INF 335W – Information in Cyberspace

Unique Number: 27865
Semester: Spring, 2017
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Office Hours: by appointment.
Class Time and location: Online

Summary

Information in Cyberspace (INF335W) is a course designed for undergraduate students that provides an overview of the history and social impact of Internet and Web technology. INF335W emphasizes technology self-sufficiency and information literacy.
The purpose of this course is to prepare students to think about information technology in a critical, thoughtful manner. The goal is to pull back the curtain on some of the inner workings of information technology and empower students to navigate confidently through information spaces in networked environments.

Objectives

In this course students will learn:
about technical applications that make the Internet possible; about political, financial, and social implications of creating content on the Internet; how to find, evaluate, and cite Information resources on the Internet; how to protect content and resources from malicious attacks. how to create content (such as Web pages) on the Internet.
Students will enact the following learning techniques:
reading about history and current news related to information technology; discussing history and current news related to information technology; ; completing hands-on projects to practice presenting and assessing information in a variety of contexts.

Course prerequisites

None

Required readings

Readings are available online via the course modules here:
https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/1189157

Assignments and grading

The course uses a 500-point grading system. Each of five modules is worth 100 points (or 20% of the final grade). In a 9-week summer session, each module is 2 weeks long, with the exception of the first module, which is only 1 week long. Each module will entail 3 assessment methods:
A quiz (30 points each module): A quiz at the end of each module will cover the readings from the relevant module. Class participation (30 points each module): During each module, students will contribute thoughtful questions and responses in the class participation forums. Individual projects (40 points each module): The project will differ from module to module, but will include practicing written skills as well as technical skills such as HTML5.

Academic dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University.

Late Assignments

It is important to complete your work on time, both so you can stay on track and so you can work with your fellow students. You will be docked 10% each day for every day late for any assignment. Plan ahead. This is an online course and you have between one and two weeks to ensure you complete everything on time. As there is no scheduled class time, you must be responsible for getting work done in a timely manner. There is much flexibility for when that happens throughout your schedule, so I will be very strict about excused late work.

Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

Schedule

Students will complete the following instructional modules:
1. Orientation to the course and search techniques (1 week) 2. History of technical applications and networked computers (2 weeks) 3. Protecting resources and content from malicious attacks (2 weeks)
4. Copyright concerns for information in cyberspace (2 weeks) 5. Accessibility, gender issues, and other social concerns for information in cyberspace (2 weeks)

Summary

It is my hope that this class will be an opportunity for you to explore new ideas, review established thoughts, and approach information technology in a critical, thoughtful manner. Our aim is to pull back the curtain on the inner workings of information technology and show you that an understanding of the basics can guide you to make good decisions, to protect yourself, and to navigate confidently through information spaces of all types.

Schedule and due dates

In this course, you will complete 6 primary instructional modules and an orientation, which cover the basics of the following areas. Deliverables for each module will be due on Thursdays.
0. Orientation to the course and search techniques, *due January 2*
1. History of technical applications and networked computers, *due February 9*
2. Protecting resources and content from malicious attacks, *due February 23*
3. Copyright concerns for information in cyberspace, *due March 9*
4. Accessibility, gender issues, and other social concerns for information in cyberspace, *due April 13*
5. A project-based module in which you will choose to apply what you've learned to one of two subject-options, *due May 4*

Each module contains:

Learning objectives for the module; 10-15 pages of introductory content on the topic, developed by the i335 team; 2-3 outside online audio, video, and reading assignments; 3 deliverables: a quiz, a participation post, and a project (you complete these!).

You will need to submit an initial participation post one week into each module. For the first module, you will only need to submit one post, but in all future modules you must also submit 2 responses to your peers' posts. All work must be submitted by midnight on the Wednesday specified as the due date. Assignments will include instructions for how they should be submitted.

Required Readings

All required readings for this course are available through the course modules. We will ask you to read articles from other schools and websites, watch online videos produced here or elsewhere, and work through online tutorials created by School of Information students.

Grading

Points for the five instructional modules come from three areas:
1. Class Participation
2. Quizzes
3. Projects

Class Participation

In each module, you will make contributions to the discussion forum as part of the class participation assignment. PLEASE NOTE: PART OF YOUR PARTICIPATION WILL BE DUE BEFORE THE END OF EACH MODULE.

Quiz

A short quiz will follow each module to test your comprehension of module content and outside readings.

Project

The project will differ from module to module but will incorporate skills taught throughout the course. It is important to start these projects early and contact your Instructor or GA early if you need help.

Prerequisites

While there are no prerequisite classes for i335, you should know the following before taking this course:
You need to contact your instructors and TAs to ask questions or get help at the first sign of trouble. You need to pay very close attention to the course home page to keep up with what's going on. You need to organize your time effectively so you can spend at least six hours a week working on this class.

Students who are unable to motivate and organize themselves, and especially those who don't communicate with their instructors or TAs, tend to be unsuccessful in a virtual classroom environment.

Although it is not necessary to be a computer expert to complete this course successfully, you do need to know the basics of operating a personal computer and navigating the Internet. You are expected to know how to...

- create folders and view the contents of a disk; open an application or program; send and receive e-mail; search the Internet. submit work that meets college-level writing standards.

If you don't know how to do these things, let your instructor or TA know during the first week of class. We will be happy to sit down and show you how to do it.