

## INF 388K.02: Academic Libraries

School of Information  
University of Texas at Austin  
Wednesday 3-6, UTA 1.204

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### Table of Contents

Course description.....1	Your feedback to me.....2	Scholarly communication PPT ....5
Rationale.....1	My feedback to you.....2	Collection management plan .....6
Course aims.....1	Course schedule.....3	Population analysis.....6
Learning objectives.....1	Assignment overview.....4	Presentation .....7
Course format.....2	Higher education post.....4	Participation.....8
		Course policies.....9

#### Official course description:

Academic library development, innovation, evaluation, and user-centered design; its role in higher education and the research community at large

#### Rationale

In a very real sense, Information Studies is integral to all of higher education. Scholarly research and curricular development are not slotted into tightly delineated, insular intellectual domains. The multi/inter/intra/cross-disciplinary aspects of modern studies require rich and inherently complex constellations of information resources. Information experts anticipate these possibilities and generate support at-the-point-of-need. As institutions, universities have a hierarchical concatenation of schools, departments, and centers that are shaped by politics, values, and economics. These power dynamics at administrative and curricular levels require an advocate for the growth of knowledge that goes beyond any single institution. Information is essential in weaving together the intellectual threads that maximize higher education's social contributions. It is the information professional who knows at a visceral level that information communication technology is an essential aspect of any university's claim on society's support.

#### Course aims

This course is intended to contribute to your growth as an information professional by developing your ability to understand and enhance academic library information engagement and opportunities.

#### Learning objectives:

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

1. Analyze the socio-historical and governance contexts of academic libraries;
2. Analyze scholarly communication trends and expectations;
3. Analyze collection management functions;
4. Analyze needs/expectations of populations; and
5. Analyze service structures.

### Course format

This course is *highly active* with concept mapping, problem-solving, and other activities designed to bridge concept and practice. Most classes will include a brief lecture designed to enhance and synthesize the readings along with other activities and discussion.

The activities, lectures, and discussions require full-tilt engagement. This means bringing additional higher education, information communication technology, and academic librarianship materials into the classroom. Read beyond what's required. Share blogs, listserv news, *NY Times* articles, *Chronicle of Higher Education* op-ed pieces, and more. Everything you bring in can lead our discussions in new directions.

**NOTE:** Each day, I'll call on someone to briefly recap a reading so that we start each discussion with reminders on all the readings at hand. To that end, it may help to have prepped such a recap for each reading in case you are called upon to give it.

### Your feedback to me

This course requires a fine balance between the conceptual and the applied. We'll read and talk about everything from social values at a conceptual level to information literacy at an application level. I need to hear your voice. I need to know if you're getting what you need to get from the course. Tell me what worked so I can find more ways of using it. ("The news stories clarified economic impact for me.") Tell me what you'd like to examine further. ("The difference between a digital library and a digital collection is still vague.") Tell me what you'd like to add in. ("What about the problems in educating academic librarians for technologies that don't even exist yet?")

### My feedback to you

Feedback can be formative or summative. *Formative feedback* is designed to strengthen work quality and increase productivity. Its sole function is to improve performance. You give formative feedback when you coach a colleague who is learning how to use an unfamiliar piece of software. *Summative feedback* is designed to quantify performance. You give summative feedback when you complete a satisfaction survey at your dentist and rate the receptionist's efficiency as 9 on a 10-point scale.

I use three means of giving you feedback, two are formative and one is summative.

- First, *one-to-one feedback* is available at any time in my office. This is particularly useful when you are working on an assignment – don't wait till the grade is in. Bring in questions as you go along. I'd rather give you feedback early so you can make the most of it. The opportunity to have conversations about coursework is one of the many advantages of graduate school. Please – come to office hours frequently. (Make appointments outside of office hours if the times aren't working well for you.)
- Second, *formative in-class feedback* fits into the workflow and is, therefore, quite informal. Requesting elaboration of an idea, encouraging follow-up on a group discussion analysis, and questioning the application of a news story are all means of providing positive feedback. Worthwhile contributions become part of the day's work and there's no better feedback than support in weaving your thoughts into the discourse.
- Finally, *grades* provide the concrete form of feedback. My grades are generally accompanied by formative notes, suggestions, and explanations. If you've made good use of office hours and actively engaged in classroom work, then grades should be more a confirmation of your own self-assessment than an unanticipated summation.

Most of us are accustomed to pay primary attention to the summative feedback. For all intents and purposes, however, the summative is temporary. What matters is the formative.

## Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings	Asgmnt
1/15	Social expectations; opportunities anticipated & missed	--	--
1/22	Objective 1: Higher education: roots, values, expectations	JB 1-2	--
1/29	Objective 1: Higher education: structure & influences	JB 3, Salmon	--
2/1	<i>No class meeting; Objective 1</i>	--	<i>Post</i>
2/3	<i>No class meeting; Objective 1</i>	--	<i>Response</i>
2/5	Objective 2: Scholarly communication patterns	JB 6	--
2/12	Objective 2: Scholarly communication opportunities	JB 4, McIntyre	--
2/19	Objective 2: Scholarly communication in funding context	JB 5, Van Noorden, Holzman	--
2/26	Objective 3: Collection management structures	JB 7; Fischer, Ping	Scholr comm
3/5	Objective 3: Collection management electronic materials	JB 8, Nagra, Gureyeva, D'ambra, Draper	--
3/12	<i>NO CLASS MEETING - SPRING BREAK</i>	--	--
3/19	Objective 4: Academic populations	JB 9, Love, Jones	CM
3/26	Objective 4: Academicians' needs	Nandez, Hank, Rupp-Serano, Sloan	--
4/2	Objective 5: Service structures - information commons	Lippincott, Yoo-Lee, Connaway, Dewan	Ppltn analysis
4/9	Objective 5: Service structures – reference	McClure, Maloney, Chang, Williams, Thompson, Meredith	--
4/16	Objective 5: Service structures – information literacy	Lacy, Ianuzzi, Banks, Watson, Mokia	--
4/23	Objectives 1-5: Profession in context	JB 10-11, Metz, Searing	--
4/30	Objective 5: Functional service structures	--	Prsntn

## Assignment Overview

The assignments are derived directly from the course objectives below. Please let me know if you have any question about the relationship between objectives and assignments. I strongly encourage you to look at each assignment and ask your questions right away.

### Learning objectives:

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

1. Analyze the socio-historical and governance contexts of academic libraries;
2. Analyze scholarly communication trends and expectations;
3. Analyze collection management functions;
4. Analyze needs/expectations of populations; and
5. Analyze service structures.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due date</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Points</i>
Higher education post/response	2/1 & 3	1	100
Scholarly communication PPT	2/26	2	125
Collection management plan	3/19	3	150
Population analysis	4/2	4	225
Presentation	4/30	5	250
<u>Participation</u>	<u>continuous</u>	<u>all</u>	<u>150</u>
Total points			1000

A	960-1000	C+	750-799
A-	900-959	C	720-749
B+	860-899	C-	700-719
B	820-859	D	600-699
B-	800-819	F	599 or below

### **Higher education post/response: objective 1; 100 points; due 2/1 and 2/3**

*Objective 1: Analyze the socio-historical and governance contexts of academic libraries*

**What:** Identify a substantive event in higher education that occurred in the last two years; in 300 words, explain its nature and significance in a BB post by 2/1; read your colleagues' posts and extend at least one person's post with your own 100 word response post, with citation, by 2/3.

**Why:** The social, political, financial, and ethical ramifications of shifting Western attitudes towards and values in higher education constitute the academic library's primary context. Seeking, analyzing, and developing reasoned positions on these ramifications are essential to effective work in academic libraries.

**How:**

- Use any substantive news source (e.g., *New York Times* is fine but Smitty the itinerate blogger is not) to identify a compelling event in higher education. (Feel free to look outside the U.S. so long as the item is pertinent to our discussions.)
- Name the event and your provide your cite in APA format.
- Provide a crisp, brief *recap* of the item's primary content – about 100 words.
- Provide *analysis* of the item's impact – about 200 words.
- By 2/1, upload your post in the appropriate BB forum.
- By 2/3 post a *response* to at least one colleague's analysis – about 100 words with at least one additional citation. (Respond first to a post that has not yet received any responses.)

Tips:

- *Your event*: look for an item with transferable impact, that is, something that would spark conversations and debates outside its immediate setting
- *Your recap*: identify the event/issue cleanly then provide an objective, factual recap; a statement of content without your opinion; use the third person
- *Your analysis*: put your item in the context of higher education as a whole; tell us what its implications are for its immediate setting; compare/contrast it with other items in that area; first person is fine
- *Your response to a colleague's post*: take the analysis further by, for example, putting the issue in another context or considering other implications; extend and/or challenge your colleague's discussion; first person is fine

Grading criteria:

- Substantive item (10%)
- cogent recap (20%)
- thoughtful analysis (35%)
- insightful response with effective use of additional reading (25%)
- writing does not need to be formal but it does need to be well structured and proofed (10%)

### **Scholarly communication PPT: objective 2; 125 points; due 2/26**

*Objective 2: Analyze scholarly communication trends and expectations*

**What:** Identify an academic library, academic consortium, scholarly journal, or scholarly organization with a viable strategic plan or program for facilitating scholarly communication. Create a ten to fifteen-minute voice-over, video-embedded PPT in which you present your choice, explain its value, and analyze its potential as a model for scholarly communication support. Post the PPT in the appropriate BB forum with a brief overview in the text area to foreshadow your material.

**Why:** Top tier universities, specific disciplines, and academia as a whole are exploring and testing an array of mechanisms that maximize information communication technology's ability to facilitate effective scholarly communication. Academic librarians need to lead or, at the very least, be a vigorous partner in these developments.

**How:**

- Choose anything other than what's already discussed in our readings. Check with me to be sure your choice is appropriate before putting work into it.
- A solid plan is just as appropriate as an implemented project so either will do.
- Your PPT should be creative and engaging – something you might show to colleagues to get a discussion going.
- Have it run continuously and open as a separate file.
- A single 2-4 minute video of any related material should be embedded at an appropriate point.
- Your voice-over explanations for your slides should be easy to hear and understand. The two audio recording rooms in the computer lab are available for your voice over work on a first-come-first-served basis.

Tips:

- Videos can come from general sites (e.g., Ted Talks), demos, or anything else useful.
- Use as many slides as you like – just make sure they add to the talk.
- Building slides are usually more engaging than static slides but any effective format is fine.

Grading criteria:

- Chosen entity has been approved as one that truly facilitates scholarly communication (20%)
- PPT runs ten to fifteen minutes (5%)
- substantive voice-over fits well into the presentation (30%)
- embedded video enhances and/or extends the description or analysis (5%)
- clearly explained value (10%)

- well-reasoned analysis (30)

**Collection management plan: objective 3; 150 points; due 3/19**

*Objective 3 Analyze collection management functions*

**What:** UT will have a new medical school within a few years. Create, explain, and justify a practical planning proposal for building the collection in 1,250 words. Identify and explain the efficacy of, at the very least, your recommendations on the following three choices. When proposing your collection management policy, what item(s) would you add that are specific to a new medical library? What process would you use for selecting journals? How would you involve the Dean/faculty of this school that does not yet exist? Write a practical planning proposal that is designed to persuade library management to adopt your plan.

**Why:** Considering a collection from its inception provides an opportunity for reviewing every element of academic library collection management. Experience in that full-scale analysis will support the more common analyses of established collection elements.

**How:**

- Read the University announcements on the planned school; identify and examine potential peer libraries' web sites.
- Identify medical libraries at other major universities then review their web sites to get an understanding of their strategies for collection development.
- If you want to contact the library, let me know when a class meets. We'll keep each other abreast on this one so that we have no more than one student doing so.
- Create an organization, tone, and overall structure to persuade the university and library administrators. "Persuading" requires effective presentation of data, comparisons, and planning elements – it's a matter of content rather than rhetoric.

**Tips:**

- *Format:* Write for management, not academia. Use bullets, headings, brief abstract, second person, and extremely tight writing in which every single word is essential.
- *Content:* Keep this at a high level – think strategy rather than tactic and policy rather than procedure. Obviously everything needs to be as digital and accessible as possible – take that as a given in a sentence or two. Spend your time on what goes beyond the obvious.
- *Support:* Reference other libraries' web sites, Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) reports, Medical Library Association publications, professional literature, and anything else needed to support your proposal. (The citations for these do not count in the 1,250 words.) Keep the references extremely formal and complete – they provide a foundation for your proposal.

**Grading criteria:**

- clean, professional document (10%)
- clearly organized at the paragraph and document levels with all three questions addressed (25%)
- sufficient and appropriate supporting material (15%)
- well-reasoned answers to all three questions (50%)

**Population analysis: objective 4; 225 points; due 4/2**

*Objective 4 Analyze needs/expectations of populations*

**What:** Write a well-documented profile of a specific subpopulation in the context of academic needs and practices. The profile, about 1,000 words, should serve as a reference for librarians who provide services and materials for the group.

**Why:** Students, faculty, and staff can be viewed as monoliths with, for example, faculty viewed in terms of their library use patterns rather than their information need patterns. The very act of peeling subpopulations out of the larger population requires a user-centered perspective. Profiling groups in terms of their own information context is essential to service design and marketing.

- How: We'll take all our subpopulations from either UT or Austin Community College (ACC).
- At whatever date you choose, start a thread in the appropriate BB forum for your work. The first post should clearly and fully identify your chosen subpopulation, e.g., humanities faculty at ACC's Grove Blvd. campus or MA students in the Women and Gender Studies program. Do *not* choose a subpopulation already in use; obviously, choosing yours early is ideal but you cannot change your mind about your choice at a later date.
  - Gather readily available demographic information.
  - Review the course listings, publications, student groups, professional affiliations, and other publicly available contextual material.
  - Read and analyze the relevant research and practice literature.
  - Create your own template for the profile information; the template should be clear enough for someone else to use with other subpopulations.
  - Complete and post your profile in the thread you started earlier.

Tips:

- Be creative in your data gathering; look for hard numbers but also the descriptive (even narrative) data. For example, someone profiling your subpopulation could get student/teacher ratios but the profile would be more enriched by an analysis of the poster session abstract booklets that show community connections, student interests, and faculty relationships.

Grading criteria:

- clean, professional document (10%)
- clearly organized template which could easily be used by others (10%)
- appropriate and cited data sources (20%)
- effective profile which goes well beyond a simple data-dump (60%)

**Presentation: objective 5; 250 points; due 4/30**

*Objective 5 Analyze service structures*

What: Working with at least one colleague, present a 8-10 minute, persuasive pitch for a service you'd recommend for a specific library. Use a handout and visual.

Why: Creative, well-reasoned service proposals drive the academic library's public services work. We can learn from our peers but need to create services for our own settings. Academic librarians present their proposals, teach their classes, and lead staff development workshops on a regular basis. Simple baseline presentation skills are *inadequate*. Dynamic, engaging, and well-crafted presentations are the true standard; this assignment demands that level of work.

How:

- *Context:* Identify the library you'll work with and develop a simple profile of its current context and service offerings. Give your audience enough information to establish the bare essentials of your library and university/college. Use readily available information (e.g., student demographics, number of librarians, number of para-professionals, collection size, and whatever else establishes your context). Making at least one visit will be fruitful and provides an opportunity for taking photos that could be part of your visual.
- *Focus* Identify the focus of your work - an opportunity or gap that could be addressed by a new or heavily revised service. Look for lost opportunities, underserved populations, holes in the library's response to university/college priorities, and similar possibilities. Tell us about this opportunity or gap; explain why it merits attention
- *Review* Review the literature and practices of academic librarianship to identify other libraries' means of addressing your problem. Look for practice literature; visit web sites of peer institutions' libraries. Choose 2-4 reports or examples of another library's means of addressing your problem. With proper attribution, describe each item by explaining its nature, mechanisms, and products. If available, evaluation findings should be included. Tell us about these professional approaches. Include the citations in your handout.

- *Proposal* Describe the goal, mechanisms, resource requirements, outcome measures, timeline, and any other appropriate elements. Tell us what you're recommending and why it's a good idea.

Tips:

- Special support offered – if you have any concerns at all about your ability to give a dynamic, powerful, professional presentation, then make full use of the following offer: I will review it with you in advance. Make a video of your presentation and show it to me. We'll talk it over together based on your questions and needs. Smartphone video is fine but the computer lab can help with something more if you'd prefer that. Do it whenever your presentation is developed enough for you to find this productive.
- *Context* Bring the institution to life. Don't assume we know it.
- *Review* Look for the best and transferable ideas. If reading the materials makes you think you're reinventing the wheel, then make a different recommendation. If your review items differ from your proposal on simple lines (e.g., your library serves a larger population), then choose a new focus.
- *Proposal* Consider the practicalities of time, budget, staffing, and community will power. You are not going to have hard data on these points – face that ambiguity and make note of what common sense tells you to pursue.
- *Support for proposal:* Come see me about your proposal as early as possible. Get your ideas laid out and let me review them with you.

Grading criteria:

- succinctly described context (5%)
- appropriately scoped and defined service (5%)
- well reasoned, practical, and effective proposal (50%)
- apt and effective visual and handout that support rather than distract or repeat (10%)
- carefully proofed materials (5%)
- **dynamic presentation** (25%)  
*{Dynamic presentations include, at the very least: sharp opening and closing; deliberate use of pitch, pace, and volume for effect; steady confident delivery; competent use of presentation equipment; effective distribution of handout; crisp identifications, e.g., speakers, library, recommendation. The non-speaker should be so effectively focused on the speaker as to provide a model for active listening.}*

**Participation; all objectives; 100 points**

This course requires vigorous, invested participation in group/full class discussions and activities. Everyone starts with 100 points; minimalist participation reduces them. Missing class for any reason costs 75 points. A make-up opportunity for one missed-class is available. See me right away if you miss more than one class.

## **INF 388K.2 Course Policies**

*You are responsible for reading and following these course policies. Ask if you have any questions.*

### **The University of Texas Honor Code – see our BB site and the UT site for this**

- Please note that matters of academic integrity are taken seriously in this course. Students who use, quote, or otherwise employ the ideas, words, and insights of others without appropriate attribution will ***fail the assignment and, possibly, the course***.
- When in doubt, ask immediately. *Asking is the sign of an intelligent, thoughtful response to our complex world of layered information resources.*
- Every student is required to take the plagiarism online tutorial [<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/index.html>] or assume responsibility for knowing its contents.

### **University Electronic Mail Notification Policy**

- All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.
- It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to e-mail address changes.
- Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week.
- In this course e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements. Please be certain that your email address in BlackBoard is correct at all times. *You are the only one who can do this and it's essential for course communication.*

### **Documented Disability Support**

The University of Texas seeks to provide appropriate academic adjustments for all individuals with disabilities. This University will comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing appropriate academic adjustments to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the responsibility of the student to register with and provide medical verification and academic schedules to Services for Students with Disabilities at the beginning of each semester or as soon as the need arises. The student must contact the faculty member in a timely manner to arrange for appropriate academic adjustments. *Students who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259- voice or 471-4641 – TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing).* This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. *Five business days before an assignment* the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed. See this Web site for more information: [<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>].

### **Technology requirements**

The vast majority of this course will take place in-person with BlackBoard (BB) used primarily as a supplement and resource. You are required, however, to use BB to communicate on some points.

BlackBoard is available at <http://courses.utexas.edu>. Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 Monday through Friday 8 am to 6 pm Monday through Thursday and 8 am to 5 pm on Friday.

In addition, you are required to have access to whatever technology is necessary for you to function well in this course. That includes Internet access that allows you to explore sites that might be blocked by some filters and sufficient memory to handle downloads and other course requirements. You can use any of the computer labs on campus but any other arrangement is acceptable so long as your own needs for connectivity, printing, and information access are met.

### **Attendance**

Much of this course includes in-class application of readings and lectures via discussion, exercises, and on-site analysis therefore attendance is required and included in the participation grade.

*Religious Holy Days and observances* sometimes conflict with class schedules. If you miss an in-class work assignment or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Austin that you must *notify each of your instructor at least 14 days prior* to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holiday.

### **Feedback**

Feedback is an important part of any learning as well as any teaching. Please let me know right away if you have questions, concerns, or simply want to confirm your understanding of the material. If any of my feedback is unclear in any way, please let me know right away.

### **Grading: Late work**

All unexcused late materials will have a 1/3 letter grade reduction for each day they are overdue.

### **Communication**

- I will make every effort to answer emails and phone calls *within 3 working days*. If you have not heard from me within those time limits, please let me know by an alternative form of contact so we can make sure there are no technical problems involved.
- I will also make every effort to *grade and return assignments within 2 weeks of their due date*.
- If I have to cancel office hours, then I will note that on our BB announcement page along with the make-up time scheduled to replace the slot.

### **Maintain work files**

Students are responsible for maintaining their own files of work, both submitted and returned, until official University grades are received. You are encouraged to keep these materials until graduation, as I may need some of it to compose a detailed and persuasive recommendation letter for you.

### **Health and safety**

The University has a wide range of health and safety services available to all students. Please take full advantage of these support tools and let me know if you have questions about how to access what you need. Please be aware of your surroundings at all times. For more on personal safety and health, take a look at these resources:

- Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL) [<http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal/>]
- Stress management [<http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/stress.html>]
- Crime prevention [<http://www.utexas.edu/police/prevention/>]

### **Style guide**

Use the APA style manual, including sections on unbiased language.