

Day/Time: Online. No set meeting times. New lessons available Friday afternoons

Email: ebailey@unc.edu

Office hours: By appointment. Please contact me by email to arrange a specific time to set up a Skype meeting.

Mailbox: Please do not send me physical mail. No assignments are to be submitted physically.

Course Description

Brief description: The behavioral and cognitive activities of those who interact with information, with emphasis on the role of information mediators; how information needs are recognized and resolved; and the use and dissemination of information.

Rationale and relationship to the current curriculum: This course undergirds much of our curriculum, because it introduces the students to core concepts that have implications for the practice of information science and librarianship. While it is a formal prerequisite only for INLS 780, Research Methods, it is expected that it will be taken early in the student's career at SILS.

Objectives for the Course

Students completing this course will:

- be familiar with the empirical and theoretical literature related to information seeking, including the recognition of information needs, actions taken to resolve those needs, the roles of intermediaries (both human and machine), and the retrieval and use of information;
- understand key concepts related to the ways in which information is created, structured, disseminated and used, with particular emphasis on scholarly information behaviors;
- be able to identify the ways in which the context of an information interaction can affect the process and outcomes of that interaction;
- explore the impact of technology on human information interactions; and
- critically apply theories and empirical findings to the definition and solution of problems related to human information interactions, as encountered in the information professions.

Readings for the Course

Since this is a "survey" course, students will be expected to complete several readings in preparation for each week's lesson. The assigned readings are listed on the course schedule and will be made available electronically online or through the Sakai site for the course. No textbook is required.

How to Succeed in this Course

Honor Code

It is expected that all students will comply with the University honor code as set forth at: <http://instrument.unc.edu/> The work you turn in for this course should be yours alone, except when working on group assignments. Written work used from other sources should be quoted and cited. I expect and encourage students to discuss the class and the assignments with one another, but take care that what you turn in to me for grading is yours alone.

Critical Analysis

Throughout this course I will be asking you for your critical analysis of the topics and readings. This course focuses on the human part of information interactions, and I expect you to examine and analyze your own experiences and behaviors. Focus on reflection and analysis in all assignments for this course.

Participation

Each student is expected to participate in online class discussions on the Sakai forums each week. This class is a cooperative venture toward which you are encouraged and expected to contribute. Online discussions should be used to help you to think critically about research and theory and the implications of research and theory for the practice of the information professions. The more you put into the discussions, the more you will get out of the class topics.

I expect all students to view and listen to the lessons, then respond to them in the forums on Sakai. The lessons will be made available on Friday afternoons. The schedule will list readings for the lessons, and I expect you to have completed the readings before watching the lesson. Forum posts will be evaluated the following Friday.

Communication and Feedback:

Communication is a key part of education. Email is the best way for you to ask me questions about your assignments and to inform me of conflicts or other situations. Normally you should expect a response within 24 hours. Discussion of grades and other issues will be done by appointment on Skype or by telephone.

We will periodically give feedback to one another. You will give me feedback on how well the course is meeting your educational needs, and I will give you feedback on how well you are meeting the course objectives. The purpose of both of these is to improve the class experience and to provide constructive criticism.

When bad things happen to good people:

First of all, don't wait to tell me of any potential issues or conflicts! Early communication is key!

All work should be completed on time. Posting in the forums is especially time sensitive, since other students will be moving on to the next lesson after that week – these postings cannot be made up after the current week. Each student will have the opportunity to drop one weekly forum grade to allow for situations such as illness.

Missing assignment due dates is a serious issue as it is expected that you are working on these well before the date due. However, I do realize that sometimes circumstances beyond your control make it impossible for you to turn in an assignment on time. Please contact me to discuss your situation. Unless you are given a rare extension, your grade for that assignment will be lowered by one point per day the assignment is late.

Grading

The grading system for graduate students at UNC makes grades much less important than before. Getting a P means that you have done what I asked for in the assignment. Most students should expect to get a P for their work in this class. Grading is as follows for graduate students:

- H (95-100) – clearly surpassed requirements
- P (80-94) – fully met requirements
- P- (70-79) – barely met requirements, need more work
- F (69 and below) - failing

Assignments

I am happy to discuss assignments with you either in person or through email. I am also happy to look at drafts of assignments to give feedback on direction. Of course, I will be able to help the most if you give me time before the assignment is due! Assignments will be submitted electronically via the Sakai website using either Word or PDF files, although Word is preferred.

Assignments are either **informal**, in which case you are expected and encouraged to include your own thoughts and perspectives and experiences, or **formal**, in which case you are expected to write from a more neutral standpoint and follow a stricter structure. In both case remember that your writing should be focused on telling the reader something and moving the reader from one point to another. I expect your final version of any assignment to be well formatted and free of any errors in spelling or grammar. All assignments with references should use the APA (American Psychological Association) guidelines. Page lengths for all assignments assume 1 inch margins and double-spaced lines.

I do not offer individual extra credit; however, each student may resubmit one graded assignment to earn up to half the points you lost (except the final).

Assignment Listing

- Weekly Forum Posts (20%) - Each student is expected to participate in online class discussions each week **by the following Sunday (9 days later) at midnight**. These posts are informal in nature.
- Article Analysis (10%) – Each student will select 1 article (not video) from the schedule. During the scheduled week for that article, the student will submit a detailed analysis of that article to me. This analysis should include discussion

of key ideas or findings, implications, comparisons to related articles or concepts, limitations of the study or protocol, and discussion of its usefulness in the current environment. This analysis is **formal** and should be between 2 and 4 pages. Analysis should be submitted by Thursday night – just before the week’s lesson. Articles should be selected by **January 28th**, although note that selecting articles before Jan 28 on the schedule will have due dates before then. Articles should be selected on Sakai using the forums – see the thread for how to post and be sure to check the postings to be certain that your article is still available. First come, first served.

- Information Seeking Diary (20%) – Each student will keep a diary or journal of a personal information-seeking event and analyze the event in terms of the concepts and ideas discussed in the course. To be completed by **March 4th**. This is an **informal** paper.
- Presentation (30%) – Each student will select 1 topic from the schedule and submit a presentation about some aspect of that topic (see the Assignment Detail for more information). Presentation topics are due on **Sunday February 11th**. The presentations are due **Sunday April 15th**. Presentations will be made available to the entire class.
- Final Reflection Paper (20%) - Each student will sum up their entire class experience using class notes, readings, and discussions. Papers are **informal** and should be 7-10 pages long. Due during final exam period (tbd). This assignment takes the place of a final exam.