

## INFS 20 -- INTRODUCTION TO INFORMATION STUDIES

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APRIL 3, 2007

Course ID: 228-060-200  
Quarter: Spring 2007  
Time: Tuesday / Thursday, 9:00am - 10:50am  
Location: Room 121 (Tuesday) / Room 118 (Thursday), GSE&IS Building

Instructor: Jonathan Furner  
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Office hours: Tuesday, 1:00pm - 4:00pm

### CATALOG DESCRIPTION

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“This course introduces undergraduate students to the field of information studies. It is a survey course of the nature and structure of information, information in culture, communities and organizations; information institutions, industries and markets; and, economic and political roles of information and information technology. This course introduces students to various forms and types of information and how information is disseminated in the humanities, physical and social sciences. The course also has a hands-on laboratory component that teaches students how to search for and retrieve information from digital and print sources and how to evaluate information.”

### TEXTBOOK AND READINGS

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There is one required **textbook** for this course, available from LuValle Commons (priced at \$60.50 new or \$45.50 used), or from Amazon.com (priced at \$55 new or \$35 used):

- Lester, June, and Wallace C. Koehler. 2003. *Fundamentals of information studies: Understanding information and its environment*. New York, NY: Neal-Schuman.

It is recommended that you consult this **online dictionary** whenever you come across new terminology:

- Reitz, Joan M. 2006. *ODLIS: Online dictionary for library and information science*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited. Available online at: <http://lu.com/odlis/> [accessed on March 24, 2007].

Almost all the other required **readings** are available from the course website, accessible through the Moodle system. Copies of any required readings that aren't available online will be put on reserve in the MIT Lab (GSE&IS Building, first floor).

To access the **course website**, go to <http://courses.gseis.ucla.edu/>, click on “Information Studies” under “Spring 2007,” then click on “IS 20: Introduction to Information Studies,” and then login using your GSE&IS username and password. (If you don't already have a GSE&IS username and password, you will need to stop by Moore Hall, Room 3051, with your Bruin Card to obtain a GSE&IS account. And if you enrolled late for the course, you will also need an “enrollment key” to access the course website: ask the instructor for this.)

Those readings marked with an asterisk (“\*”) are **recommended** as the ones you should read first each week. The ones marked with the number symbol (“#”) are a little more **advanced** than the others.

## OBJECTIVES

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This course serves as a general survey course for lower division students, as well as an introduction to the proposed **information studies major**. It has been approved for **General Education (GE)** credit as a Foundations of Knowledge course, in the Foundations of Society and Culture area, Social Analysis subgroup. The primary objectives of the course are:

- to allow students to develop an **understanding** of the many senses in which information and information-related issues pervade the social world, and of the many kinds of role that information producers, organizers, and seekers, information structures, processes, and systems, information institutions, information technologies and information policies play therein; and
- to allow students to begin to determine whether they would **like** to major in the field of information studies.

## OUTCOMES

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On completion of this course, you will be able to:

- articulate a basic understanding of the complexities of some of the most important **issues** relating to information and its creation, organization, storage, transmission, retrieval, management, ownership, and use; and
- demonstrate an awareness of the variety and nature of social, cultural, economic, political, legal, ethical, and technological **factors** shaping and being shaped by **information practices**.

## METHODS

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There are two interrelated themes running through this course:

- information literacy, and
- information ethics.

**Information literacy is the set of skills that people need to have if they are to find, evaluate, and use information effectively.** In this course, you will learn about how and why information literacy is important, and you will improve your own information literacy by taking part in hands-on information discovery and evaluation sessions every Thursday (in the Computer Lab in the GSE&IS Building, Room 118).

**Information ethics is the study of who should have access to what information.** In this course, you will learn about some of the ethical dilemmas that are faced by people who seek to provide, restrict, or obtain access to the information they create, own, collect, or want, and you will learn about some of the ways in which attempts are made to resolve these dilemmas (and about the theories and principles on which those attempts are based).

You will be encouraged to learn through a combination of the following methods:

- reading and interpreting the required readings;
- taking part in class discussion of the readings, the instructor's lectures, and students' presentations;
- looking for, retrieving, reading, and interpreting additional material related to students' presentations and essay topics;
- taking part in hands-on information discovery and evaluation sessions; and
- preparing for the final exam.

**Students are expected to come to class having read and ready to discuss the assigned readings for that week.**

## ASSIGNMENTS

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1. **Essay** (1,500 words): **15%**. Due **April 24**.

“There are no circumstances under which plagiarism can be considered acceptable conduct.” Do you agree? If so, why; if not, why not? In your answer, define and give examples of plagiarism, and describe the kinds of situation in which it is and is not acceptable.

You should ensure that all materials you use are cited, and that any citations you make are full, accurate, and formatted consistently according to the Turabian (Chicago) style. The grade you receive for this essay will account for 15% of your final grade, and will be awarded on the basis of your demonstrated ability to justify the assertions you make, and to write cogently, critically, concisely, and readably. The deadline for submission of the essay is 9am, Tuesday, April 24 (Week 3). If your submission is late, you will lose a percentage point for every hour or part of an hour that it is late.

2. **Essay** (1,500 words): **15%**. Due **May 8**.

“In the age of the Web and Google, when so much information is available at the click of a mouse, it is no longer necessary for undergraduate students to develop high levels of information literacy.” Do you agree? If so, why; if not, why not? In your answer, define information literacy, and give examples of the kinds of learning environment in which information skills are and are not required.

Again, you should ensure that all materials you use are cited, and that any citations you make are full, accurate, and formatted consistently according to the Turabian (Chicago) style. The grade you receive for this essay will account for 15% of your final grade, and will be awarded on the basis of your demonstrated ability to justify the assertions you make, and to write cogently, critically, concisely, and readably. The deadline for submission of the essay is 9am, Tuesday, May 8 (Week 6). If your submission is late, you will lose a percentage point for every hour or part of an hour that it is late.

3. **Presentation** (10 minutes): **10%**. **May 3 / 10 / 17 / 24 / 31**.

Each week from Week 4 through Week 8, we will be covering a different issue. All five of these issues are complex. One way of approaching them is to consider each in terms of a single positional statement -- such as “What the Napster affair shows is that copyright law isn't working any more” -- that may be either asserted or denied in a debate. You will be assigned one of these positional statements, and asked

to make and present a case either in support of or in opposition to that statement. You will have ten minutes to present your case as part of a debate in class, on the Thursday of the week following the class in which the issue was initially discussed. Each debate will be between two people making a case in support of the statement and two people making a case in opposition to the statement. The grade you receive for your presentation will account for 10% of your final grade, and will be awarded on the basis of the completeness and relevance of the evidence you marshal in support of your case, the validity of your argument, the persuasiveness of your presentation, and your demonstrated ability to respond to the points made by others in class. If you do not attend your assigned debate, you will receive zero percentage points.

4. **Annotated bibliography and evaluative report** (1,500 words): **20%**. Due **May 29**.

You will complete a practical information-seeking assignment related to the hands-on information discovery and evaluation sessions. Further details about this assignment will be given out in Week 3. The grade you receive for this assignment will account for 20% of your final grade, and will be awarded on the basis of your demonstrated ability to make effective use of information services in identifying information sources that are relevant, authoritative, accurate, current, and comprehensive. The deadline for submission of the completed assignment is 9am, Tuesday, May 29 (Week 9). If your submission is late, you will lose a percentage point for every hour or part of an hour that it is late.

5. **Final exam: 30%. June 13.**

You will take a final two-hour exam in finals week (Week 11), on Wednesday, June 13, 2007, from 3:00pm to 5:00pm (room TBD). There will be two parts to the exam. In the first part, you will be required to supply extended definitions for eight terms selected from those that have been introduced in class. In the second part, you will be required to write answers (in the form of essays) to two of four questions on topics selected from those covered in class. The grade you receive for this exam will account for 40% of your final grade, and will be awarded on the basis of your demonstrated ability to answer questions directly, to address issues critically, and to express your thoughts precisely. If you do not attend the exam, you will receive zero percentage points.

6. **Participation in class: 10%.**

You will be awarded up to 10 points on the basis of the extent and quality of your participation in class discussion.

**Full attendance at all classes is expected.** Please do your best to inform the instructor beforehand if you have to miss a class because of illness, injury, etc. If you miss a class without informing the instructor beforehand, you may lose a percentage point for each hour missed.

All grading decisions are final and nonnegotiable.

**Week 1: Introduction to the course.**

April 3, 5

- (a) Personal introductions. Overview of course syllabus. Explanation of expectations for assignments.
- (b) What is information studies? Relation to other disciplines. Opportunities and challenges of interdisciplinarity.
- (c) What is information? What is scholarly information? What is an information source, and what kinds of information source are there? What is an information service, and what kinds of information service are there?

Readings:

- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 1: The impact of information on society.
- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 2: The fundamental concepts of information.
- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 3: History of information technology.
- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 4: Current information technology.
- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 5: Societal institutions for creation, distribution, and management of information.
- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 6: The information professions.

**Week 2: Information ethics and information literacy.**

April 10, 12

- (a) What is information ethics? Access; equity; diversity. Human rights, freedoms, duties.

Readings:

- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 11: Information ethics.
- \* Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. 2003. *Background note on the information society and human rights*. Geneva: OHCHR.
- \* Mendel, Toby. 2000. *Freedom of information as an internationally protected human right*. London: Article 19.
- Moore, Nick. 1998. Rights and responsibilities in an information society. *JILT: Journal of Information, Law & Technology* 1998, no. 1.
- Fallis, Don. 2007. Information ethics for twenty-first century library professionals. *Library Hi Tech* 25, no. 1: 23-36.
- # Nickel, James. 2006. Human rights. In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta. Stanford, CA: Metaphysics Research Lab, Center for the Study of Language and Information, Stanford University.

- (b) What is information literacy? Use of local library and information services. Evaluating authority of information sources.

Readings:

- OCLC. 2005. *Perceptions of libraries and information resources*. Dublin, OH: OCLC.

- \* Association of College and Research Libraries. 2000. *Information literacy competency standards for higher education*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association.
- Bawden, David. 2001. Information and digital literacies: A review of concepts. *Journal of Documentation* 57, no. 2: 218-259.
- UCLA Library Instructional Services Advisory Committee. 2001. *Information competence at UCLA: Report of a survey project*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles.
- \* UCLA Library Information Literacy Program Steering Committee. 2005. *Information literacy at UCLA: The core competencies*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles.
- UCLA College Library. 2004. *The road to research*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles.
- \* UCLA Library. 2004. *Carlos and Eddie's guide to Bruin success with less stress*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles.
- Vedder, Anton. 2001. Misinformation through the Internet: Epistemology and ethics. In *Ethics and the Internet*, ed. Anton Vedder, 125-132. Antwerpen: Intersentia.
- Burbules, Nicholas C. 2002. Paradoxes of the Web: The ethical dimensions of credibility. *Library Trends* 50, no. 4: 441-453.

### **Week 3: Intellectual property and plagiarism.**

April 17, 19

(a) What is intellectual property? What is plagiarism?

- # Hettinger, Edwin C. 1989. Justifying intellectual property. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 18, no. 1: 31-52.
- # Himma, Kenneth E. 2007. The justification of intellectual property: Contemporary philosophical disputes. Forthcoming in *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*.
- Ashworth, Peter, Philip Bannister, and Pauline Thorne. 1997. Guilty in whose eyes? University students' perceptions of cheating and plagiarism in academic work and assessment. *Studies in Higher Education* 22, no. 2: 187-203.
- Auer, Nicole J., and Ellen M. Krupar. 2001. Mouse click plagiarism: The role of technology in plagiarism and the librarian's role in combating it. *Library Trends* 49, no. 3: 415-432.
- Harris, Robert. 2004. *Anti-plagiarism strategies for research papers*. VirtualSalt.
- \* UCLA Office of the Dean of Students. n.d. *Student guide to academic integrity*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Los Angeles.
- \* Roig, Miguel. 2006. *Avoiding plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and other questionable writing practices: A guide to ethical writing*. Staten Island, NY: St. John's University.

(b) Turabian (Chicago) system of citation.

Readings:

- \* University of Chicago. 2006. *Chicago-style citation quick guide*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- \* University of California Berkeley Library. 2006. *Turabian and Chicago styles citations*. Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkeley.

## **Week 4: Copyright.**

April 24, 26

### **Plagiarism essay is due at 9am, Tuesday, April 24.**

Case study: Napster and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, 1998.

Positional statement: “What the Napster affair shows is that copyright law isn’t working any more.”

Readings:

- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 10: The areas and issues of information policy.
- \* Harper, Georgia K. 2001. *Crash course in copyright*. Austin, TX: University of Texas.
- \* U.S. Copyright Office. 2006. *Copyright Office basics*. Washington, DC: U.S. Copyright Office.
- \* Aoki, Keith, James Boyle, and Jennifer Jenkins. 2006. *Tales from the public domain: Bound by law?* Durham, NC: Center for the Study of the Public Domain, Duke University Law School.
- Kranich, Nancy. 2004. *The information commons: A public policy report*. New York, NY: Free Expression Policy Project, Brennan Center for Justice, New York University School of Law.
- Healy, Kieran. 2002. Digital technology and cultural goods. *Journal of Political Philosophy* 10, no. 4: 478-500.
- \* Madden, Mary, and Amanda Lenhart. 2003. *Music downloading, file-sharing and copyright*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet & American Life Project.
- Bhattacharjee, Sudip, Ram D. Gopal, and G. Lawrence Sanders. 2003. Digital music and online sharing: Software piracy 2.0? *Communications of the ACM* 46, no. 7: 107-111.
- Klein, Benjamin, Andres V. Lerner, and Kevin M. Murphy. 2002. The economics of copyright “fair use” in a networked world. *American Economic Review* 92, no. 2: 205-208.
- Landes, William, and Douglas Lichtman. 2003. Indirect liability for copyright infringement: Napster and beyond. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17, no. 2: 113-124.

## **Week 5: Intellectual freedom.**

May 1, 3

### **Copyright debate is on Thursday, May 3.**

Case study: Libraries and the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Positional statement: “It is more important that librarians defend the right to intellectual freedom than that they defend any other.”

Readings:

- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 9: The regulation and politics of information.
- Ortega y Gasset, José. 1961. The mission of the librarian. *Antioch Review* 21, no. 2: 133-154.
- \* American Library Association Council. 1996. *Library bill of rights*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association.
- Doyle, Tony. 2001. A utilitarian case for intellectual freedom in libraries. *Library Quarterly* 71, no. 1: 44-71.
- \* American Library Association, Office for Intellectual Freedom. n.d. *Intellectual freedom and censorship Q & A*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association.

- American Library Association, Intellectual Freedom Committee. 1997. *Statement on library use of filtering software*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association.
- \* Rosenberg, R. S. 2001. Controlling access to the Internet: The role of filtering. *Ethics and Information Technology* 3, no. 1: 35-54.
- Jaeger, Paul T., and Charles R. McClure. 2004. Potential legal challenges to the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) in public libraries: Strategies and issues. *First Monday* 9, no. 2.
- Heins, Marjorie, Christina Cho, and Ariel Feldman. 2006. *Internet filters: A public policy report*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Brennan Center for Justice, School of Law, New York University.
- # Mart, Susan Nevelow. 2003. The right to receive information. *Law Library Journal* 95 (spring): 175-189.

**Week 6: Privacy, surveillance, security.**

May 8, 10

**Information literacy essay is due at 9am, Tuesday, May 8.**

**Intellectual freedom debate is on Thursday, May 10.**

Case study: Libraries and the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USAPATRIOT) Act, 2001.

Positional statement: "The individual's freedom to read is not unduly threatened by the USAPATRIOT Act."

Readings:

- Thomson, Judith J. 1975. The right to privacy. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 4, no. 4: 295-314.
- \* American Library Association Council. 2004. *Freedom to read statement*. Washington, DC: American Library Association.
- \* American Library Association Council. 2002. *Privacy: An interpretation of the Library bill of rights*. Washington, DC: American Library Association.
- \* American Library Association, Office for Intellectual Freedom. 2002. *The USA Patriot Act in the library*. Washington, DC: American Library Association.
- \* American Library Association Council. 2005. *Resolution on the USA PATRIOT Act and libraries*. Washington, DC: American Library Association.
- Jaeger, Paul T., John Carlo Bertot, and Charles R. McClure. 2003. The impact of the USA Patriot Act on collection and analysis of personal information under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. *Government Information Quarterly* 20, no. 3: 295-314.
- # Nissenbaum, Helen. 1998. Protecting privacy in an information age: The problem of privacy in public. *Law and Philosophy* 17: 559-596.

**Week 7: Preservation and access.**

May 15, 17

**USAPATRIOT debate is on Thursday, May 17.**

Case study: Nicholson Baker's *Double fold*.

Positional statement: "Provision of access to information is always more important than preservation of original documents."



Readings:

- Modern Language Association of America. 1995. Significance of primary records. In *Profession* 95, 27-50. New York, NY: MLA.
- \* Tanselle, G. Thomas. 1998. Texts and artifacts in the electronic era. *21stC* 3, no. 2.
- \* Baker, Nicholson. 2000. Deadline: The author's desperate bid to save America's past. *New Yorker* (July 24): 44-61.
- Cox, Richard J. 2001. Review article: Nicholson Baker, *Double fold*: Libraries and the assault on paper. *Archival Science* 1: 183-217.
- Pavelka, Karen L. 2002. Double trouble or more: A response to *Double fold*. *Libraries & Culture* 37, no. 3: 249-255.

**Week 8: Classification and diversity.**

May 22, 24

**Access vs. preservation debate is on Thursday, May 24.**

Case study: Bias in schemes for organizing knowledge by its subject matter.

Positional statement: "It is impossible to correct for bias in the construction of schemes for knowledge organization (and so it is not worth trying to do so)."

Readings:

- Introna, Lucas B., and Helen Nissenbaum. 2000. Shaping the web: Why the politics of search engines matters. *The Information Society* 16, no. 3: 1-17.
- \* Olson, Hope A. 2001. The power to name: Representation in library catalogs. *Signs* 26, no. 3: 639-668.
- Olson, Hope A., and Rose Schlegl. 2001. Standardization, objectivity, and user focus: A meta-analysis of subject access critiques. *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 32, no. 2: 61-80.
- Olson, Hope A., and Rose Schlegl. 2001. *Bias in subject access standards: A content analysis of the critical literature*. Milwaukee, WI: School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
- \* Shirky, Clay. 2005. *Ontology is overrated: Categories, links, and tags*. Clay Shirky's writings about the Internet. Shirky.com.
- \* Rainie, Lee. 2007. *Tagging*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet & American Life Project.
- # Berman, Sanford. 1993. *Prejudices and antipathies: A tract on the LC subject heads concerning people*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

**Week 9: Freedom of information, information equity, and the digital divide.**

May 29, 31

**Annotated bibliography and evaluative report is due at 9am, Tuesday, May 29.**

**Knowledge organization debate is on Thursday, May 31.**

Readings:

- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 7: The impact of information on cultures and societies.

- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 8: The economics of information.
- Schement, Jorge R., and Leah Lievrouw. 1987. The fundamental assumptions of information society research. In *Competing visions, complex realities: Social aspects of the information society*, ed. Jorge R. Schement and Leah Lievrouw, 1-10. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Holderness, Mike. 1998. Who are the world's information-poor? In *Cyberspace divide: Equality, agency and policy in the information society*, ed. Brian D. Loader, 35-56. London: Routledge.
- \* Warschauer, Mark. 2003. Demystifying the digital divide. *Scientific American* 289, no. 2 (August): 42-47.
- \* Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. 2004. *Toward equality of access: The role of public libraries in addressing the digital divide*. Seattle, WA: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- Schement, Jorge R. 2003. Measuring what Jefferson knew and De Tocqueville saw: Libraries as bridges across the digital divide. *IT and Society* 1, no. 4: 118-129.
- Webster, F. 2006. The information society revisited. In *The handbook of new media*, rev. ed., ed. Leah Lievrouw and Sonia Livingstone, 443-457. London: Sage.
- # van den Hoven, Jeroen. 1995. Equal access and social justice: Information as a primary good. In *ETHICOMP95: Proceedings of an international conference on the ethical issues of using information technology*. Leicester: De Montfort University Press.

### **Week 10: Summary and wrap-up.**

June 5, 7

What is information?, revisited.

Readings:

- Lester & Koehler, Chapter 12: Information futures.
- \* Braman, Sandra. 1989. Defining information: An approach for policymakers. *Telecommunications Policy* 13, no. 3: 233-242.
- Buckland, Michael K. 1991. Information as thing. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 42, no. 5: 351-360.
- \* Brown, John Seely, and Paul Duguid. 1996. The social life of documents. *First Monday* 1, no. 1.
- Furner, Jonathan. 2004. Information studies without information. *Library Trends* 52, no. 3: 427-447.

### **Week 11: Finals week.**

June 13

**Final exam is at 3pm, Wednesday, June 13.**