Course information

**Course Name:** INF385S Digital Libraries  
**Course ID:** 28810  
**Semester:** Fall 2021  
**Pre-requisites:** Graduate standing  
**Class Meets:** Wednesdays, 6:00-9:00 pm, with 1-2 breaks, in UTA 1.212  
**Course Mode:** In Person  
**Course Description:** Examines design, development, management, and evaluation issues in digital libraries. Covers project management, collection development, and digitization; provision of access to multimedia materials; metadata and interoperability; access strategies and interfaces; policy and social issues.

Instructor information

Melanie Cofield, She/Her/Hers  
**Contact:** Use Canvas to email  
**Weekly office hours:**  
- Mondays 6:30-7:30pm via course chat in Canvas  
- Wednesdays 4:00-5:00pm at iSchool, UTA building, location TBD  
**Schedule appointment:** contact me via email to request a one-on-one appointment in person or online via Zoom.

Course Objectives

Course modules and assignments are designed to support specific learning objectives. At the end of this course, students will be able to...

1. Demonstrate effective project management, communication and collaboration skills.  
2. Recognize and explain knowledge, skills, and abilities important for digital library work.  
3. Compare and evaluate digital representation formats for a variety of materials.  
4. Read and interpret standards-based metadata documentation.  
5. Design standards-compliant metadata to describe and manage digital objects.  
6. Make informed recommendations for adopting digital object formats and descriptive practices.  
7. Describe how digital collections and user interfaces serve the target audience/s.  
8. Ask essential questions and develop criteria to maximize the benefits of digital collections for all stakeholders.  
9. Identify and use appropriate tools for performing digital library work.  
Course Materials
No textbook is required; readings will be freely available online, posted as PDFs in Canvas, or available through UT Libraries.

Pedagogy
This course is designed as a Flipped Classroom course, where students complete readings, online discussions and assessments, and assignments on their own time, and come together in class to collaborate, share, and further discuss. This format requires participation of all class members.

Class meetings will include:

- Short topic-based presentations, talks, or Q&A sessions by instructor or guest speakers
- Student-led reflections and discussions on readings and assignments
- Collaborative, inquiry-based activities involving feedback from instructor and classmates to support learning objectives, skill development, and assignment completion
- Review of upcoming modules and assignments

Presentations, talks, and Q&A sessions will highlight important aspects of assigned readings, introduce related concepts and materials, and provide a venue for the instructor and guest speakers to share expertise and perspectives. The goal is to create a learning environment where together we raise significant questions, discuss concepts, exchange ideas and develop skills collaboratively.

This course also includes a trauma-informed approach, including:

- Warnings that detail content, severity, and duration of material that might be triggering
- Check-ins at the open and close of class meetings: a few minutes at the beginning to talk about how everyone is doing, a few minutes at the end to discuss the personal and emotional reactions to the course material.
- Permission for students to tune out or leave the class meeting to attend to personal and emotional needs when necessary.

Land Acknowledgment
As the flagship institution in our state university system, it is important that The University of Texas at Austin demonstrate respect for the historic and contemporary presence of Indigenous Peoples in Texas and, particularly, in the greater Austin area. To that end, it is incumbent upon us at The University of Texas at Austin to recognize that our campus resides on what were historically the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples who were dispossessed of their homelands. Land Acknowledgements are an expression of gratitude and appreciation to the Indigenous Peoples, the traditional caretakers of the land, for the use of their lands on which we work, study, and learn.
I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the Indigenous lands of Turtle Island, the ancestral name for what now is called North America, and pay respects to the Alabama-Coushatta, Caddo, Carrizo/Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Kickapoo, Lipan Apache, Tonkawa and Ysleta Del Sur 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. Today, various Indigenous peoples from all over the globe call Austin home. While honoring the many diverse Indigenous Peoples still connected to this place on which I join you today, I acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced removal from this territory. I also would like to acknowledge others whose history with this place is systemically erased, such as the enslaved whose labor built the city and wealth here.

Recognizing the land and the history of place in this way is an expression of deep appreciation for those who were here before us. I am grateful to be able to study, learn, work, and teach here, working to decolonize our practices and make this present learning moment and environment more inclusive.

As you work through this semester and course, I hope each of you will take a moment to acknowledge and recognize the Indigenous Peoples in the places you inhabit. This online map may help you in that endeavor: https://native-land.ca/

My Personal Goals
During this course, I will do my best to:

- Communicate early and often about course assignments and syllabus/schedule changes.
- Provide opportunities to think deeply and engage in lively discourse.
- Cultivate a welcoming, inclusive environment where students feel free to share knowledge, hopes, and concerns.
- Develop students’ skills to support professional pursuits.
- Encourage interest in and commitment to life-long learning.
- Foster pride in achievements, both individual and collaborative.
- Support an enjoyable experience.

Student Participation Expectations
General Participation
Student preparation for discussion and participation is extremely important for the success of everyone in the class. Students are expected to:

- **Participate actively.** Active participation includes being prepared to discuss course readings and resources, assignments, and concepts; engaging yourself in classroom activities and discussion; and putting your best effort into both formal and informal assignments. The more you put into it, the more you will get out of it.
- **Understand that respect is vital.** You can expect that as the instructor, I am concerned about the educational experience of each student in the class, respectful of individual
differences, encouraging of creativity, reasonably open and accessible to discuss material and assignments, thorough in evaluating assignments, and rigorous yet supportive in maintaining high standards for performance. As a student, you are expected to work individually and with others, to create an atmosphere that is safe, valuing of one another, and open to diverse perspectives. Everyone is expected to show courtesy, civility, and respect for one another. Comments or online postings that degrade or ridicule another, whether based on individual or cultural differences, are unacceptable.

- **Complete all assignments**, including reflection surveys that follow class meetings.
- **Read and digest material in advance** of weekly discussion deadlines; use the course readings and resources to inform participation in discussions, team activities, and completion of assignments.
- **Post discussion questions and comments** to Canvas before the deadline.
- **Turn in all assignment deliverables fully and on time.** Late submissions will only be accepted as specified in the grading policies or the assignment. For exceptions related to emergency situations and university excused absences, please contact me as soon as possible (see also Grading and Policies).
- **Communicate with and educate each other.** Team activities and discussion of the readings, resources, and assignments are designed to encourage this kind of collaboration.
- **Ask for additional help** from peers or instructor when needed.
- **Have fun!** This course is an adventure in exploring your thought processes, empowering yourself with the ability to evaluate information, and reasoning through arguments that you encounter. Some of what we do may be personally and intellectually uncomfortable. It is OK to express your discomfort as long as you are open to safely exploring beyond those comfort zones. Make the most of it!

**Canvas Participation**
Students are expected to:

- **Confirm your email address on file with UT is accurate** - review University policy and update your information in UT Direct as needed.
- **Complete weekly course modules in Canvas**, including engagement in discussion of assigned readings and resources, submission of assignments and peer reviews, completion of assessments, and team collaborations.
- **Turn on Canvas notifications** in order to receive weekly course announcements at confirmed UT email address.

**NOTE:** recordings posted in Canvas (e.g. class recordings or student assignments) are reserved only for the use of members of this class (students, TAs, and the instructor), only for educational purposes, and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.
Schedule

Changes to the syllabus or schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. Students are responsible for noting these changes when announced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Module</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>Introductions, syllabus &amp; course review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>September 1</td>
<td>What are digital libraries? Historical narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>What are digital libraries/librarians? Tour, tools &amp; resources, librarianship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>File formats and metadata standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>Ethical practice in digital libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>September 29</td>
<td>Infrastructure, repositories, digital objects, identifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>User interfaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>Interoperability and crosswalks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>Data aggregations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>October 27</td>
<td>Digital scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November 3</td>
<td>Research data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Sustainable development and management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>Group project presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>November 24</td>
<td>No class meeting; Challenges, trends, future outlook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>Challenges, trends, future outlook; Course wrap</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading
Grades will be determined both by individual performance as well as the performance of small
teams on course projects. These components will be weighted as follows:

Individual performance
20% - Participation (including pre-survey, personal introduction in Canvas, class discussions, weekly assessment and reflection surveys, and peer reviews of assignments)

15% - Assignment 1 – Imagine a future where something from your personal digital collections ends up in a publicly-accessible archive, available for research and potential re-use. Create and encode metadata for a personal digital object of your choice (image, document, audio or video recording), using the Dublin Core schema and one additional schema from choices provided.

15% - Assignment 2 – Choose, explore, describe, and critically evaluate a digital library collection.

Individual performance will be assessed on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. For Assignments 1 & 2, assignment details will be provided in Canvas. Satisfactory work will receive full credit; incomplete or unsatisfactory work will receive no credit.

Each student will have 1 token/opportunity to either revise an unsatisfactory individual assignment (case-by-case negotiation) or submit an individual assignment up to 48 hours late.

Group performance
15% - Pair project (team of 2)
Technology topic presentation - choose and present to the class a particular technology that supports any of the myriad activities involved in creating or managing digital collections.

35% - Group project (groups of 3-ish)
semester-long project involving sign up for a project from options provided; development of formal statement of work; progress reports; presenting as a group to class and project contacts; submission of all final project deliverables to project contact and instructor.

Pair project performance will be assessed via rubrics laid out in Canvas. Group project performance will be assessed on a broad project rubric, including the unique expectations defined in project proposals created by students and their project contacts.

As I hope you can see, flexibility is built into the assignments to support your success in this course. Consequently, the final grades are firm.
Policies

Statement on Learning Success
Your success in this class is important to me. I recognize we all learn differently, and accommodations are necessary. 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.

Late Work
Late work will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Generally, except in the case of an excused absence or use of 1 token for late individual assignments (see details about individual assignments above), work submitted after an assigned deadline will not be eligible for full credit. Please communicate with me if you are having problems keeping to the schedule. It is better to talk through problems than ignore them.

Absences
If you are absent on the day that your team (pair or group) meets, you are responsible for providing them the necessary information to compensate for your absence. It is crucial to keep in communication with your team members; you are responsible for letting both your instructor and your team know if you cannot make it to a class or team meeting.

Excused Absence: The only absences that will be considered excused are for religious holidays or extenuating circumstances due to an emergency (including COVID-19-related circumstances). If you plan to miss class due to observance of a religious holiday, please let your instructor know at least two weeks in advance. You will not be penalized for this absence, although you will still be responsible for any work you will miss on that day if applicable. Check with your instructor for details or arrangements.

If you have to be absent, use your resources wisely. Ask your team and other classmates to get a run-down and notes on any lessons you miss. If you find there are topics that we covered while you were gone that raise questions, you may drop in during office hours or schedule a meeting with your instructor to discuss. Email specific questions you have in advance so that we can make the most of our time. "What did I miss?" is not specific enough.

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. 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. Students are encouraged to add preferred pronouns to their Canvas account settings (see video tutorial) and their Zoom name display.

University Resources for Students
Staying Healthy on Campus
Students are encouraged to stay connected and engaged while prioritizing their physical health and mental well-being: [https://protect.utexas.edu/students-families/](https://protect.utexas.edu/students-families/)

Services for Students with Disabilities
This class respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, if you have medical information that you need to share with me, please let me know. I am committed to creating an effective learning environment for all students, but I can only do so if you discuss your needs with me as early as possible. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of these discussions. Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 512-410-6644 (Video Phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. For more information, visit [http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/about/](http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/about/).

Counseling and Mental Health Center
Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is often helpful. If you or anyone you know experiences any academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings like anxiety or depression, we strongly encourage you to seek support. [http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html](http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/individualcounseling.html)

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 [https://ugs.utexas.edu/slc](https://ugs.utexas.edu/slc) or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

University of Texas Libraries
UT Libraries provides a wide range of research help and support, study spaces and technology, maintaining more than 10 million volumes and providing access to the latest digital journals, databases and web resources. [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/)

Graduate Student Services at the Undergraduate Writing Center: [https://uwc.utexas.edu/how-we-help/graduate-students/](https://uwc.utexas.edu/how-we-help/graduate-students/)
Information Technology Services: https://its.utexas.edu/

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
If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or instructors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns 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.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures
The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation are from the Campus Safety Office, 512-471-5767, https://safety.utexas.edu/.

- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated or an official announcement is given.
- Evacuation procedures require orderly exiting and assembly 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.
- During an evacuation — follow the instructions 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 the Fire Prevention Services.
- Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: https://preparedness.utexas.edu/emergency-plans

Campus Climate and Title IX Reporting
The University of Texas at Austin is committed to addressing incidents that impact our campus climate. The Office for Inclusion and Equity provides many resources for students, faculty and staff, including a concern submission form to report incidents.
Faculty members are not confidential reporting resources. If you disclose to me incidents related to discrimination or harassment as defined in the nondiscrimination policy below, I am obliged to file a report.

From the UT-Austin Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) 3-3020: "It is the policy of The University of Texas at Austin ("University") to provide an educational and working environment that provides equal opportunity to all members of the University community. In accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits unlawful discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, citizenship, veteran status, and genetic information. The University also prohibits discrimination on the basis of, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression." [https://policies.utexas.edu/policies/nondiscrimination-policy](https://policies.utexas.edu/policies/nondiscrimination-policy)

The UT-Austin Office for Inclusion and Equity (OIE) reminds us that: "Every supervisor, administrator, University official or any other employee who has the authority to take action to redress an alleged violation and/or has the duty of reporting such allegations as defined under "responsible employee" in HOP 3-3031 is responsible for promptly reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment in violation of this policy that come to their attention to either the Office of the Dean of Students or OIE."

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, 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 sexual misconduct 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 ([https://titleix.utexas.edu/policies](https://titleix.utexas.edu/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. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit [http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/](http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/), contact the Title IX Office via email at 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 sexual misconduct, including the types of sexual misconduct 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.

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 Student Honor Code and Institutional Rules which can be found online: https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/academicintegrity.php

Q Drop Policy

If you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you’ll need to execute a Q drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. Under Texas law, you are only allowed six Q drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution. For more information, see: http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/csacc/academic/adddrop/qdrop

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class or Canvas course materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University’s Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.