

University of Kentucky
School of Library & Information Science (SLIS)

LIS 634: Information Architecture

Fall 2015 (August 26 to December 11)

Instructor

Youngseek Kim

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 Adobe Connect

Course Information

This is an online course. Please visit <https://elearning.uky.edu/> (Blackboard) 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.

Additional readings:

There will be additional readings to the textbook, and they will be made available on the Blackboard 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.

Blackboard as the Main Platform of the Course

This class uses Blackboard as a required and main part of the course. Teaching materials (syllabus, course notes, discussions, assignments, resources, etc.) will be made available in the Blackboard. All assignments should also be submitted to the Blackboard. Students can check grading status and progress in the Blackboard. Please visit the Blackboard Information Pages at <http://wiki.uky.edu/Blackboard/> to learn about the Blackboard. 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 Blackboard. Please post your questions on the Blackboard discussion board because other students may have the same questions and receive the benefits from answers. Important announcements will be made inside the Blackboard. Students thus are required to check Blackboard 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 and/or Blackboard Course Messages account. I prefer to use the Blackboard Course Messages in order to keep all course related emails in one place to facilitate communication; however, please feel free to send me any email message 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 Blackboard 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	30.0
	Assignment #2: IA Critique	10.0	
	Assignment #3: 2 Topical Presentations (5 points per each)	10.0	
Individual Project	Installment #1: Project Selection / User & Task Analysis	10.0	30.0
	Installment #2: System Analysis / Design & Documentation	10.0	
	Installment #3: Final Report with Strategy	10.0	
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 Blackboard 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 Blackboard. 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%
B	80% - 89%
C	70% - 79%
E	0% - 69%

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.

Late assignment policy:

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 project. 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. No assignment and project will be accepted after five days.

RE-GRADING REQUESTS

The grade for each assignment is recorded in the Blackboard before the assignment is returned to the student. It is a student's responsibility to ask questions or request re-grading of an assignment within five business days from the time the assignment is returned. No re-grading requests will be accepted after the five business day period.

ETHICS & POLICIES

Excused Absences and Verification: Please refer to Student Rights and Responsibilities, Part II, Section 5.2.4.2 (<http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html>) for UK's policy on excused absences. You can request verification for excused absences.

Excused absences include (as defined at the web site above):

- Significant illness of student or serious illness of household member or immediate family
- Death of a household member or immediate family
- Trips for members of student organizations, class excursions or participation in intercollegiate athletic events
- Major religious holidays
- Any other circumstance that the instructor finds reasonable cause for nonattendance

Academic Accommodations: If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible. 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, jkarnes@uky.edu) for coordination of campus disability services available to students with disabilities. We can then collaborate on the best solution.

Academic Integrity, Cheating and Plagiarism: You are expected to submit your own original work for all assignments in this course. See the home page for the Office of Academic Ombud Services (<http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>) for a definition of plagiarism, how to avoid plagiarism and UK's new academic offense policy. Please refer to Student Rights and Responsibilities, Part II, Section 6.3 (<http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html>) for UK's policy on academic integrity.

Classroom Behavior, Decorum and Civility: Please be respectful to others in the class and engage in civil discourse when we discuss topics that have a diversity of perspectives. Please help me maintain the most courteous environment by using a little peer pressure if necessary.

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: <https://iweb.uky.edu/MSDownload/>.

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

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

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

<http://ci.uky.edu/lis/sites/default/files/policies.pdf>

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 8/13/2015)

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due Date
1	8/26	Course Introduction		
2	8/31	Introduction to IA	Ch. 1 & 2	
3	9/8	Basics of IA (9/7 Labor Day)	Ch. 3 & 4	
4	9/14	Research Framework	Ch. 10	Assignment #1: IA Awareness (9/20)
5	9/21	Organization Systems	Ch. 5	
6	9/28	Labeling Systems	Ch. 6	
7	10/5	Navigation Systems	Ch. 7	Project Installment #1: Project Selection and Analysis (10/11)
8	10/12	Search Systems	Ch. 8	
9	10/19	Metadata	Ch. 9	
10	10/26	IA Strategy	Ch. 11	Assignment #2: IA Critique (11/1)
11	11/2	Design and Documentation	Ch. 12	
12	11/9	IA in Practice	Ch. 13,14,15,16	
13	11/16	IA & Business Strategy	Ch. 17 & 18	Project Installment #2: Design and Documentation (11/22)
14	11/23	Thanksgiving – Enjoy!		
15	11/30	Enterprise IA Strategy	Ch. 19	<i>Exam Review</i>
16	12/7	Reflections and Advanced IA Topics	TBA	Project Installment #3: Final Report with Strategy (12/13) / Exam (12/13)

*The due dates for the Assignment #3: Topical Presentations vary by individual students.

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