# INLS 203

## Human Information Behavior

Instructors:
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## Assignments

### Description

Introduce key areas and concepts in information science, to include task modeling, information seeking behavior, search behavior, human-computer interactions, usability, user interfaces, social media and social media analysis. *Prerequisite: INLS 201.*

### Learning Outcomes

1) Describe the domain of human information behavior within the broader discipline of information science;
2) Describe the phenomenon of *context* and how it permeates human information behavior and interactions;
3) Read, write, and discuss information behavior concepts, models, frameworks, and theories;
4) Identify empirical and theoretical literature related to information behavior 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;
5) Critically apply theories and empirical findings to the definition of problems and potential solutions related to human information behavior.

### Requirements

- Read, think, discuss, listen, research and write. You are expected to read/view the assigned material by the dates listed on the schedule. This is a fairly reading-intensive course, so please schedule accordingly. You should bring your laptop and have access to the readings during class.
- Participation is critical. Be prepared to ask questions and discuss the readings in class.
- Attendance is also critical because of participation. One absence is forgiven, regardless of reason. We are all adults here and therefore we do not need to know what your reason might be.

### Materials

Readings will be placed in the Sakai site. Videos will have online links.

### Milestones

**Feb 4 Platform Analysis 10-Min. Paper**

**Feb 18 Platform Analysis 10-Min. Paper**

**Feb 18 Presentation on a Bias**

**Mar 3 Information Seeking Diary + Analysis**

**Mar 25 Platform Analysis 10-Min. Paper**

**Mar 25 Platform Analysis Presentation**

**Apr 14 Context Paper**

**May 2 Final Reflections Paper (due by 5:00 pm)**

### Evaluation

Your assignments for this course are:
- Participation (24%),
- Bias Presentation (10%),
- Information Diary (20%),
- Platform Analysis Short Papers and Presentation (16%),
- Context Paper (10%),
- Reflections Paper (20%).

**COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK**

An overarching goal of any SILS course is to help prepare you to become not only competent professionals, but leaders in your respective fields. While we are happy to meet with you outside of class if you are having trouble with a particular assignment or other aspect of the course, you will be primarily responsible for establishing your own work schedules and internal deadlines and for locating and retrieving information to complete your assignments. Since meeting deadlines is an important professional responsibility, grades on late work will be lowered by a full letter. <u>Any incidence of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will result in an F for the course.</u>

Communication is a key part of education. Email is the best way for you to ask us questions about your assignments and to inform us 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 we 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.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**#1 – CLASS PARTICIPATION (24%) ONGOING**

This class is a cooperative venture toward which you are encouraged and expected to contribute. This includes asking questions and sharing insights from class readings and other course content. **Practically, this means you have to be in class in order to add to these discussions.** Coming to class and participating will earn you points towards your final grade (see below).

The purpose of the discussions is to help you to think critically about the topic for that day as well as connecting that topic to prior topics. Read the required readings before each class session. For each topic, consider:
- What are the key point(s) of the reading(s)?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the authors' arguments?
- What are the implications of the reading for your areas of experience and interest?
- How does this topic connect to prior topics?

**Evaluation Criteria**
Class participation is **earned** by attending class and participating in the discussions. The specific categories that will be evaluated are:
- **Attendance** (6 points) – Earn 0.5 points for each class you attend. 13 total classes, one absence forgiven, 6 points maximum (12 x 0.5 = 6).
- **Active Participation** (6 points) – For each class you attend, you may earn up to 0.5 points depending on your actual participation. 6 points maximum. Participation here means speaking up in class discussion, asking and answering questions, and relating the topic to your own interests and experiences.
- **Active Listening** (6 points) – For each class you attend, you may earn up to 0.5 points for actively engaging in the discussion even when you are not speaking. This includes looking at those who are speaking and responding to their ideas. Be engaged! 6 points maximum.
- **Class and Small Group Activities** (6 points) – For each class you attend, you may earn up to 0.5 points for your participation in small group discussions or other class activities. 6 points maximum.

## #2 – PRESENTATION ON A BIAS (10%) DUE FEBRUARY 18

During class session 3 (Feb 4), you will select a cognitive bias to present for class session 5. Presentations should be 5 minutes or less and can include 1-3 slides if desired. **If slides are used, they must be given to us (the instructors) 2 days before class** – Friday night at midnight. Presentations will be given in class on **February 18th**.

Your presentation should define the bias and discuss where and how that bias might be experienced or encountered. It could also discuss related biases, impact on decision-making, or areas where it might be particularly important. Presentations should end with a call for any questions.

### Evaluation criteria
Presentations will be graded on a 10-point scale.

- (5 points) Description of the bias – How well do you describe the bias? Did you include the important parts of it or discuss how it might be important?
- (5 points) Delivery and Clarity of the Message – Did your presentation flow well verbally and mechanically? Did you successfully create interest? Was your message easy to understand?

## #3 – INFORMATION SEEKING DIARY (20%) DUE MARCH 3
*[Based on an assignment prepared by Dr. Verna Pungitore, SLIS, Indiana University, with modifications by Dr. Deborah Barreau and Barbara Wildemuth]*

You will keep a short diary or journal over a period of hours or days that covers an information-seeking experience with an identifiable beginning and end. It does not have to be a unique event and it may or may not have been resolved. You will write up what you thought, felt, and did, and how you understand the experience based upon our readings and discussions in class. The two deliverables for this assignment are (1) the diary itself, and (2) your analysis of the event described in the diary. Both deliverables are due on **March 3rd by midnight**.

This assignment requires you to note your thoughts over time! Do not wait until the last minute! **Also, do not use an information need based upon a class you are taking – this should be something else.**

### The Diary/Journal
Start by describing your information need. You should choose an information need that is occurring during the period in which you're working on the assignment. In most cases your problem should be more complex than finding a fact.

> Example: My home computer died suddenly, and I needed to buy a new computer as soon as possible. I did some preliminary shopping (both online and in a Best Buy store) and also consulted with IT support. Through an iterative process, in which additional focus was gained with each iteration, I eventually settled on a particular computer and the other peripherals I would need to accompany it. This process occurred over several weeks.

Take notes or record your experience in some way. The diary does not need to be neat and orderly. It's more important that you record what's happening and what you're thinking/feeling as it's happening than that you present it neatly. It only needs to be neat enough so that you can interpret and remember what happened for your later analysis of the event.
- How did you know when you needed to look for information?
- What steps did you take and what motivated you along the way?
- Did you make any incidental discoveries that influenced your behavior?
- When and why did you finally stop looking (or are you still looking)?
- How did your emotions affect the search process?

While the diary is a necessary deliverable for this assignment, it will play only a minor role in the grading. I will refer to it, as needed, to understand and evaluate your analysis of the event.

**The Analysis**
Assess which (if any) of the information seeking and use models we have discussed in class apply to your situation – if any. Write a brief report (3-4 double-spaced pages) that interprets the experience. Concentrate on analyzing what happened instead of recounting each step. For example, it is more important to hear your reactions to what you did than to hear what you did - how important was the information to you? What sources were consulted? What barriers or surprises did you experience? If you consulted systems or online sources, describe the interaction and why it worked, or did not. If you consulted other people, describe the interaction and how you were able to convey your need to this person. Why do you think your experience was a successful (or unsuccessful) one? What did you learn that you did not know beforehand? What would you do differently if a similar problem arises in the future? Be sure to relate your observations to readings and discussions from class. Cite them as appropriate.

**Evaluation Criteria**
Grades will be based upon the quality and depth of your analysis of the experience. A description of the need and what motivated it, any obstacles you experienced, sources used, tasks performed, and results obtained along with your evaluation of those results should be included in the paper. While this paper is relatively informal in style, it should be formatted using a standard publication style (APA Style) and should include citations to the literature as appropriate. Analyze more than you describe. **Connect to class topics!**
- Diary (2 points)
- Suitability of Information Need (2 points)
- Spelling and Grammar of paper (3 points)
- Structure of paper (3 points)
- Analysis (10 points)

**#4 – PLATFORM ANALYSIS (16%) PAPERS DUE 1/28, 2/11, 3/18; PRESENTATION MARCH 25**

You will be meeting in class in small groups to assess and discuss specific online platforms. These meetings will take place in different class sessions (2, 4, and 8) where you will look at that platform through the lens of the class topic. After each discussion, you will be asked to write a 10 minute paper summarizing your thoughts on the platform and topic. These papers can be written at the end of that class session or anytime before the next class session. Each paper will be worth 2 points.

During class session 9 (March 25th), your group will work together to present your combined thoughts on the platform. This presentation should last 10 minutes and should include every member. Presentations should also include visual media – such as Power Point slides. Slides **must be given to us (the instructors) the day before class** – Sunday night at midnight.

Your presentation should describe the platform briefly then discuss the platform with regards to the topics in the first 8 sessions. Note that not every topic might be applicable to a particular platform.  Concentrate on the topics that you consider important. For your discussion, consider pointing out places where the platform might use ideas from a topic or where it might fall short in addressing some aspect of human information interactions. Your goal here is to show the platform through the lens of what we have been discussing – therefore keep simple descriptions short and specific and concentrate on your analysis. Presentations should end with a call for any questions.

**Evaluation criteria**
Papers will be graded either as checks (2 points) or check minuses (1 point).

Presentations will be graded on a 10-point scale.

- (1 point) Description of the platform – How well did your group describe the platform? Did you include the important parts of it?
- (2 points) Organization of overall presentation – Did the overall presentation flow well topically?
- (4 points) Connection to class topics – How well did your group select topics and connections to the platform? How interesting and insightful was your overall analysis?
- (3 points) Delivery and Clarity of your part of the Presentation – Did your presentation flow well verbally and mechanically? Did you successfully create interest? Was your message easy to understand?

## #5 CONTEXT PAPER (10%) DUE APRIL 14

For this assignment, you will write a short (3-4 page, double spaced) informal paper comparing two specific contexts. The choice of contexts to compare is up to you – they can be more general or very specific – but be sure that you have something to say about the comparison. Contexts discussed in class are allowed, but you should be sure that you do not simply retell what we discussed in class. **The paper is due Sunday 14th by midnight.**

Your goal here is to examine the two contexts and then compare them using the topics we have discussed in class. How might they be similar or different? How might the context affect information seeking or use?

Each context should be briefly described by focusing on the aspects of it that you consider to be important for information use.

### Evaluation criteria

The paper will be graded based upon your description of the important aspects of each context as well as your comparison of the two. Note that 4 pages is not a lot of space, so be thoughtful in what you discuss!
- (2 points) Discussion/Inclusion of key areas – Context 1
- (2 points) Discussion/Inclusion of key areas – Context 2
- (4 points) Thoughtful comparison of the 2 contexts
- (2 points) Grammar and Spelling

## #6 FINAL REFLECTIONS PAPERS (20%) DUE MAY 2 AT 5PM

Instead of a final exam, each student will write an informal paper to sum up their entire class experience. Papers should be 5-7 pages long, double spaced, and use your class notes as well as class assignments, class readings, and in-class discussions. Papers are due during the final exam period on May 2nd (by 5pm). There is no need to physically go to the class for the final exam – simply turn in your paper on Sakai.

The final reflection papers are a summary of your experience in the class, but also serve as your thoughts on the topics presented throughout the semester. Your paper should tie it all together into a distinct narrative. Note that this should not be a simple recap of each week's topic or theme presented in chronological order – do not write this paper saying things like "The next week we studied this topic…" Instead, find a way to organize the information into a whole that is meaningful for you. This organization could be relating class topics to your area of interest, to a job, or to your experience. It could be reorganizing them based upon a different perspective. It could be discussing ideas you found very interesting or connected to personally. Not all topics covered in the course need to be discussed, but it is expected that most of them will be mentioned. Remember that you are writing about the topics in a way that means something to you – be thoughtful about how you organize them! Relating the topics to your own interests is encouraged.

Remember that you can discuss the assignments and class discussions as well.

**Evaluation criteria**

The final reflections papers will be graded based upon your thoughtfulness and the quality of your analysis of the class. Inclusion of class readings, notes, assignments, and discussions is encouraged.

- (20 points) Overall Structure of Narrative
- (20 points) Flow and Grammar
- (30 points) Discussion of Topics/Themes
- (30 points) Thoughtfulness

## Technology Policy

Research on laptop use in higher education has shown that laptops used for course activities can result in learning gains, but that in-class laptop use also can also lead to distraction and decreased course satisfaction, understanding, and overall performance among students.[1] This course will occasionally require the use of a laptop computer or tablet for class activities, and you may wish to have digital copies of readings accessible to you during class. However, other activities such as checking e-mail, social networking, etc. should be restricted to before and after class and break times. You may find that taking notes on paper is easier and more effective for this course.

[1] Efaw, J., Hampton, S., Martinez, S., & Smith, S. (2004). Miracle or menace: Teaching and learning with laptop computers in the classroom. *EDUCAUSE Quarterly, 27*(3), 10-18.
Fried, C.B. (2008). In-class laptop use and its effects on student learning. *Computers & Education, 50*(3), 906-914.
Wurst, C., Smarkola, C., & Gaffney, M.A. (2008). Ubiquitous laptop use in higher education: Effects on student achievement, student satisfaction, and constructivist measures in honors and traditional classrooms. *Computers & Education, 51*(4): 1766-1783.

## Grading Scale

Your grade for this course will be based upon the sum of all the assignments – note that the points for the assignments add up to 100. There will be no extra credit work for this course. Grades are based on UNC Registrar policy for undergraduate-level courses:

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|---|---|---|---|
| A = 94-100 points | B = 83-86 points | C = 73-76 points | D = 63-66 points |
| A- = 90-93 points | B- = 80-82 points | C- = 70-72 points | D- = 60-62 points |
| B+ = 87-89 points | C+ = 77-79 points | D+ = 67-69points | F = 0-59 points |

## University Honor System

The University of North Carolina at 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://www.unc.edu/depts/honor/honor.html . The system is the responsibility of students and is regulated and governed by them, but faculty share the responsibility and readily commit to its ideals. If students in this class have questions about their responsibility under the honor code, please bring them to me or consult with the Office of the Dean of Students. The web site identified above contains all policies and procedures pertaining to the student honor system. We encourage your full participation and observance of this important aspect of the University.

**SILS Diversity Statement**

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.

*~The faculty of the School of Information and Library Science, Dr. Barbara B. Moran.*

**Students with Disabilities**

"The Department of Disability Services (DDS), a part of the Division of Student Affairs, works with departments throughout the University to assure that the programs and facilities of the University are accessible to every student in the University community. Additionally, DDS provides reasonable accommodations so students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified may, as independently as possible, meet the demands of University life." Visit their website at http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/ for more information.