

Syllabus INLS 202, Retrieval and Organizing Systems, Spring 2018

(most of this content is generously adapted from the original syllabus by Dr. Stephanie Haas)

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Class Meets: Mon and Wed, 12:20 – 1:35pm

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Sakai Course Description Introduction to foundational core concepts, techniques, and critical issues in information organization, information retrieval, and network theory. (3 credits)

Course Objectives

Identify and describe the major concepts and terminology of information representation, organization, information retrieval and related topics through readings, presentations, discussions, and activities. Interpret, apply, and analyze techniques of information representation, organization, retrieval, and related topics through exercises, assignments, and examinations. Develop critical thinking and problem solving skills including reflection, explanation, and evaluation. Learn the value of information representation, organization, retrieval and related topics in the information world, and gain an understanding of the field of Information Science.

Rationale and Approach

This course examines several inter-related areas in Information Science, with a focus on how information is represented, organized, and retrieved in information systems. It is intended to build on INLS 201, Foundations of Information Science, and prepare students for more advanced courses in Information Science such as INLS 509 Information Retrieval, and INLS 520 Organization of Information. The three major areas we will study -- how information is represented, how information is organized, and how information is retrieved -- are tightly inter-woven. Each constrains the other two, and each pair constrains the remaining area. We will examine the individual areas, as well as the relationships among them. Information and information systems do not exist in a vacuum. Technology, standards (formal and informal), needs and expectations, and culture and society shape the systems and the information itself. Thus, we will also consider the context in which information and information systems exist, which includes consideration of information's sometimes discriminatory and exclusive effects.

Your work for this class falls into 4 categories:

- 1) preparation for each class,
- 2) in-class activities,

- 3) a reflections journal, and
- 4) assessment in form of assignments and examinations.

Preparation:

The schedule lists the topics and materials (readings, videos, etc.) for each class meeting. Folders in the Sakai Resources/Class Materials contain the materials for each class. Slides from the class (if any) will usually be added shortly before the class meeting, in case you would like to take notes on them. Plan ahead to give yourself enough time to complete all the preparations for each meeting. You are welcome to work together to prepare for class.

- In-class activities: In-class activities are a mix of lecture, discussion, and exercises. We will also host some guest speakers.
- Reflections journal: I will assign prompts for you to respond to in your reflections journal. Prompts will ask you to think about course topics: what you found interesting (or frustrating), comments or ideas that occurred to you after the class, additional questions, and so on. In this way, you can record comments and observations in addition to those you made in class. You will keep your journal in your Sakai Drop Box.
- Assignments and examinations: There will be 1 assignment in four parts, and 3 examinations during the semester.

Keys to Success/How to Read:

Plan ahead! Success in this course requires project management skills: identify milestones and deadlines, and plan your work accordingly. Coordinate the work schedule for this class with the schedules for your other classes, work, and other activities. You are likely to have many deadlines toward the end of the semester, so it's important for you to keep up. Give yourself plenty of time to prepare for each class. Because we are engaging with interdisciplinary texts that read at a high level, you may find some of the readings challenging; take the time to get as much as you can from each one.

To support this challenge, I ask you to review this link on ["how to read an article"](#). Additionally, I adopt a multipart plan in which challenging readings will be deconstructed, by you and me, in class and out of class. We will make sense of complicated concepts together so you can get the most from what you read (and from the class in general).

Here is my method (adapted from the awesome Dr. Kaitlin Costello):

(1) I will ask you to focus on no more than 2 readings for the week and ask you to read them carefully (2) write down every word you don't know; (3) look up at least three of the words and write down their definitions before class; (4) You'll break into small groups to talk about the words you didn't understand and help one another define them; (5) In class I will provide a "cliff's notes" version of the reading; (6) I collect the vocabulary words and then find all terms that people didn't know that no one defined and provide definitions the following class; (7) You will do, in the same session, a "minute paper" where you write down how you,

personally, interpreted the reading; (8) We discuss your interpretations and relate them to the "cliff's notes" version I handed out.

Remember: If you are not prepared for class, you will not be able to fully participate in (and benefit from) each class meeting. If there is something you don't understand, say so! If you don't want to ask during class, come to my office hours, make an appointment with me, or contact me by email. If you have any questions or concerns about the class or your work for the class, please talk to me about them. I cannot help you if I don't know there is an issue, and it is always easier to deal with problems earlier rather than later.

Course Policies

- **Preparation and Attendance:**

I will always be prepared for class, and will start class on time. If unforeseeable circumstances prevent this for any reason, I will try to notify you beforehand if at all possible. I expect the same of you: be prepared for class, and be ready to start class on time. You are expected to attend all class meetings. Unexplained absences or tardiness will lower your participation grade – you cannot participate if you are not present. If you know you will miss a class because of an unavoidable conflict, for example, because you will be attending a conference, you must inform me by email in advance of the class. If you must miss a class session unexpectedly, for example, because of illness or other emergency, you must inform me by email as soon as possible. If you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for learning what you missed from a classmate. Reading assignments, exercises, study questions, and other preparation should be done before the class for which they are assigned so you can ask questions and participate in discussions.

- **Participation:**

You are expected to be an active participant in class, including full class discussions, small group discussions and exercises, and individual exercises. Participation is not just about talking; listening to others' ideas and facilitating discussions and exercises to make sure everyone has a chance to participate is also important. Asking a question is another form of participation. Other students may be wondering the same thing – or you may have thought of something no one else has. During class, laptops, smartphones, and similar devices should be used only for class-related work. Unrelated activities such as texting, browsing, using social media, or playing games divert your attention from the class and are distracting and discourteous to others. Please mute your phone before class starts.

Participation grades are based on the following rubric. (adapted with permission from Dr. Emily Vardell)

| | Strong | Needs development | Unsatisfactory |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Preparation | Arrives with notes, observations, and questions. | sometimes arrives unprepared. | Shows little if any indication of having prepared for class or having read the assigned materials. |
| Listening | Actively supports, listens, and engages. | Shows effort to interact but at times shows disinterest in peer contributions. | Limited or no interaction with peers and may exhibit disrespect. |
| Quality of contributions | Comments and questions are relevant and show close reading and keen insight. | Participates constructively but unevenly. Comments and questions are at times irrelevant or lack depth. | Never participates or participates only when prodded and does so perfunctorily. Shows little interest in materials or peer contributions. |
| Frequency of participation | Participates actively at appropriate times. | Participates sometimes but fails always to be attentive. | Rarely participates and is not generally engaged. |
| Impact on class | Moves discussion forward; class members benefit from student's contributions and group dynamic is enhanced. | Sometimes advances discussion but at other times seems merely filler. Group dynamics are sometimes better (but never worse) as a result of student participation. | Comments and questions fail to advance conversation. Group dynamics are impaired as a result of student's participation. |

Assignments, Exercises, Journal Entries Assignments, including exercises and journal entries, must be submitted on time, either deposited in your Sakai Drop Box or through the Assignment tool in Sakai. Although you will be able to submit an assignment after the deadline, a late assignment will be penalized. Assignments will be penalized 5% for each day they are late. Journal entries that are more than 1 week late will be penalized 1 point (out of 4). If you have a real problem submitting an assignment, exercise, or journal entry on time, please talk to me well before the due date. Getting a late start on an assignment does not count as a real problem. Pay attention to the instructions for each assignment, exercise, and journal entry. Be sure you have completed each part of the assignment, and proofread it before you submit it. Start working on assignments well in advance of the due date. Do not wait until the last minute (or hour or day) to ask questions about the assignment – I may not be available for consultation.

Communications

My office hours are Tuesday 12-2pm. You are also welcome to make an appointment, if office hours are not convenient for you. The best way to get in contact with me (other than talking to me during my office hours) is by email: maron at live dot unc dot edu. Note that I receive a large amount of email and while I try to reply to student emails within 48 hours, there are times that it may take me 2-3 days to reply. Therefore, it is important that you get started on assignments

early, so there is time for me to respond to any questions you may have. I cannot guarantee that I will be able to answer last-minute questions (e.g., within 2 days of the assignment due date). Email is a good way of letting me know if you can't be in class, or if you want to make an appointment with me. If you want to discuss something we talked about in class, and assignment or some other matter, I prefer we meet in person. Please come to my office hours or make an appointment with me. I will use the message/email facility within Sakai to send announcements to the class, as well as to individual students.

Policies on Academic Integrity and Diversity

Chapel Hill has had a student-administered honor system and judicial system for over 100 years. Because academic honesty and the development and nurturing of trust and trustworthiness are important to all of us as individuals, and are encouraged and promoted by the honor system, this is a most significant University tradition. More information is available at <http://studentconduct.unc.edu/honorsystem> The UNC Honor Code is in effect for all work in this course.

Chapter 5 of the "Instrument of Student Judicial Governance" (<https://studentconduct.unc.edu/sites/studentconduct.unc.edu/files/documents/Instrument.pdf>) discusses Academic Dishonesty; you are responsible for being familiar with, and abiding by all aspects of the "Instrument". Students often ask what is okay to talk about with other students and what is not. There are some specific guidelines for this course. I do encourage you to help each other learn the course material – your fellow students can often be a great resource for learning. For example, you may want to work together when you are reading an assigned reading for class. Reflective journal entries may be based on other students' comments or ideas (although they do not have to be), but you should add your own thoughts and ideas. Give the others credit for their inspiration. All work you submit for exercises, assignments and examinations should be your own.

In support of the University's diversity goals and the mission of the School of Information and Library Science, SILS embraces diversity as an ethical and societal value. We broadly define diversity to include race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation and physical and learning ability. As an academic community committed to preparing our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly multicultural and global society we strive to: Ensure inclusive leadership, policies, and practices; Integrate diversity into the curriculum and research; Foster a mutually respectful intellectual environment in which diverse opinions are valued; Recruit traditionally underrepresented groups of students, faculty and staff; and Participate in outreach to underserved groups in the State. The statement represents a commitment of resources to the development and maintenance of an academic environment that is open, representative, reflective and committed to the concepts of equity and fairness.

Grading Policies Your final grade will be based on the following: 3 Examinations 60% (20% each) 4 part essay assignment (30%) Preparation & Participation 5% Reflection 5% The following grade scale will be used AS A GUIDELINE (subject to any curve).

| Grade Range | Definition* |
|---------------|---|
| A 90-100% | Mastery of course content at the <u>highest level of attainment</u> that can reasonably be expected of students at a given stage of development. The A grade states clearly that the students have shown such <u>outstanding promise</u> in the aspect of the discipline under study that he/she may be strongly encouraged to continue. |
| B 80-89.9% | <u>Strong performance</u> demonstrating a high level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The B grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study. |
| C 70-79.9% | A <u>totally acceptable</u> performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The C grade states that, while not yet showing unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development. |
| D 60-69.9% | A <u>marginal performance</u> in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment. A student has given no evidence of prospective growth in the discipline; an accumulation of D grades should be taken to mean that the student would be well advised not to continue in the academic field. |
| F 0-59.9% | For whatever reason, an <u>unacceptable performance</u> . The F grade indicates that the student's performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content. A grade of F should warrant an advisor's questioning whether the student may suitably register for further study in the discipline before remedial work is undertaken. |

*Definitions are from:

<http://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/explanation-of-grading-system/> (underlining is Dr. Haas' emphasis)

Plus and minus scores, when given, use the following range:

| | |
|----|---------------|
| A | 93 and higher |
| A- | 90-92 |
| B+ | 88-89 |
| B | 83-87 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 78-79 |
| C | 73-77 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D+ | 68-69 |
| D | 63-67 |
| D- | 60-62 |
| F | 59 and below |

Sakai

We will use Sakai for almost all course activities. All enrolled students should have access to the UNC Sakai site for this course: <http://sakai.unc.edu/>

- Course Materials. Most course materials are stored in folders in the Sakai/Resources tool.
- Official Course Documents. This folder includes the syllabus, schedule, an overview of assignments, and other important information.
- Class Materials. This folder contains a folder for each class meeting, labeled with the class number and date. Contents of each class folder may include:
 - Overview: reading and other work that you should complete before the class, as well as
 - any in-class activities you should prepare for
 - Articles that aren't available on the web
 - Slides that will be used during the class (usually added the morning of the class meeting)
 - Instructions and prompts for exercises and reflective journal entries (if any).

It is your responsibility to check each class folder enough in advance so you can prepare for the class. Submitting assignments, exercises, and journal entries Assignments and exercises must be submitted through the Sakai Assignment Tool following the submission instructions given in the assignment specifications. You each have a Drop Box in Sakai that is accessible only to you and me. You will keep your journal in your Sakai Drop Box. If for some reason you are unable to submit an assignment to Sakai, as a last resort you may email it to me along with a note about the problem you encountered. Then, as soon as you are able to, it is your responsibility to submit the exact same assignment to Sakai. The email serves as a record that you tried to submit the assignment on time, but to receive credit, your assignment must be uploaded to Sakai.

To confirm you have read all of this, send me a picture of a dinosaur (maron@live.unc.edu).

Gradebook I will use the Sakai Gradebook to record course grades.