

LIS 601: Information Perspectives and Contexts
Fall 2018 - University of Wisconsin-Madison
Professor Jonathan Senchyne (senchyne@wisc.edu)
Mondays, 1:30 – 4pm
Bunge Room, 4207 Helen C. White

3 Credits, Face to Face Course
Office: 4255 Helen C. White
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:30-1, by appointment.

Catalog Course Description:

Provides an introduction to major themes and topics in information studies as well as the language and literature of the field and related disciplines. This course is about information, information agencies, and being an information professional. We look at social, historical, ethical, legal and political issues surrounding information dissemination, use, control, and management.

Professor's Course Description:

This course is about information and its institutions in a broad context. We will study many social, legal, political, historical, cultural, theoretical, and ethical issues surrounding information creation, dissemination, use, and control. Throughout the course we will question the relation of information to power, control, and access by studying a representative range of information agencies, memory institutions, and their contexts. These include libraries, archives, public and private info technology agencies, and the wider social-political contexts in which information is created, stored, sought, and deployed.

Goals

In this course we will focus on both content (information and its contexts) and process (your skills and capacities). In terms of your skills and capacities, the course challenges you to:

- Develop and improve capacity for intense, purposeful reading in combination with writing and multimedia production at the graduate level
- Integrate theory, practice, and policy as three approaches to understanding libraries, archives, and information agencies in context
- Build and be part of a collaborative learning and critical discussion group
- Reflect critically on the information professions, information society, and your place within them

Required Texts

Books listed here will be read in their entirety and therefore you should have access to them in some way. You may purchase them wherever books are sold. You may also access them via the UW-Madison library's collections or interlibrary loan. Madison Public Library may have them, or can get them for you. With a public library card and a smart device, you can access e-books and audiobooks via the "Libby" app by overdrive. I am not concerned about which format you use to access these: print, e-book,

audiobook. I use a combination of all three. Where noted, PDFs will be made available via the course Canvas page. I have also included occasional URLs for you to navigate to using internet connected devices. If you are experiencing economic hardship accessing the books for the course, please let me know as soon as you can. I will either help connect you to resources or lend you my personal copies.

- **Safiya Umoja Noble**, *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism*
- **Marie Hicks**, *Programmed Inequality: How Britain Discarded Women Technologists and Lost Its Edge in Computing*
- **Sara Ahmed**, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*
- **Jonathan Taplin**, *Move Fast and Break Things: How Facebook, Google, and Amazon Cornered Culture and Undermined Democracy*
- **Siva Vaidhyanathan**, *Antisocial Media: How Facebook Disconnects Us and Undermines Democracy*
- **Michele Caswell**, *Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia*
- **Amy Lonetree**, *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*
- **Ethelene Whitmire**, *Regina Anderson Andrews, Harlem Renaissance Librarian*
- **Philip Nel**, *Was the Cat in the Hat Black?: The Hidden Racism of Children's Literature, and the Need for Diverse Books*
- **Melissa Adler**, *Cruising the Library: Perovsities in the Organization of Knowledge*

Calendar of Readings and Assignments

KEY:

🎧 = podcast due Friday before this class meeting, listening due before class

📖 = read entire book

📄 = read PDF or browse website

Colors of Class Date Indicate Units/Related Themes

Tuesday, September 11, 2018

First class meeting. Syllabus overview, goals and expectations, community building

Tuesday, September 18, 2018

📖 **Whitmire**, *Regina Anderson Andrews, Harlem Renaissance Librarian*

📄 Wayne A. Wiegand, "Any Ideas?": The American Library Association and the Desegregation of Public Libraries in the American South, *Libraries: Culture, History, and Society* Vol. 1, No. 1 (2017),

📄 <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

 <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations>

Tuesday, September 25, 2018

 Pod

 **Noble**, *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism*

Tuesday, October 2, 2018

 Pod

 **Ahmed**, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*

 <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>

 <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/EDI>

 <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/diversity>

Tuesday, October 9, 2018

 Pod

 **Nel**, *Was the Cat in the Hat Black?: The Hidden Racism of Children's Literature, and the Need for Diverse Books*

 Browse Summer 2018 news/blog posts about ALA and the former Wilder Award

 <https://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/multicultural.asp>

 <http://ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp>

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

Professional Development Workshop with Tanya Hendricks Cobb

Sunday, October 21, 2018

Broadband Papers Due

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

 Pod

 **Vaidhyanathan**, *Antisocial Media*

Tuesday, October 30, 2018

 Pod

 **Taplin**, *Move Fast and Break Things*

Tuesday, November 6, 2018

🎧 Pod
📖 Hicks, *Programmed Inequality*

Tuesday, November 13, 2018

🎧 Pod
📖 Adler, *Cruising the Library*

Tuesday, November 20, 2018

📖 **Students' Choice: Students Select Topic and Readings**

Tuesday, November 27, 2018

🎧 Pod
📖 Caswell, *Archiving the Unspeakable*
📄 Ricardo L. Punzalan and Michelle Caswell, "Critical Directions for Archival Approaches to Social Justice," *The Library Quarterly* 86, no. 1 (January 2016)
📄 Michelle Caswell, "Teaching to Dismantle White Supremacy in Archives," *The Library Quarterly* 87, no. 3 (July 2017)
📄 http://www.gracenbrilmyer.com/dismantling_whiteSupremacy_archives3.pdf

Tuesday, December 4, 2018

🎧 Pod
📖 Lonetree, *Decolonizing Museums*
📄 <http://www.tlamproject.org/>

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Final reflections and observations. Course evaluations.

Descriptions of Major Assignments

10%

Participation and Preparation: Your active and prepared presence is expected at each class meeting. This can take the form of being active in discussion, asking classmates and the professor to say more about a topic, volunteering to share a resource, making a connection to between class discussion and a current event, sharing relevant links and resources to the class email list, and so on.

25%

4 Monthly Check-In Memos: At the end of each month (September, October, November, and mid-December) you will write an informal (but organized and readable) reflection on what you've read, learned, discussed, and thought about during the previous month. What's stuck with you the most from the month's reading and discussion? Did a classmate raise a question that's really inspired you to think more deeply about a topic? What's confusing still, and why do you think so? What questions remain as we move from week to week, month to month? The purpose of these memos, which will be 2-3 double spaced pages and submitted on Canvas, is for you to reflect periodically on your learning in the course and for me to get a sense of individual student's progress and the course's global interests and concerns. **Due** before 11:59pm on the last day of each month, except in December when due before 11:59pm on December 12.

30%

Class Podcast Episode: this is a major project that will be treated in detail in a separate document. Working in a small group of 3-4, you will produce a "podcast" episode of between 45-90 minutes that introduces, discusses, and makes connections about the major reading for the week. **Due** noon on Saturday BEFORE the Tuesday meeting in which we discuss the texts and topics addressed in your episode. Submission guidelines detailed in handout.

10%

Class podcast listening and feedback: You are expected to listen to each episode of the class podcast before our class meeting. In addition, you will be assigned to provide a brief and constructive peer review report of two podcast episodes (other than the one you worked on). Submitted on a rolling basis.

25%

Broadband Policy Paper: Everyone in all sections of 601 does this assignment. You will research and synthesize the issues for how a community might implement improved broadband access, as well make a case for which considerations are most important for a specific community to make a good decision. 4-5 pages. Details laid out in separate assignment sheet. **Due:** Sunday Oct 21.

Policies, Housekeeping Details, and Helpful Information

How Credit Hours Are Met By This Course: This course will follow the federal credit hour definition. For each credit hour you earn in this course, you participate in one hour

(i.e. 50 minutes) of classroom or direct faculty/qualified instructor instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks. This means that in each week of a three-credit course you attend and participate in 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of classroom or direct faculty/qualified instructor instruction and you also do a minimum of 6 hours of out of class student work (reading, writing, note taking, preparing for class, etc).

Program Level Learning Outcomes and Assessment Map

This may be useful to you when you’re trying to do your e-Portfolio for graduation. It matches up work you did for the course (“learning artifacts”) with program level learning outcomes.

Course Learning Objective	Program-Level Learning Outcomes	Evidence of Learning Outcomes	Assessing Mastery of Learning Outcome
Students develop an understanding of theoretical and historical perspectives.	1. Students demonstrate understanding of society, legal, policy or ethical information issues	Monthly Journal Broadband paper Podcast Episode	Students participate in discussion and analyze key concepts. Students’ synthesis and analysis demonstrates understanding of broadband as an info policy issue. Students include knowledge of information behavior in their discussion of considerations.
Students develop a critical understanding of professional ethics.	7. Students demonstrate understanding of issues surrounding marginalized communities and information.	Monthly Journal Podcast Episode	Students participate in discussion and analyze key concepts and policies including considerations of power dynamic related to access and information.
Students develop critical thinking and writing abilities in order to become more reflective, creative, problem-solving leaders.	4. Students demonstrate understanding of professional competencies important for management of information organizations. 6. Students apply theory to professional practice	Monthly Journal Podcast Episode Broadband paper	Students articulate questions and criticisms of readings effectively. Written assignments are clear, terse, and well-articulated. Presentation is evidence-based & persuasive.

Grading Scale

A 94-100

Outstanding work. Student performance demonstrates full command of course materials. Work shows a degree of synthesis and creativity that surpasses course expectations.

AB 88-93

Very good work. Student performance demonstrates thorough knowledge of course materials. Work shows a degree of synthesis and creativity that is superior.

B 82-87

Good work. Student performance demonstrates the ability to meet designated course expectations. Overall work is at an acceptable level.

BC 77-81

Marginal work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete understanding of course materials. Or student fails to meet deadlines.

C 72-76

Unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates inadequate understanding of course materials. Or student fails to meet deadlines.

D 67-71

Very unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates inadequate understanding of course materials. Or student fails to meet deadlines.

F 66 and below

Completely unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates very inadequate understanding of course materials and serious lack of competence on site. Or student misses many deadlines.

Please review policies in the iSchool MA Handbook on **final** course grades below B.

Late Work

Assignments are due on the dates listed on the syllabus and must be handed in according to the guidelines given on each assignment sheet. Late work will not be accepted unless you have been granted an extension. If you would like an extension on an assignment, talk to me well before the assignment is due. If you must miss class or require an extension due to illness or other emergency, please keep me informed, and I will handle these instances on a case-by-case basis.

Academic Integrity

Work you submit for this course must have been written for this course and not another and must originate with you in form and content with all contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. In this course, the normal penalty for a violation of the academic integrity policy is an "F" for the term.

See <http://students.wisc.edu/doso/students.html> for more information on academic misconduct, including how to avoid plagiarism. Students should make themselves familiar with the University's Academic Integrity Policy at <http://students.wisc.edu/doso/acadintegrity.html>.

Grievance Policies

If a concern regarding grades or other matters remains unresolved after meeting with me, students will be referred to the Director of the iSchool.

Office Hours and Individual Meetings

I am available to meet students individually during my weekly office hours and by appointment. If you have questions about assignments, readings, or other things, please get in touch. I'm here to help you do your best in this class. If you schedule an appointment with me, please don't stand me up!

University Policies

The instructor respects and upholds University policies and regulations pertaining to the observation of religious holidays; assistance available to physically handicapped, visually and/or hearing impaired students; plagiarism; sexual harassment; and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identification. All students are advised to become familiar with the respective University regulations and are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns to the attention of the instructor.

Student Needs and Accommodations

I want all of my students to do the best they can in this class, and I realize that sometimes issues beyond your control make that unnecessarily difficult. If you face challenges meeting your basic needs, I urge you to contact the office of UW-Madison's Dean of Students (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/>) and to reach out to me, if you feel comfortable doing so. I offer specific information regarding the following:

Learning Accommodations

In compliance with the University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Requests for accommodations should be made at the beginning of the semester, except in unusual circumstances, so that arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with the McBurney Disability Resource Center (1305 Linden Drive; 608-263-2741; <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu>) to request academic accommodations.

Food Insecurity and Other Financial Stress

A 2016 national [study](#) indicated that 20% of 4-year college students lack reliable access to sufficient, nutritious food: The physical and emotional stress of food insecurity makes learning understandably difficult. There are various on- and off-campus resources for accessing food and dealing with other financial difficulties, listed here: <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/food/foodassist/>. Students are also welcome to visit me during office hours or whenever my door is open. I have or can quickly get some snacks.

Mental Health

College and grad school are hard. Life is hard. It is entirely common to feel overwhelmed at times. When you do, I encourage you to seek the assistance you need and deserve. UW-Madison offers students confidential, no-cost mental health and crisis services. A list of resources is available here: <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/>. And feel free to drop by my office hours, even if you want to chat about difficulties beyond the scope of our class.

Sexual Assault

As an instructor I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. However, there are university policies that may require me to report disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator (compliance.wisc.edu/titleix) whose role is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct. UW-Madison offers a variety of resources for students impacted by sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking.

Information about free, confidential services available on campus and elsewhere can be found here: www.uhs.wisc.edu/assault

Class Conduct

Participation-focused courses thrive on the contributions of their members. In order to maintain an atmosphere of open, constructive discussion, class members must be respectful of each other's person, work, and ideas. Our class discussion of sexist, racist, and otherwise bigoted views treated by our readings should avoid unnecessary repetition of historical texts' sometimes problematic language. When such language is being quoted (and only quoted for constructive reasons), we should be mindful of the persistent offenses and harms evoked and enacted by these words.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to complete the course evaluation. The feedback provides valuable information to the instructor and the iSchool and is used to improve student learning. Students are notified when the online evaluation form is available.

Updates to Syllabus

There will likely be some updates to the syllabus. However by the first day of class the syllabus becomes a statement of intent and serves as an implicit agreement between the instructor and the student. Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. Please remember to check your WiscMail email and the course site often.