notification is required); and for making up the missed work. The professor must give the student an opportunity to make up the work and/or the exams missed due to an excused absence, and shall do so, if feasible, during the semester in which the absence occurred.

Verification of Absences:

Students may be asked to verify their absences in order for them to be considered excused. Senate Rule 5.2.4.2 states that faculty have the right to request "appropriate verification" when students claim an excused absence because of illness, or death in the family. Appropriate notification of absences due to

University-related trips is required prior to the absence when feasible and in no case more than one week after the absence.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Per University policy, students shall not plagiarize, cheat, or falsify or misuse academic records. Students are expected to adhere to University policy on cheating and plagiarism in all courses. The minimum penalty for a first offense is a zero on the assignment on which the offense occurred. If the offense is considered severe or the student has other academic offenses on their record, more serious penalties, up to suspension from the University may be imposed.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Complete information can be found at the following website: <http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty. It is important that you review this information as all ideas borrowed from others need to be properly credited.

Senate Rules 6.3.1 (see <http://www.uky.edu/Faculty/Senate/> for the current set of Senate Rules) states that 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.

When students submit work purporting to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or content from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact, the students are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work (including, but not limited to a published article, a book, a website, computer code, or a paper from a friend) without clear attribution. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work, which a student submits as his/her own, whoever that other person may be. Students may discuss assignments among themselves or with an instructor or tutor, but when the actual work is done, it must be done by the student, and the student alone.

When a student's assignment involves research in outside sources or information, the student must carefully acknowledge exactly what, where and how he/she has employed them. If the words of someone else are used, the student must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Making simple changes while leaving the organization, content, and phraseology intact is plagiaristic. However, nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas, which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain.

Please note: Any assignment you turn in may be submitted to an electronic database to check for plagiarism.

ACCOMMODATIONS DUE TO DISABILITY

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 (DRC). The DRC coordinates campus disability services available to students with disabilities. It is located on the corner of

Rose Street and Huguelet Drive in the Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407. You can reach them via phone at (859) 257-2754 and via email at drc@uky.edu. Their web address is <http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/DisabilityResourceCenter/>.

Policies concerning academic integrity, excused absences and academic accommodations due to disability are available online at:

<https://ci.uky.edu/sis/sites/default/files/policies.pdf>

TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION & RESOURCES

Distance Learning Students are expected to have a minimum level of technological acumen and the availability of technological resources. Students must have regular access a computer with a reliable Internet connection and audio capabilities. Internet Explorer 7 (IE) or Firefox 2.x are the recommended browsers for those using a Windows-based PC. Those using Firefox 3.x may encounter problems with assignment uploads. Those using an Apple computer with MAC OS X (10.5.x) may use Firefox 3.x or Safari 3.x.

Please be certain that your computer and/or browser allow you to view Adobe Reader documents (.pdf). Microsoft Office and other software products are free for students: <http://download.uky.edu/>.

As your instructor, I am your first go-to person for technology problems. If you need more immediate assistance, please contact UKIT.

Information Technology Customer Service Center (UKIT):

<http://www.uky.edu/UKIT/>; 859-218-4357

Library Services & Distance Learning Services:

<http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/DLLS>

Carla Cantagallo, DL Librarian

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

Email: dllservice@email.uky.edu

DL Interlibrary Loan Service: http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/libpage.php?lweb_id=253&llib_id=16

For more resources about online classes and student resources, visit <http://www.uky.edu/ukonline/>

The School of Information Science has a page with a comprehensive list of technology resources here: <http://ci.uky.edu/sis/students/techtips>

Military Members and Veterans:

We recognize the complexities of being a member of the military community and also a student. If you are a member of the military or a military veteran or dependent, please inform your instructor if you are in need of special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, mandatory training exercises, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran related developments can complicate your academic life. If you are aware of a complication, we will work with you and put you in contact with university staff members who are trained to assist you. Please contact the Coordinator of the University of Kentucky Veterans Resource Center at (859) 257-1148 for additional assistance.

Visit <http://www.uky.edu/veterans> for more available resources.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE (AS OF 8/2/2016)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due Date
1	8/24	Course Introduction		
2	8/29	Introduction to IA	Ch. 1 & 2	
3	9/6	Basics of IA (9/5 Labor Day)	Ch. 3 & 4	
4	9/12	Research Framework	Ch. 10	Assignment #1: IA Awareness (9/18)
5	9/19	Organization Systems	Ch. 5	
6	9/26	Labeling Systems	Ch. 6	
7	10/3	Navigation Systems	Ch. 7	Project Installment #1: Project Selection and Analysis (10/9)
8	10/10	Search Systems	Ch. 8	
9	10/17	Metadata	Ch. 9	
10	10/24	IA Strategy	Ch. 11	Assignment #3: IA Critique (10/30)
11	10/31	Design and Documentation	Ch. 12	
12	11/7	IA in Practice	Ch. 13,14,15,16	
13	11/14	IA & Business Strategy	Ch. 17 & 18	Project Installment #2: Design and Documentation (11/20)
14	11/21	Thanksgiving – Enjoy!		
15	11/28	Enterprise IA Strategy	Ch. 19	<i>Exam Review</i>
16	12/5	Reflections and Advanced IA Topics	TBA	Project Installment #3: Final Prototype and IA Strategy (12/11) / Exam (12/11)

*The due dates for the Assignment #2: Topical Presentation varies by individual students.

**All the submission time is 11:59 p.m.