

**INF 391D.12, Disciplinary Foundations for Information Studies**  
**28530**  
**Spring 2021**

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**Class Meets:** 3-5:45 pm, Thursdays, Zoom

**Course Mode:** Online

**Instructor:** Dr. Kenneth R. Fleischmann

**Office:** Zoom, phone

**Pronouns:** he, him, his

**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Email:** kfleisch@ischool.utexas.edu

## Course Description

### University Catalog Course Description

An overview of concepts, results, and perspectives from philosophical, social science, humanistic, design, and technological disciplines that provide important underpinnings for Information Studies.

### Detailed Course Description

This course explores the connections between the interdisciplinary information field and related disciplines and fields. Each week, during the first half of class, a subject matter expert will join us to lead the discussion on the week's selected discipline/field. During the second half of class, we will have a writing workshop focusing on a different aspect of the writing process for the main assignment for the course, a mini qualifying paper.

### What will I learn?

1. Explain the relationship between the information field and related disciplines.
2. Integrate and synthesize concepts from the information field and related disciplines.
3. Apply theories and methods from disciplines in different foundation areas to your research.

### How will I learn?

1. From the readings, which will cover many important fields related to the interdisciplinary information field.
2. From the class discussions, including the discussions with subject matter experts and the mini writing studio.
3. By iteratively proposing, outlining, and writing a mini-qualifying paper to prepare for the qualifying procedure.

### How to succeed in this course

1. Please make sure to complete all readings prior to class and all assignments by their due dates and times.
2. Please make sure to come into each class ready to make contributions in both halves with questions and ideas.
3. Please make sure to be respectful during all class discussions, and to listen carefully and have civil discussions.

# Course Requirements

## Required Materials

All course readings will be available via the course Canvas site.

## Required Devices

You will need to use an Internet-based device with sufficient bandwidth to access the readings and participate in class.

## Classroom expectations

Please make sure to be engaged and respectful at all times, and to contribute to the discussions.

## Assignments

### 1. Class attendance and participation policy

(a) Because the vast majority of the learning in this class will occur within the classroom, you are required to attend class regularly. Attendance will be taken during each class period. Absences will only be excused in situations following university policy (illness, religious holy days, participation in University activities at the request of university authorities, and compelling absences beyond your control) with proper documentation and timely notification (prior to class for non-emergencies). Excessive tardiness may be considered as an unexcused absence except in situations following university policy.

(b) Class participation is a critical element of this course. The effectiveness of the course will be significantly impacted by the quality of your participation. Class participation is not merely attendance, but rather factors in your overall contributions to the collaborative learning environment, based on both the quantity and quality of your interactions in all aspects of the course. Discussion of class participation with the instructor is encouraged in order to ensure that you are making the most of the classroom experience and the accompanying opportunities for learning. You are expected to participate in all aspects of class discussion. You should come to class prepared to discuss the required readings, as well as your perspectives on these readings. You should strive for balance in your contributions, and your participation will not be based on who speaks the loudest or the longest, but on consistent participation of significant quantity and, most importantly, quality.

(c) Your attendance and class participation grade will be calculated by multiplying the numerical assessment of your class participation by the percentage of classes that you attend (with exceptions made for documented, university-recognized absences as noted above). Please note that regular attendance and active participation in each class session are critical for receiving a good grade in this course. For example, by actively participating in each class, you will receive a full letter grade higher than if you were to skip half of the classes or to be half-awake for all of the classes.

### 2. Course Readings/Materials

Please make sure to complete all readings (available via Canvas) before the class meeting for that week.

### 3. Discussion Questions

Before noon on each class day (except the first week and last two weeks), you will submit three discussion questions via Canvas. Each question should be one sentence in length. Please be sure to directly refer to, cite, and synthesize all four of the readings for the week.

### 4. Mini Qualifying Paper

Throughout the semester, you will develop a mini qualifying paper that explores a single concept across any three distinct disciplinary/field perspectives, including but not limited to the perspectives explored through the required readings and class discussions. During the mini writing studio, we will discuss how to select your three perspectives, to ensure that they are sufficiently interdisciplinary and comprehensive. The mini qualifying paper should be a good preparation for writing your qualifying paper, one of the milestones required for graduation from the Ph.D. in Information Studies program.

**Paper Proposal:** Please describe, in 250-500 words, your proposed mini qualifying paper. Please make sure to introduce the concept, describe the three disciplinary/field perspectives through which you will examine this concept, and briefly outline your strategy for finding appropriate outside readings. Mini qualifying paper proposals will be graded according to the following criteria: suitability and creativity of the topic; appropriateness and breadth of the disciplinary/field perspectives; and feasibility and comprehensiveness of the plan for finding outside readings.

**Paper Outline:** Please provide an outline of your paper, including the introduction to the selected concept, a description of the literatures that you will cover for each of the three disciplinary/field perspectives, and a synthesis that integrates the various fields' approaches to the concept. The recommended format is either a bulleted list, with 3-6 bullets for each of the 5 sections, or paragraph-length descriptions of each of the 5 sections. You also need to include a list of at least 10 references of relevance to the paper, including at least 5 references which are peer-reviewed journal articles, refereed conference proceedings papers, or academic books or book chapters from beyond the course syllabus (henceforth, scholarly outside readings). Citations must follow APA style; there are many online resources available; I recommend: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/) Outlines will be graded according to the following criteria: clarity of the plan for the paper; appropriateness of the plan for the paper; and appropriateness of the references.

**Use of TurnItIn:** Rough and final drafts will be processed by TurnItIn, a tool that compares submitted material to an archived database of published work to check for potential plagiarism. Other methods may also be used to determine if a paper is original. TurnItIn is just one tool that I will use to make the final determination as to whether or not a paper has been plagiarized.

**Paper Rough Draft:** Your rough draft should include the introduction to your selected topic, the three disciplinary/field perspectives, and a synthesis that integrates the various disciplines'/fields' approaches to the topic. You may choose to what extent and in what ways you develop the paper; for example, you can provide half of your final paper or the complete paper with each section half written. However, for all omitted sections, please provide a description that is further developed from the outline. You may also use this as an opportunity to provide a complete draft of the paper, but this is not required. Rough drafts should be 1,000-2,500 words in length (excluding references). You must cite at least 20 sources, including at least 10 scholarly outside readings using APA style. Rough drafts will be graded according to the following criteria: suitability and creativity of the topic, appropriateness and breadth of the disciplinary/field perspectives; and overall coherence and clarity of writing.

**Peer Reviews of Rough Drafts:** You will be selected to review three papers written by peers. Please prepare one-page reviews of each paper, including a brief summary of the purpose and content of the paper as you understood it, the strengths of the paper, and constructive feedback on how to improve it. Reviews will be graded according to the following criteria: clarity, insightfulness, and helpfulness.

**Final Paper:** Your final paper should incorporate feedback from all previous stages of the paper development. Your paper should be complete, coherent, and easy to read. Please make sure to proofread your paper thoroughly prior to submission. The final paper should be 2,000-2,500 words in length (excluding references) and must cite at least 30 sources, including at least 15 scholarly outside readings. Final mini qualifying papers will be graded according to the following criteria: suitability and creativity of the topic, appropriateness and breadth of the disciplinary/field perspectives; depth of analysis within the disciplinary perspectives; synthesis of the disciplinary perspectives; and overall coherence and clarity of writing.

**Final Presentation:** Please prepare a 15-20-minute presentation of your paper that explains the goals of the paper, how you developed the paper, and the final product. Please load your slides onto the class computer prior to the class meeting. Presentations will be graded according to the following criteria: quality of synthesis, quality of visual presentation, and quality of oral presentation.

#### 4. Late Assignment Policy

All assignments are due by the start of class for that week, except as noted in the course schedule. Late assignments will only be excused in situations following university policy (illness, religious holy days, etc.) with proper documentation and timely notification (prior to the deadline for non-emergencies). In all other cases, assignments received after the deadline will be penalized 10% per 24-hour period. If you turn in an assignment (without prior authorization or extreme emergency circumstances) even one minute late, you will have an automatic deduction of 10% prior to grading of the assignment; if you are five days late, even an otherwise perfect assignment will only receive half-credit; and if you are ten days late, your assignment will not be graded and will not receive any credit.

#### Grading for this Course

The following table represents how you will demonstrate your learning and how we will assess the degree to which you have done so.

Assignments	Week(s) Due	Percent of Total Grade
<b>1. Attendance and Participation</b>	Weeks 1-14	20%
<b>2. Discussion Questions</b>	Weeks 2-12	20%
<b>3. Mini Qualifying Paper</b>		60%
• Paper Proposal	Week 5	5%
• Paper Outline	Week 7	5%
• Paper Rough Draft	Week 10	10%
• Peer Reviews	Week 11	15%
• Final Paper	Week 14	15%
• Paper Presentation	Week 13 or 14	10%

## Course Outline

All instructions, assignments, readings, rubrics and essential information will be on the Canvas website at <https://utexas.instructure.com>. Check this site regularly and use it to ask questions about the course schedule.

**Changes** to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced (although I will do my best to ensure that you receive the changes with as much advanced notice as possible).

Week	Date	Class Topic & Guest	Required Readings	Assignments Due
1	1/21	Introduction	Syllabus and Doctoral Program Handbook	Attendance & Participation (A&P)
2	1/28	History Guest: Nitin Verma Scoping a (Mini) Qualifying Paper	Dixon & Foster, 2008 Verma, In Preparation Wartofsky, 1981 Winner, 1980	A&P Discussion Questions (DQs)
3	2/4	Science and Technology Studies Guest: Sarah Welsh Writing a Mini QP Proposal	Latour, 2014 Oudshoorn et al., 2004 Shilton, 2012 Welsh, 2020	A&P DQs
4	2/11	Universal Design Guest: Nathan Davis Peer Feedback on Paper Proposals	Davis et al., 2020 Goggin, 2019 Kane et al., 2020 Wobbrock et al., 2018	A&P DQs Paper Proposal
5	2/18	Game Studies Guest: Ayse Gursoy Researching/Organizing a Mini QP	Gursoy, In Preparation Jenkins, 2006 Nardi, 2010 Simons et al., 2020	A&P DQs
6	2/25	Philosophy Guest: Karim Nader Peer Feedback on Paper Outlines	Allen, 2019 Anowai & Maduabuchi, 2016 Cockburn, 2015 Nader, In Press	A&P DQs Paper Outline

7	3/4	Artificial Intelligence Guest: Anubrata Das Writing an Introduction	Das et al., 2020 Kalluri, 2020 Rahwan et al., 2019 Shneiderman, 2020	A&P DQs
8	3/11	Critical Infrastructure Studies Guest: Steve Slota Writing Body Sections	Baldwin & Crane, 2020 Bowker et al., 2010 Ribes & Finholt, 2009 Slota et al., 2020	A&P DQs
9	3/25	Consumer Health Informatics Guest: Yung-Sheng Chang Writing a Synthesis	Chang et al., 2021 Huh et al., 2018 Sbaffi & Rowley, 2017 Xie et al., 2020	A&P DQs
10	4/1	Media Studies Guest: Soyoung Park Writing Constructive Peer Reviews	Gillespie, 2010 Kearney, 2018 Lewis, 2020 Park et al., Under Review	A&P DQs Paper Rough Draft
11	4/8	Education Guest: Siqi Yi Peer Feedback on Paper Drafts	Ames, 2016 Bailey & Bailenson, 2017 Dixon & Anderson, 2018 Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995	A&P DQs Peer Reviews
12	4/15	Gerontology Guest: Kristina Shiroma Constructively Using Peer Reviews	Booker et al., 2020 Czaja et al., 2019 Vedel et al., 2013 Xie, 2009	A&P DQs
13	4/22	Social Psychology Guest: Tara Zimmerman Giving a Research Presentation	Bandura, 2001 Breslin & Wadhwa, 2018 Schwartz, 2007 Zimmerman, Under Review	A&P DQs
14	4/29	Presentations	N/A	A&P Presentations
15	5/6	Presentations	N/A	A&P Presentations Final Paper

# Policies

## Classroom Policies

### Statement on Learning Success

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need to be adaptable because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT. Many are listed on this syllabus, but I am happy to connect you with a person or Center if you would like.

### Statement on Flexibility

In acknowledgement of COVID 19 and its impact on the University of Texas at Austin community, this course will reaffirm one of the core values here at UT Austin: responsibility. Our responsibility to ourselves and each other is to put our humanity in the forefront of our academic pursuits. If you experience any hardships such as illness, accident, family crisis please know that these policies may be amended and therefore you should communicate with me as soon as you feel comfortable doing so. You can also consult [Student Emergency Services](#) and <https://coronavirus.utexas.edu/students>.

### Grading Scale:

	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69			
A	93-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66	F	0-59
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

## Student Rights & Responsibilities

- You have a right to a learning environment that supports mental and physical wellness.
- You have a right to respect.
- You have a right to be assessed and graded fairly.
- You have a right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- You have a right to meaningful and equal participation, to self-organize groups to improve your learning environment.
- You have a right to learn in an environment that is welcoming to all people. No student shall be isolated, excluded or diminished in any way.

### *With these rights come responsibilities:*

- You are responsible for taking care of yourself, managing your time, and communicating with the teaching team and with others if things start to feel out of control or overwhelming.
- You are responsible for acting in a way that is worthy of respect and always respectful of others.
- Your experience with this course is directly related to the quality of the energy that you bring to it, and your energy shapes the quality of your peers' experiences.
- You are responsible for creating an inclusive environment and for speaking up when someone is excluded.
- You are responsible for holding yourself accountable to these standards, holding each other to these standards, and holding the teaching team accountable as well.

## Personal Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "preferred name" with the Gender and Sexuality Center, which you can do so here: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/publications-and-resources/>. I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the gender pronouns you use (she/he/they/ze, etc). Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas, visit <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/633028/pages/profile-pronouns>.

## University Resources for Students

### **COVID-19 Update:** "Keep Learning" Resources

This course may be offered in a format to which you are unaccustomed. If you are looking for ideas and strategies to help you feel more comfortable participating in our class, please explore the resources available here:

<https://onestop.utexas.edu/keep-learning/>

### *Land Acknowledgment*

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Indigenous land. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge and pay my respects to the Carrizo & Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Caddo, Tonkawa, Comanche, Lipan Apache, Alabama-Coushatta, Kickapoo, Tigua Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas, here on Turtle Island.

### *Services for Students with Disabilities*

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please refer to SSD's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

### *Counseling and Mental Health Center*

The [Counseling and Mental Health Center](#) serves UT's diverse campus community by providing high quality, innovative and culturally informed mental health programs and services that enhance and support students' well-being, academic and life goals. To learn more about your counseling and mental health options, call CMHC at (512) 471-3515.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, call the CMHC Crisis Line 24/7 at (512) 471-2255.

### *The Sanger Learning Center*

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

University Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Libraries: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

ITS: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/>

Student Emergency Services: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>



## BeVocal

BeVocal is a university-wide initiative to promote the idea that individual Longhorns have the power to prevent high-risk behavior and harm. At UT Austin all Longhorns have the power to intervene and reduce harm. To learn more about BeVocal and how you can help to build a culture of care on campus, go to: <https://wellnessnetwork.utexas.edu/BeVocal>.

## Important Safety Information:

**COVID-19 Update:** While we will post information related to the contemporary situation on campus, you are encouraged to stay up-to-date on the latest news as related to the student experience.

<https://protect.utexas.edu/>

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: [www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency)

## Title IX Reporting

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's [relevant policies](#).

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be reported. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email [advocate@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:advocate@austin.utexas.edu).

For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>, contact the Title IX Office via email at [titleix@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:titleix@austin.utexas.edu), or call 512-471-0419. Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, including the types of conduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.

### **Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>

## **University Policies**

### **Academic Integrity**

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: “As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.” **Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT.** Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT’s Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address: <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/standardsofconduct.php>

### **COVID-19 Updates: Spring 2021 Semester**

For the most up to date information on learning during COVID-19, including guidance about safety, cloth masks in classrooms, and classroom guidelines, see <https://protect.utexas.edu/learning/>.