INF 304D Introduction to Information Studies

Unique Number: 27034
Fall 2019

Syllabus

The syllabus for 304D includes goals for the course, the grading policy, an overview of assignments, and a list of resources you may find helpful. If, at any time throughout the semester, you have questions about the syllabus, please contact your instructor for clarification.

Contact

Instructor: Yalin Sun
Office Hours: by appointment
Office: UTA 5.550
Email: (please contact me using Canvas) clairesun05 at utexas.edu
TA: TA Pool Email: ta_pool@ischool.utexas.edu

Course Goal

This course will introduce students to the field of information studies. Students will explore the foundations of the field, professions in the field, and issues within those professions.

This session of the class ***does not*** have a writing flag.

Prerequisite: none.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:
- Demonstrate an understanding of major topics, identify key issues, and discuss important terms in information studies
- Examine numerous perspectives related to professions and issues in information studies and formulate independent arguments based on these perspectives
- Relate perspectives and issues in information studies to both their personal and professional lives

Course Materials

INF 304 does not have a textbook or course packet. Instead, all readings will be available through the course Web site, Canvas, UT's Library, or through the World Wide Web.

This course is a web-based course, so students will need regular access to the following materials:
- **Internet** – If you do not have access to a personal computer, you may use the iSchool lab (UTA 1.210) while enrolled in this course. You do not need to sign up for an iSchool account. The iSchool lab has both Macs and PCs, as well as lots of great software. I encourage you to check out the lab!
- **Email** – You can open an email account through UT, Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc. if you do not already have one. Make sure you register your official email account with

the university. All correspondence for this course will use your official UT email, and "I didn't get the email" is not accepted as an excuse for missing an assignment!

- **Adobe Acrobat Reader** – Several articles we will read are in .pdf format so you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader (you most likely already have it).
- **UT Box** – UT offers you unlimited storage for your files and make them available to you anywhere. All you need is an Internet connection and a Web browser. Set up UT Box synch and keep your local files backed up to the cloud automatically! As a student, you have already paid for this service. Use it! Set up an account with your UTEID.

Course Format

This course is web-based, so there are no class meetings. The course is divided into modules, and each week a new module will be released. You can do the work whenever you want throughout the week as long as you submit everything no later than the designated date and time for each assignment. I recommend setting up a few 3-hour time blocks that will help you keep up with the class.

Each week I will release a new module (or two) that will focus on one topic within information studies. Each module will be composed of the following activities:

- **Online lecture** - Each module begins with an online "lecture." Read each lecture before proceeding to the referenced readings. While reading, take notes on questions, interesting points, concerns, etc.
- **Readings** – There are citations provided at the beginning of each module, and all readings are available through the course Web site, Canvas, UT Library Online, or through the World Wide Web. See the "Course Materials" section for more information.
- **Discussion** – Students will engage in discussions about the lecture, readings, and/or related topics each week using the discussion board section set up by the instructor. You will find more information on discussions in the "Assignments" section of this syllabus.
- **Quiz** – an open book review of what we covered that week.

In addition, students will work on a **"final project"** (divided into 5 submissions) which are described in the "Assignments" section below.

Schedule

This course consists of 14 instructional modules. The first module serves as an orientation to this course; and the last module is reserved for students to complete their final video project. Module 2 to 12 cover twelve unique topics in information studies. Below is a list of all the modules and their schedules.

Module	Week
1. Introduction to the Course	9/3 – 9/8
2. Overview of Information Studies	9/9 – 9/15
3. Librarianship	9/16 – 9/22
4. Archives and Preservation	9/23 – 9/29
5. Museums and Conservation	9/30 – 10/6
6. Records Management	10/7 – 10/13
7. Media and Entertainment	10/14 – 10/20

8. News and Social Media	10/21 – 10/27
9. Security and Privacy	10/28 – 11/3
10. Crowdsourcing	11/4 – 11/10
11. Digital Humanities	11/11 – 11/17
12. User Experience and Design	11/18 – 11/24
13. Human-Computer Interaction	11/25 – 12/1
14. Final Video Presentation and Wrap up	12/2 – 12/9

Grading Policy

This class uses the traditional UT Austin undergraduate grading scale:

A	94 – 100
A -	90 - 93
B +	87 - 89
B	83 - 86
B -	80 - 82
C +	77 - 79
C	73 - 76
C -	70 - 72
D+	67 – 69
D	63 - 66
D-	60 - 62 (minimum for pass/fail students to pass)
F	Below 60

This course has three types of assignments: weekly discussions, weekly quizzes and final project. The due dates and weights of these assignments are described below.

Assignments	Due date	Weight
Weekly discussions	Every Friday 11:59pm for posting your discussion; Every Sunday 11:59pm for responding to others' posts	20%
Weekly quizzes	Every Sunday 11:59pm	20%
Final project	Various due dates, see below	60%
Total		100%

The final project assignments must be turned in to pass the class. If you do not turn in any one of the final project assignments, you will receive an F in the class, regardless of the grade Canvas displays. You might as well turn them in on time and earn some points! You can turn in a final project assignment late in order to pass the class, but you will not receive points for late submissions.

Grades for final projects, quizzes, and weekly discussions will be posted in Canvas. You will need your UT EID and password to log in. I usually have each assignment that was submitted on time graded within a week, and final project submissions graded within two weeks, so you should be able to keep up with your score on a regular basis. If you have any questions about your grades at any point, definitely let me know!

Late Grading:

All work is due before the deadline listed on the due date. Late discussions will not be graded. No exceptions. (Turning in a late discussion is like walking into the classroom after class is over and sharing your thoughts – too late!)

Canvas records the exact time you upload, so make sure you give yourself plenty of time for the document to upload before the deadline. I will use Canvas' recorded time as the official submission time. If the deadline is midnight and Canvas lists 12:01 AM as the time you uploaded your assignment and marks it late, then you will not receive credit.

No assignments will be accepted for a grade after the deadline except in the case of a verifiable medical emergency. A computer virus, a computer crash, athletic events, and thunderstorms are not verifiable medical emergencies. So plan ahead and do backups!!

There is no final exam for this class.

Assignments

Discussions

This semester will include a discussion for each module. For most discussions, Canvas will divide the class into a number of randomly assigned discussion groups. Discussions will be graded on a 4-point scale; two points for your original submission and one point for each of your responses to two other students. You must complete all three parts of the submission (original post and two responses) and meet the minimum requirements to receive credit. If you submit a great original post and only respond to one peer, you can only earn three points.

2 Points: For most original discussions, your submission should be at least 200 words long and make it clear to the instructor or TA that you have read the lecture for that week. Detailed instructions are listed on each discussion assignment.

2 Points: In addition, students must respond to the submissions of two other students. These responses should be at least two sentences long and should move the conversation forward. Responses of "I agree. This happened to me once." or similar short responses will not receive credit.

Quizzes

Each module also includes a quiz to help you review what we discussed in that module and in the assigned reading. Quizzes are open book, so consider them more of a review than a "test of knowledge". Quizzes time out after 3 hours, so set aside an appropriate amount of time to work through the quiz.

Final Project (FP)

Students will complete a final project throughout the semester. This final project (FP) is broken down into 5 separate assignments (FP1 – FP5) and a peer review assignment that you will need to complete at different times along the semester.

Each final project assignment is due at 11:59pm on the assigned due date.

Here is a breakdown of the final project.

	Assignment	Due Date	Points
FP1	Project preparation	Sept. 15th	5%
FP2	Status report	Oct 6th	15%

FP3	Paper draft	Oct 27th	5%
Peer Review		Nov 10th	10%
FP4	Paper revision	Nov 24th	10%
FP5	Video presentation	Dec 9th	15%
		Total points	60%

For this final project, you will need to choose a subject from the table below. These subjects cover the fundamental professional/research areas in information studies and will also be the themes of our lectures this semester. The goal of your final project is to have an in-depth understanding of one of these subjects, through researching online or interviewing related professionals by yourself.

Final Project Subjects
Librarianship
Archives and Preservation
Museums and Conservation
Records Management
News and Social Media
Security and Privacy
Digital Assets Management
User Experience and Design
Crowdsourcing
Digital Humanities
Human-Computer Interaction

Once you've decided on a subject, you will start building your project around this subject. You will be asked to research upon this subject in two parts: 1) find some recent news/events or interesting stories related to that subject, and 2) gather information regarding the profession of your chosen subject (e.g., social media specialist). There may be several related professions of your chosen subject; however, you will only need to focus on one profession. You can look for the information about a profession from sources such as online job-posting websites (e.g., LinkedIn) or persons of that profession. There may be some other ways that you can get to know more about a profession. Brainstorm a little bit!

After you've gathered the information needed, you will have to synthesize these resources into a final project paper introducing this subject. We will also have a peer review component in which one of your classmates will review your FP3 submission and give comments. After you receive feedback from your peer, you will have the opportunity to revise your paper in the FP4 assignment.

Last, we ask you to make a recorded video presentation to share with your peers your accomplishment over the semester regarding this final project.

See the detailed description below about each FP assignment. Specific rubrics for each assignment can be found on the specific assignment page in Canvas.

I encourage you to select a subject that closely relates to your major or to your future career. For example, students who are interested in "blockchain" can take this project as an opportunity to learn more about cyber security and privacy, as well as the profession of cyber security and privacy specialists.

Please note that you have to complete all the assignments (FP1-5) of the final project in order to pass this course. If you fail to submit the final project, you will fail the course regardless of the number of points you have accumulated.

General requirements for FP assignments

For all written documents you will submit, please follow the formatting guidelines below:

- Page margin: 1 inch for all the four sides
- Font: Cambria @ 11 point
- First line indentation of a paragraph: 0.25 inch
- Double space
- Using headings to organize your content as you see fit

Even though this class does not have a writing flag, the final project assignments still require you to meet basic college-level writing standards. Completing your assignment at the last minute usually results in a poor grade. Your writing will be graded on the following criteria:

- Grammar and spelling
- The clarity of thoughts and structures demonstrated in your writing
- Your use of resources (including citations)
- The overall quality of the writing

Please submit all assignments using Canvas. Assignments submitted via email will not be counted (I lose track of them – I get hundreds of emails a day, so I ask that you use Canvas both for communicating with me and submitting your assignments so we both have a record).

You must cite **all** sources you have used in your final project submissions and provide complete citation information at the end of your submitted documents, including any module readings or the online lecture. Remember that citing others' materials without proper reference may result in plagiarism and suffer strict academic consequences. All citations should use APA format. For more information on APA, please see the Purdue University OWL guide: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

All writing assignments will be passed through Turnitin or another plagiarism check software. The results of this software analysis are not the only method I use to determine whether something is plagiarized. Plagiarism is my least favorite thing to deal with in this course. So avoid it!

Final project preparation (FP1)

FP1 is the preparation stage for your final project. During the first two weeks of the semester, we want you to decide on a subject (from the list mentioned above) that is of particular interest to you.

Specifically, for this assignment, you are required to write a one-page paper that indicates:

- What is the subject you chose and why you chose this subject?
- What is your prior impression and understanding of this subject? (share some concrete examples or stories with us!)
- How do you plan to proceed your investigation of this subject? Especially the second part of the final project - understanding the information profession related to your subject. (e.g., What are the job titles you plan to search for? Do you have any potential resources or places in mind that you can contact later?)

Your paper should include at least 300 words and your work should meet the general requirements for FP assignments listed above.

Once you have chosen a subject and made a plan for your investigation, now it's time to do the research and prepare for your FP2!

Final project status report (FP2)

For your second FP submission, you will need to complete two tasks and turn in a report describing what you have found.

First, you will have to find at least **<u>three</u>** online news articles or posts related to your subject that mention three different events or news items happened recently. We also ask you to write a short summary for each resource. These resources will be used later in your final project paper. The summary of each resource should be at least 200 words and your work should meet the general requirements for FP assignments listed above.

Second, we ask you to do some research on a corresponding profession of the subject you chose. You need to gather from at least **<u>three</u>** sources about this profession. You can search online for this profession (e.g., job posting; each job posting counts as one source), or you can interview someone of this profession about his or her job. Either way, you should gather at least the following information as you conduct this research.

- What is the title of the job?
- Who offers this job?
- What are the core job responsibilities or tasks?
- What are the qualifications or skills required for this job?
- What are the working conditions of this job? (e.g., frequent travelling, night shift, etc.)
- What are the salary and benefits of this job?

You do not need to include your responses to all these questions in your FP2. You will use this information in your next submission. However, in your FP2, we ask you to provide a short description of where you have looked for this job. For online sources, provide a link to the source page and introduce a little bit about the poster/sponsor of this page (e.g., companies/organizations that post a job or authors that write about a job). If you interviewed a person as your source (either face-to-face or email communication), please briefly introduce this person and describe how you got in touch with this person.

Final project paper draft (FP3)

In your FP3 submission, you will synthesize the resources you used in FP2 into a coherent piece of writing. Imagine that someone who has no prior knowledge of your subject will be reading your paper. How would you introduce this subject to him/her? It's up to you how to structure your writing, but you should include the information you gathered previously to support your writing. In addition to an introduction of your chosen subject, we also ask you to include two paragraphs (~300 words) at the end of the paper describing 1) what were some difficulties or issues you have encountered while conducting this final project and 2) how your impression or understanding of this subject has changed after your research about this subject (comparing with what you've mentioned in your FP1).

This paper draft should be ready to be reviewed by your peer. Your draft should be at least three pages long (not including references). Remember to follow the general requirements of written assignments.

Peer review

Canvas will assign one of your peer's FP3 for you to review. You will have to go back to your FP3 assignment page to find your assigned peer review. You can leave your feedbacks by adding a comment at the peer review page or marking directly on your peer's writing (if the Canvas DocViewer shows up). If you aren't sure how to do this in Canvas, check out the [instructions for completing the peer review through Canvas](#).

This peer review process is important because not only does it help your classmate improve their final project, but it also helps you improve your critical thinking skills. Your comments and criticism should be constructive and substantial.

Here are some guidelines for this peer review:

- Have your critical eyes on your peer's submission and let them know what you are thinking as you read their FP3. Ask for clarifications if anything confuses you.
- Leave feedback or suggestions if you know something that may be relevant to your peer's project but hasn't been mentioned in their FP3. Even though it is up to your peer to include it or not in his or her revisions, the information you provide may help your peer to significantly improve his or her final project.
- Please also review your peer's writing for grammar, spelling, word choice, and formatting.

Don't forget to give positive feedback as well!

Final project paper revision (FP4)

Based on your peer's feedback, you will revise your paper and submit it for a final grade and feedback from me. Part of your grade on this revision will include your response to your peer's comments, especially the ones that we feel like you should make effort to revise (e.g., spelling/grammar errors or unclear descriptions).

Final video presentation (FP5)

FP5 is the last stage - the presentation - of your final project. After completing the previous final project assignments, you should already accumulate a great deal of materials and knowledge about your studied subject. Now it's time to make these elements into a formal presentation that you will share with the class. Remember knowledge is a lot more powerful when it is shared!

Don't sweat if you never created a video before. We will be using Panopto (as a plugin on Canvas) and you will have a chance to learn about Panopto at the end of the semester.

Please refer to the class Canvas site for details about this final video presentation.

Resources

Style Manuals

Students will need to cite all sources for their essays in APA format. Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) offers a great overview on how to do this.http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl Style manuals are located under Research and Citation.

U.T. Writing Resources

You are fortunate to attend the University of Texas, where you have access to one of the largest research libraries in the world! Take advantage of all the wonderful resources available through the U.T. system.

- Undergraduate Writing Center – located in FAC 211
- UT Library Online's (UT LOL) homepage – You can find library information, resources, and receive virtual assistance from a reference librarian!
- Full text articles and essays – Databases offering a plethora of articles and essays, available in both in HTML and .pdf format and from many disciplines
- Social Sciences Citation Index – An outstanding resource for finding articles and information on citation rates for many articles
- Databases arranged by subject – You can locate articles within specific disciplines.

Other Writing Resources

- The Citation Machine – A free Web site that can translate citation information into proper format for both APA and MLA style. A helpful and time-saving resource.
- Online Writing Lab – Purdue University provides an excellent online writing lab, including information about avoiding plagiarism, citing resources, and avoiding grammatical errors.

University Policies

Academic Integrity

Please abide by the University's policy on academic integrity. All work you submit must be your own. "Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism... 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. University policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced." From: The University of Texas: General Information, Appendix C.

Special Needs

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To determine if you qualify, please contact the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. If they certify your needs, we will work with you to make appropriate arrangements.

Religious or Holy Day Observance

"A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence."
(http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gi04-05/ch4/ch4g.html)

Email

"Electronic mail (e-mail), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send e-mail communications to all students, and the University will expect that e-mail communications will be received and read in a timely manner."
(http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gi04-05/app/appn.html). Both the instructor and the TA will reply to student emails within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends barring a rare and extenuating circumstance.

I look forward to working with you all this semester. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, do not hesitate to email me!