

Adverse Conditions: Reduced Campus Operations and Services

# INLS 520 – Spring 2020

Tuesdays. Professor Megan Winget

## Course Objectives

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In this version of INLS 520, we will focus on fundamental concepts of organizing systems that transcend particular implementations or professional contexts. We will not restrict ourselves to the traditional concerns of information science, narrowly defined, because organizing systems are not so restricted.

You will be able to use what you learn in INLS 520 in all information professions. INLS 520 will help you to understand, use, explain, create, assess, and interrogate any organizing system.

Although organizing systems are simple in the abstract, they become incredibly complex in practice. This is because organizing systems attempt to make an unruly, messy, and ambiguous world appear systematic and orderly—and, often, the world isn't having it. For INLS 520, this means that easy answers are impossible, and you cannot find refuge in following rules. But this is what makes organizing information fun—and fascinating.

## Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, you will understand:

- Basic elements that constitute the structure and arrangement of organizing systems:
  - Things (entities, resources, items, ..).
  - Categories (attributes, dimensions, properties, elements, ..).
  - Values (terms, tags, descriptors, ..).
  - Relationships (between things, between categories, between values).
- The role of categorization in language and
- The ubiquity of organizing systems and categorization processes and their complex integration throughout our forms of life—social, cultural, scientific,
- The inherent instability, ambiguity, and arbitrariness of any organizing system.

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Design an organizing system.
- Implement an organizing system
- Explain how others should implement it.
- Assess an organizing system.
- Explain an organizing system.

## Course Structure

The course meets once / week.

Usually, the beginning of the class will emphasize more abstract and conceptual topics. This part of class will be oriented around discussions, with some lectures, demonstrations, and games.

The second part of class will typically emphasize more concrete and practical topics. This part of class will focus around project work: creating organizing systems (the schema and taxonomy projects) and explaining organizing systems (the organizing system analysis project). There will be occasional lectures, discussions, and games.

The semester calendar presents topics for each day in the course, along with associated readings and preparatory activities. A zip file of the readings is available in Sakai, and I've linked to readings on the course website:

<https://inls520winget.web.unc.edu/>

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## Grading

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### Grading

The class has four graded components:

Schema	100 points
Taxonomy	100 points
Organizing system explanation	100 points
Participation	100 points

### 400 points total

For graduate students, course grades will be determined according to the following schedule:

384 or above H

300 to 383 P

240 to 299 L

below 240 F

For undergraduate students, course grades will be determined according to the following schedule:

384 and above A

360 to 383 A-

340 to 359 B+

325 to 339 B

310 to 324 B-

300 to 309 C+

285 to 299 C

275 to 284 C-

265 to 274 D+

240 to 264 D

<240 F

## Participation

The class will be mostly based around discussions, in-class activities, and project work, with relatively few lectures. Class participation is a vital component of the course.

The essence of good participation is in helping the class to attain a greater understanding of concepts, readings, and activities. Asking questions and talking about things that you don't understand are *excellent* forms of participation.

## Grading criteria

Excellent participation involves these characteristics:

- You take responsibility for making our class sessions worthwhile and engaging by contributing to discussions and activities.
- Your contributions to discussions and activities demonstrate that you have prepared for class by doing the assigned readings and engaging in the preparatory activities.
- Your contributions to discussions and activities show evidence of thoughtful engagement with the material.
- You listen to others and respond to them respectfully and provide thoughtful feedback.

Attendance affects participation; if you have excessive absences, your participation will necessarily suffer.

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## Descriptive Schema

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### Project overview

In this project, you will define a set of things, detailing the set's domain, scope, and means for establishing that one item is different from another. You will then outline a structure of attributes and associated values to systematically describe your set of things.

Next, you will develop documentation to help someone else (not you) to use the schema to describe instances of the things in your set.

To assess your schema and improve it, you will use the schema to describe (i.e., create metadata for) five varied instances of the things in your set. In class, you will further assess your schema by having someone else use it to describe three things. After these assessments, you may decide to revise your schema or the instructions.

Finally, you will write a short essay that reflects on your experience developing and assessing the schema.

This project is NOT designing a database. Your project is merely to instruct other people how to describe a set of things in a systematic way. (A good database design requires this kind of conceptual thinking also, but this project is not specific to a database implementation.)

### Project component 1: Your set of things

This part of your project includes three parts:

- Domain
- Scope
- Identification

## Domain

You will *define a group of things* to describe. This could be anything: concrete, physical things, informational things, or abstract, conceptual things. Some examples that students have previously used:

- Spoons
- Historical sites in Beijing
- Programming
- Jerky
- Characters based on Sherlock Holmes in film and television
- Knitting
- Reality television
- Computer viruses
- Yoga poses.
- Visualization
- Representations of “the aztec” in popular culture.

**As part of the domain, you will also articulate a *purpose* and associated *target audience* to motivate your description.** For example, you might want to help novice knitters find patterns that make nice gifts, or you might want to interrogate stereotypes latent in “Aztec” imagery. Each situation will suggest a different set of attributes for the same set of things, so define the audience and purpose carefully.

## Scope

**Here you will clarify what is in, and what is out, of your set of things.**



For example, is a yoga pose invented by your teacher a proper yoga pose? Is a ladle a spoon? What are central members of your set of things, and what are peripheral members? What doesn't belong at all? Thinking about central and border cases will help you create attributes that apply equally to all members of your set of things.

## Identification

**Now that you've clearly defined your scope, you should be able to more precisely define your things.**

This involves deciding on a level of *abstraction*: for example, are you organizing individual physical books, or abstract literary expressions that may be manifested in various forms and editions? Are you describing a specific package of jerky or all instances of a certain product?

You also need to think about *parts* and *granularity*: do your things have parts that need to be kept track of? Are your things themselves collections? What about the *persistence* of your things: do they change over time? How much can a thing change before it is no longer the same thing?

Explain how you will distinguish between two different things. Do they have some intrinsic property that you can rely on for identification? Will you need to assign identifiers?

## Project component 2: Attributes, value parameters, and documentation

**You will articulate a set of 10–15 attributes to define your things in support of your identified audience and purpose.**

You will label and document each attribute in sufficient detail so that someone else can assign values for things of the type that you have described. For each attribute, you will set parameters for acceptable values and provide guidelines that show how values should be expressed.

## Preliminary assessment

**Once you have sufficiently defined your attributes, use the structure that you have developed to preliminarily describe five instances to represent both central and border cases of your entity set.**

If there are cases where you are unable to satisfactorily describe an instance, use this as an opportunity to revise the schema and clarify your attribute definitions. (You might even need to clarify the boundaries of your group of entities and sharpen its description.) Then use your revised schema to create five final descriptions for your entity instances.

## User assessment

**You will further assess your schema by having someone else use it to describe three things.**

We will do this in class, but you will include your assessors' results with your final submission.

## Project component 3: Reflection essay

Finally, write a brief critical reflection on your design process and resulting product. You might discuss questions such as the following:

- Did designing the schema clarify or complicate any of the ideas we've been reading about in class?
- What was difficult about designing the schema?
- How did you decide which attributes to include in the schema?
- How do you know what makes an attribute good or useful?
- How do you know if you've defined an attribute well?
- What might you keep in mind when designing similar kinds of organizing systems?

These are *examples* of questions that you *might* discuss. To create a concise yet cohesive essay, you will need to concentrate on a few design issues of particular relevance to your project. *Do not merely answer the questions here.*

Note that the point of this reflective essay is *not* to justify why your schema is awesome. Clearly, it is awesome, and you don't need to persuade me of that. Instead, the goal of this essay is to explore how the practical experience of designing a schema provokes insight onto the conceptual foundations of information organization.

## **Deliverables**

Your final assignment should include:

1. The domain, scope, and identification information for your set of things.
2. Your attribute descriptions, value parameters, and associated guidelines for using the schema to describe the things. The description for each attribute should follow a consistent format. (You can use something similar to the NISO standard for Dublin Core metadata elements or devise your own format. You may use tables if you like)
3. Your descriptions of five instances. Use a consistent format for each record (perhaps a table for each instance).
4. The instance descriptions created by your peer.
5. Your critical reflection. This should be written in narrative form, as a cohesive paper of about 1000 words (3-4 pages).

## **Grading criteria**

A successful schema will exhibit these characteristics:

- The following are clearly described:
  - What constitutes a member of the defined set of things,
  - The schema's audience and purpose, and
  - How a thing should be identified and distinguished from other, similar things.
- The defined attributes effectively represent the selected things in the context of the described purpose, and the value space effectively represents the extent of the attributes.
  - For example, when describing yoga poses for students, an attribute that indicates level of difficulty might be appropriate. However, such an attribute might seem less appropriate if describing yoga poses in relation to the history of Hindu thought and culture. In addition, the values described for the potential level of difficulty attribute for yoga poses should encompass the full range of possibilities at an appropriate level of detail for the audience and purpose of the schema.
- The documentation is sufficient to describe actual things accurately and comprehensively within the context of the selected purpose.
- The critical reflection thoughtfully considers the design process, product, or both, using the experience of creating the descriptive schema to productively engage larger issues of theory and practice (that is, the reflection does not merely summarize or justify the design process or product; it interrogates it).
- All project components follow a logical document structure, are clearly written, and use correct grammar and usage.
- All the project components are present.

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## Taxonomy Development

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### Project overview

In this project, you will develop a taxonomy of categories to relate and arrange the things that you described with your schema. You will document the taxonomy so that someone else can use it to put things within the categories that you define. In class, you will assess the taxonomy and its documentation by having others use the taxonomy to classify things. Finally, you will write a short essay that reflects on your experience developing and assessing the taxonomy.

### Project component 1: Taxonomy

**First, you will decide on a property to organize your things.** This could be an attribute from your schema or it could be a new property.

To create a worthwhile taxonomy, the property that you select must be complex enough so that its values can be arranged in multiple levels of hierarchy. You might need to play around with several ideas before making your final selection.

**To begin, select a property that has between 10–15 specific values that can then be organized under more general categories.**

Here are some examples.

- If your entity set was *yoga poses*, you might create a taxonomy of *skills* associated with each pose: for example, arm strength, open hamstrings, balance, breath control, mental presence.
- If your entity set was *spoons*, you might create a taxonomy of *materials*: teak, silver, plastic, bone, glass.
- If your entity set was *still-life paintings*, you might create a taxonomy of depicted *objects*: lemons, oysters, goblets, petunias.
- If your entity set was *gardening implements*, you might create a taxonomy of gardening *activities* that the implements are used in: weeding, insect spraying, harvesting, sowing, mulching.

We will work on creating the basic taxonomy structure in class, but here are the fundamental steps for a bottom-up design approach:

1. Identify 10–15 specific values—the ones that you would have specified in your descriptive schema.
2. For each value, generalize it into a broader category. From lemons, go to citrus, or fruit. From teak, go to wood. From arm strength, go to upper body strength. From insect spraying, go to pest control.
3. For each broader category, go up another level, until you get to your top term: skills, materials, objects.
4. Now comes the hard part. Arrange, redefine, remove, add, and relabel your categories so that they are organized into proper hierarchical relationships with a single principle of division at each level of the hierarchy. (We'll talk about what this means in class)
5. Ensure that your taxonomy follows good design practice for hierarchies: at each level, categories are jointly exhaustive and mutually exclusive, and at a similar level of abstraction. (You'll get a set of design principles in class)

**Your final taxonomy should include from 25–40 categories**, dispersed throughout all its levels. It should be at least four levels deep (the root term, two intermediate levels, and terminating values). Arrange your final

taxonomy in a diagram that shows the relationships between categories. (There is no advantage to creating a fancy diagram.)

## **Project component 2: Taxonomy documentation**

To enable someone else to use your taxonomy to categorize actual things, you need to define each category in your taxonomy and provide guidance about which kinds of things to put where.

Here are some issues that you need to think about:

- Can things be placed into higher-level categories or only at the bottom level? If things can go into higher-level categories, when might this occur?
- Can things go into multiple categories or just one?
- If a thing seems to fall in between or outside the existing categories, where should it go?

Your definitions should explain what the categories mean in the context of your taxonomy. For example, if you had a category of Bone to describe materials that spoons are made of, you would not transcribe the dictionary definition for Bone; that would be silly. You might write something like this:

Bone: Place here any spoons made of animal bone, tusks, teeth, or horn. Do not use Bone for spoons made from shells of marine animals.

## **Project component 3: reflection essay**

Finally, write a brief critical reflection on your design process and resulting product. You might discuss questions such as the following:

- Did designing the taxonomy clarify or complicate any of the ideas we've been reading about in class?
- What was difficult about designing the taxonomy?
- How did you decide which categories to include in the taxonomy?
- How do you know what makes a category good or useful?
- How do you know if you've defined a category well?
- What might you keep in mind when designing similar kinds of organizing systems?

These are *examples* of questions that you *might* discuss. To create a concise yet cohesive essay, you will need to concentrate on a few design issues of particular relevance to your project. *Do not merely answer the questions here.*

Note that the point of this reflective essay is *not* to justify why your taxonomy is awesome. Clearly, it is awesome, and you don't need to persuade me of that. Instead, the goal of this essay is to explore how the practical experience of designing a taxonomy provokes insight onto the conceptual foundations of information organization.

## **Deliverables**

Your final assignment should include:

1. A summary of the set of things to be arranged with the taxonomy, and the audience and purpose associated with organizing these things (this may come directly from your schema project).
2. A diagram that includes all the categories in the taxonomy and shows their relationships.
3. Your taxonomy documentation, including general guidelines and category definitions.
4. The category assignments made by your peer tester.
5. Your critical reflection. This should be written in narrative form, as a cohesive paper of about 1000 words (3-4 pages).

## **Grading criteria**



A successful taxonomy will exhibit these characteristics:

- The taxonomy itself includes an appropriate number of categories, arranged in well-formed hierarchical relationships, that follow best practices for taxonomy design and development.
- The selected categories represent the set of things well in the context of its identified audience and purpose (from the descriptive schema).
- The documentation is sufficient to categorize actual things accurately within the context of the selected audience and purpose.
- The critical reflection thoughtfully considers the design process, product, or both, using the experience of creating the taxonomy to productively engage larger issues of theory and practice (that is, the reflection does not merely summarize or justify the design process or product; it interrogates it).
- All project components follow a logical document structure, are clearly written, and use correct grammar and usage.
- All the project components are present.

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## Explaining an Organization System (Zine)

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### Project overview

In this project, you will write and create a zine that explains and compares, in detail, how a set of things is presented in two or three organizing systems in the real world. These should be systems that are available to the public (that is, not the sock drawer in your house). You may organize physical or digital items. Your explanation will have several parts:

- A explanation of the category structure in each organizing system and the kinds of items placed in each.
- An interpretation of each category structure that attempts to understand the ideas it communicates about the entity set.
- A comparison of the different ideas presented in each organizing system.

Your goal in this project is to understand how each organizing system interprets the entity set: how it gives the entity set a particular meaning. Your goal is not to assess the effectiveness of the organizing system for retrieval. It doesn't matter if it's easy or difficult for you to find items in the entity set.

### The real-world things

To write a meaningful, detailed, incisive explanation, you will need to focus on just one part of each organizing system. That is why you will keep your analysis to one type of things within the system.

Here are some examples:

- The organization of light fixtures at Home Depot and Target.
- The organization of chips at CVS and Harris Teeter.
- The organization of mystery novels at Flyleaf Books and at Barnes & Noble.
- The organization of Legos at the Southpoint Target and online, via the Lego Website.
- The organization of Japanese woodblock prints at two different online resources.

As with defining an entity set to organize with your schema, you will need to identify a set of things that is specific enough to analyze in depth but broad enough to enable you to say something interesting about it. So the entire supermarket would be too broad, but just the Cheerios would be too narrow. The cereal at the supermarket might be just right.

### **Explanation of category structure**

Your zine will need to explain each category structure that you're investigating. Let's say you're looking at the cereal in a supermarket. Here are the kinds of questions you might ask:

- What different kinds of organizing principles are at play in arranging the cereal? Are the cereals arranged by size, price, brand, primary ingredients, level of sugar? How are these principles deployed—are the most expensive items on the top shelves or the bottom shelves?
- What principles inform the selection of items within the category? How many different kinds of cereal are there? What kinds are represented the most, and what kinds the least?
- Can you define central and peripheral members of the set of "cereal" each supermarket, and on what basis can you make that determination?
- How is cereal related to other entities? What is next to it?

Note that your set of things might be split up into multiple locations within the organizing system: for cereal, there might also be cereal in the bulk section, or in the International section. You'll need to investigate these as well.

When you describe the category structure in your zine, focus on *explaining* it, not documenting it. There is no need to map out or transcribe each item in the cereal section! That would be silly. Your goal is to explain how the cereal section works, not to merely copy it down.

In creating your explanation, make use of the readings and class activities from throughout the semester.

### **Interpretation of category structure**

This is the fun part. What does the category structure that you've explained tell us about the set of things? Here's an example.

Let's say my entity set is Noodles, and I'm looking at the Harris Teeter. Most of the noodles are in a section labeled Pasta that is near the tomato sauce. Indeed, based on the selection and arrangement of pasta varieties, the central idea of "noodle" is oriented around the notion of spaghetti and tomato sauce as a common meal. However, not all the noodles are in the Pasta section. Rice noodles are with other "Asian" foods in the International section. These noodles are not near the tomato sauce. Rice noodles might be similarly shaped to spaghetti, but in the organizing system of the supermarket, they are far away from spaghetti. They are, in a sense, more Asian than noodle. They certainly do not appear to be interchangeable, based on their placement within the organizing system of the supermarket. There are implications to this: the supermarket is saying, in a way, that if you invited a friend over for pasta and served pad kee mao, your friend might be surprised. And yet, aren't rice noodles also noodles? (If you were defining "noodles" as an entity set for your descriptive schema, would you have excluded them?

(Probably not.)

While I encourage you to think deeply about the category structures that you're investigating, *make sure to ground your interpretation within the evidence provided by your explanation*. You need to show how your interpretation arises from that evidence.

In making your interpretation, you should also make use of the readings we've done throughout the semester.

### Comparison of different organizing systems

In comparing the two (or three) organizing systems that you are investigating, you might consider the following kinds of questions:

- What are the different ideas presented by each organizing system about the entity set? Are these ideas compatible or incompatible? (For example, rice at the Li Ming Global Mart is the foundation of one's diet—it's in its own section in 25-lb bags. But rice at the Harris Teeter is just an occasional companion )
- Would items from one organizing system take on a different character in the other organizing system? (For example, sugary cereal might be common at the Harris Teeter but uncommon at Whole Foods.)
- Would any items from one organizing system be excluded from the other system? (For example, spaghetti probably doesn't appear at the Li Ming Global Mart, although there might be wheat noodles of similar shape.)

### Zine details

Your explanations, interpretations, and comparisons should take the form of a zine. This is a small magazine, with different sections, images, textures etc. There are typically 8 pages in a zine, but this does not equal the same number of words you'd have in an 8-page essay. Your zine should have a clearly identified argument and structure. For example, your theme might be "Noodles! Different things to different people!" or, "Cereal! More complicated than you might think!" or, "Have you ever noticed? Salad bars contain very little salad: based on evidence from supermarket buffets."

Although your zine needs to include your explanation of category structure, your interpretation of category structure, and your comparison of organizing systems, it does NOT need to put these into separate sections. You should structure your essay in the way that makes the most sense for your argument.

## Peer review

On Tuesday April 7, you will bring two DRAFT copies of your zine to class. This is not the finished zine. This is the text / images you plan to put in the zine. Two people will be assigned to read your draft and provide written and oral feedback on it at the next class session, on Tuesday, April 14.

In your peer review, you will provide written answers to the following questions:

- What is the argument put forth by the zine?
- What is the evidence used to make this argument?
- What going well?
- How can the argument be strengthened?

You will give this feedback to the zine's author. (We will also discuss the drafts in class.)

Your goal in writing peer review feedback is to help make the argument better. Harsh criticism is not helpful; neither is mindless praise. Be honest, constructive, and compassionate. Also be a mindful and attentive reader: your feedback should not direct the writer to do things your way but help the writer to accomplish his or her goals more effectively.

## Grading criteria

A successful organizing system explanation will exhibit these characteristics:

- The zine has a clearly identified topic and argument.
- The explanations of each organizing system are adequate and cogent.
- The interpretations of each organizing system are insightful and well supported by evidence.
- The comparison of the organizing systems is insightful and well supported by evidence.
- Material from course readings and activities is usefully employed to extend the argument.
- The zine follows a logical structure, is clearly written, and uses correct grammar and punctuation.

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## Schedule

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### Week 1: Course Introduction (January 14)

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#### Readings

- Course Syllabus
- Luciano Floridi. 2010. Information: a very short introduction. London: Oxford University Press. (Chapters 2-4, p. 19-59.) (Floridi 2010)
- Phil Agre. 1995. Institutional circuitry: thinking about the forms and uses of information. Information Technology and Libraries 14(4): 225-230. (Agre 1995)

#### In-Class

- Introductions
- Syllabus Q&A
- In-Class Activity: Examples of Organizing Systems
- In-Class Activity: Examples of Schema

### Week 2: Information, Language & Cognition (January 21)

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#### Readings



- Orwell, George (1949). *Nineteen Eighty-Four*: Appendix. *The Principles of NewSpeak* [http://orwell.ru/library/novels/1984/english/en\\_app](http://orwell.ru/library/novels/1984/english/en_app)
- Clark, Andy. (1998) *Being there: putting brain, body, and world together again*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Ch 10-11 plus epilogue (pp. 193-227). [Dropbox]
- Choose One:
  - Lakoff, George. (1987) *Women, fire, and dangerous things*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Ch. 1-4, pp. 5-76. [Dropbox]
  - Reddy, Michael J. (1979). The conduit metaphor: A case of frame conflict in our language about language. In *Metaphor and thought*. Edited by Andrew Ortony. New York: Cambridge University Press: 164-201. [Dropbox]

## Prepare for Class

- Brainstorm 1-3 ideas for your schema. Bring to class. Be prepared to discuss your ideas with colleagues.

## In-Class Activities

- Games!
- Discussion of Readings
- Discussion of Schema Ideas
- Schema Project Overview & QA

## Week 3: Information as Interpretation of Natural Phenomena (January 28)

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### Readings

- Dupre, John. (2006) Scientific classification. *Theory, Culture, and Society* 23(2-3): 30-32. [Dropbox]
- Gould, Stephen J., "What, If Anything, Is a Zebra?" In: *Hen's Teeth and Horses Toes: Further Reflections on Natural History*. 1983. New York: Norton. p. 355-365. [Dropbox]

## Prepare for Class

- Baca, M. (2016, July 20). Introduction to Metadata [InteractiveResource].
  - Anne Gilliland: Setting the Stage  
<https://www.getty.edu/publications/intrometadata/setting-the-stage/>
- Dublin Core Metadata Element Set
  - User Guide: Creating Metadata:  
[https://www.dublincore.org/resources/userguide/creating\\_metadata/](https://www.dublincore.org/resources/userguide/creating_metadata/)
- Handout: Attributers & Values (DOC)
- Bring a printed schema proposal to class for instructor feedback. A set of things you want to describe with your schema; a sense of scope and means of identification. This is a paragraph, not a paper.

## In-Class Activities

- Demonstrations
- Lectures
- Work on Project

## Week 4: Information as Collective Memory (February 4)

### Readings

- Zerubavel, Eviatar. (1991) The fine line. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 2. [Dropbox]
- Basso, Keith. (1996) Wisdom sits in places: landscape and language amongst the western Apache. (Chapter 2 = required; Chapter 4. = Optional)
- Watson, Helen, David Chambers, and the Yolngu community at Yirrkala. (2008) Signing the land, signing the land. (Available at <http://singing.indigenouknowledge.org/home/contents>) Look at Exhibits 1 and 4 only.

## Prepare for Class

- Patricia Hapring (2010). Introduction to Controlled Vocabularies: Terminology for Art, Architecture and other Cultural Works. Online Edition: (Specifically Chapter 1: Controlled Vocabularies in Context / Chapter 2: What are Controlled Vocabularies? / Chapter 7: Constructing a Controlled Vocabulary
- XKCD. Color Survey Results (2010) <http://blog.xkcd.com/2010/05/03/color-survey-results/>
- Brainstorm ideas for attributes in schema

### **In-Class Activities**

- Discussion
- Project Work

## **Week 5: Information as Recorded Intellectual Creation (February 11)**

### **Readings**

- Buckland, Michael. (1997) What is a “document”? Journal for the American Society of Information Science 48 (9): 804-809. [Dropbox]
- Wilson, Patrick. (1968) Two kinds of power: an essay on bibliographic control. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. Chapter 2.
- Choose One:
  - White, H. (1980). The value of narrativity in the representation of reality. Critical Inquiry, 7(1), 5-27. [Dropbox]
  - Tanselle, Thomas. (1989) A rationale for textual criticism. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Ch. 1, pp. 11-38. [Dropbox]
  - Williams, William Proctor, and Craig S. Abbott. (2009) An introduction to bibliographical and textual studies. 4th ed. New York: Modern Language Association. Introduction, pp. 1-14. [Dropbox]

### **Prepare for Class**

- IFLA. Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records final report. Full report available at: <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s13/frbr/frbr.pdf> Read pages 13–14, 17–24, 31–49 only (all that's in this PDF). This is the material about Group 1 entities.
  - Handout: classification basics (DOC)
- Choose One
  - Case Study: McDonough, Jerome, Matthew Kirschenbaum, Doug Reside, Neil Fraistat, and Dennis Jerz. (2010) Twisty little passages almost all alike: applying the FRBR model to a classic computer game. *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 4(2). Available at <http://digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/4/2/000089/000089.html>
  - Case Study: Henninger, M. (2018). From mud to the museum: Metadata challenges in archaeology. *Journal of Information Science*, 44(5), 658–670. [Dropbox]
- Another example of a schema: PREMIS Data Dictionary  
<https://www.loc.gov/standards/premis/v3/premis-3-0-final.pdf>
- Document an initial set of attributes and value parameters for your schema and bring it to class. Bring to class three things (or a source of information about the things) to be described with your schema. One thing should be central to your set of things and one thing should be peripheral.

## In-Class Activities

- Discussion
- Games
- Project Wrok

## Week 6: Information as Evidence (February 18)

### Reading

- Gilliland, Anne. (2000) Enduring paradigm, new opportunities: the value of the archival perspective in the digital environment. Council of Library and Information Resources (CLIR). Full report available at: <http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub89/contents.html> (Read: The archival paradigm: the genesis and rationales of archival practices and principles).
- Cvetkovich, Ann. (2003) An archive of feelings: trauma, sexuality, and lesbian public culture. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Ch. 7, 239–271. [Dropbox]

## Prepare for Class

- Revise your schema and documentation based on last week's test.
- Kirkland, A. (2019). Costume Core: Metadata for Historic Clothing. VRA Bulletin, 45(2). [Dropbox]
  - Look: <http://www.ardenkirkland.com/costumecore/>

## In-Class Activities

- Discussion
- Project Work

## Week 7: Information as Sign (February 25)

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### Readings

- John Fiske. 1990. Introduction to Communication Studies, 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge. (Excerpts: pages 6–12, 39–46, 56–58, 64–65.) [Dropbox]
- Scott McCloud. 1994. Understanding Comics. 1st HarperPerennial ed. New York: HarperPerennial. (Chapter 2, p. 24–59.) [Dropbox]
- Ereshevsky, Marc. (2007) The poverty of the Linnean hierarchy: a philosophical study of biological taxonomy. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 2 and 4–5; pp. 50–80 and pp. 129–193. [Dropbox] [Notes on Ereshevsky – DOC file]

## Prepare for Class

- Final Schemas DUE at beginning of class

## In-Class Activities

- Lecture
- Discussion
- Games
- Taxonomy Project Overview

## Week 8: Organized Information Structures (March 3)

### Readings

- Mai, J.E. (2011). The modernity of classification. *Journal of Documentation*, 67(4), 710–730. (PDF)
- Ranganathan, S.R. (1962) Elements of Library Classification. Bombay, India: Asia Publishing House. [Dropbox]
- Hunter, Eric J. (2002) Classification made simple. 2nd ed. Aldershot, England: Ashgate. (Ch. 1–5) [Dropbox]
- Lecture

### Prepare for Class

- Bring a printed copy to class for instructor feedback:
  - A proposal for the set of things you'll arrange with your taxonomy (e.g., superheroes),
  - The purpose your taxonomy will serve (helping MCU develop new characters)
  - the property that the taxonomy is based on (e.g., superpowers)
  - and a list of potential unorganized descriptors (e.g., telepathy, flying)
- Allinson, J. (2012). OpenART: Open metadata for art research at the Tate. *Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 38(3), 43–48. [Dropbox]

## In-Class Activities

- Lecture
- Discussion
- Game
- Project Work

## **Week 9: Spring Break (March 10)**

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## **Week 10: PANDEMIC**

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## **Week 11: Expressive Information Structures (March 24) (Welcome Back)**

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### **Readings (Lecture)**

- Lee, H.-L. (2012). Epistemic foundation of bibliographic classification in early China: A Ru classicist perspective. *Journal of Documentation*, 68(3), 378–401. (PDF)
- Light, A., Shklovski, I., & Powell, A. (2017). Design for existential crisis. Proceedings of the 2017 CHI Conference Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems, 722–734. ACM. (PDF)
- Clifford, J. (1991). *Four northwest coast museums: Travel reflections*. In I. Karp & S. Levine (Eds.), *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press. (PDF)
  - Handout: *Four Museums, Two Archives* (PDF)

### **Prepare for Class**

- Blog Post: Choose One!
  - Write a blog post on what you've been doing since March 3. This can be a poem, it could be a video, it could be a scanned piece of art, a drawing, a video that speaks to you – you could communicate via gifs. You could make/share a tiktok – whatever.
  - Find an example of an “expressive” classification system that reminds you of the readings, is interesting and speaks to you in some way or another. Blog about it.
- *Bring your set of potential descriptors to class.*

## In-Class Activities

- Discussion
- Game
- Project Work: Test your taxonomies

## Week 12: Structured Information Structures (March 31)

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### Reading (Lecture)

- Brookshear, J. Glenn., David T. Smith, and Dennis Brylow. (2010) Computer science: an overview. 11th ed. Pearson. (Ch. 9 Database Systems, pp. 383-424.) [Dropbox]
- Fun with SQL – Solve a Murder Mystery! <https://mystery.knightlab.com/>
- Bagui, Sikha, and Richard Earp. *Database Design Using Entity-Relationship Diagrams*. Boca Raton, FL: Auerbach Publications. Ch. 2. [Dropbox]

### Prepare for Class

- Blog Post: Choose One!
  - Can you find any examples of people using technology in ways that might help lessen the loss of different rites of passage (like commencement / weddings / conferences / etc.)? Are there any technologies out there that could help? I envision a blog post that points to innovative use of existing technologies. (For example, I read an article about some students holding their cancelled commencement in Minecraft – <https://www.ign.com/articles/japanese-school-cancels-graduation-students-hold-it-inside-minecraft-instead>)
  - What are some databases or classification resources that you're using in daily life right now? Are there any tools that are especially helpful in tracking outbreaks of COVID-19? Share these resources in a blog post.
- Complete a draft of your taxonomy and descriptor definitions and bring it to class.
- Bring 5 items (or information about those items) to class, so that others can attempt to place those items within your taxonomy.



## In-Class Activities

- Lecture
- In-Class Activities
- Project Work: Brainstorm ideas for project

## Week 13: Automated Information Structures (April 7)

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### Reading (Lecture: )

- M.E. Maron. 1961. Automatic indexing: an experimental inquiry. *Journal of the ACM* 8(3): 404–17. (PDF)
- Rieder, B. (2017). Scrutinizing an algorithmic technique: The Bayes classifier as interested reading of reality. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(1), 100–117. (PDF)
- *Brookshear, J. Glenn., David T. Smith, and Dennis Brylow. (2010) Computer science: an overview. 11th ed. Pearson. (Ch o History of Computing / Ch 5 Algorithms / Ch 6 Programming Languages – skim, do not do the problems) [Dropbox]*

### Prepare for Class

- Blogging: Choose One!
  - After this pandemic is over, I suspect that remote work will be more the norm than going into an office. Find a remote working tool (broadly construed: this could be an app or a piece of software, or a framework, or methodology for running meetings, or a general behavior modification), try to test it out to the extent possible, find reviews, and write a blog post pointing to the tool and maybe giving a little review.
  - Are there any artificial intelligence or machine learning algorithms that are working double-time right now? Can you think critically about this tool / software / algorithm and report on its use?
- *Taxonomy DUE at beginning of class*
- *Bring a printed copy to class for instructor feedback:*
  - *A proposal for your explanation project that includes the system's you'll compare and the set of things that you'll be examining (e.g., hot sauce in two supermarkets or database courses at UNC and Coursera)*
- *Investigate the selection, categorization, and arrangement of one of the following at at least one supermarket:*  
*Cheese. / Wine. / Tea. / Oil.*
- *Be sure to find all of the places where these things are located.*
- *Take notes! How does the selection, arrangement, and relationship of the instances in these categories present an interpretation of what this entity is?*

## In-Class Activity

- Lecture
- Game
- Project Work – Supermarkets!

## Week 14: Utopian Information Structures (April 14)

***No More! 😞 Section 1 (2pm) Meet in Our Normal Spot; Section 2 (5:45) Meet in Fine Arts Library – To See Zine Collection***

## Reading (Lecture: )

- Rayward, Boyd. (1994) Visions of Xanadu: Paul Otlet and hypertext. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 45(4): 235–250. [Dropbox]
- David Easley and Jon Kleinberg. 2010. *Networks, crowds, and markets: reasoning about a highly connected world*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1 (p. 1–20). (Dropbox)
- Bush, Vannevar. (1948) *As we may think*. *The Atlantic Monthly*, July 1945: 101–108. (Available at: <http://sloan.stanford.edu/mousesite/Secondary/Bush.html>)

## Prepare for Class

- Blogs! Choose One!
  - The world is a challenging place. Find an example of a tool that someone has developed that helps make the world a better place. This could be a digital or physical tool – it could be a framework, or a methodology or a way of looking at the world. To the extent that you can: write about how the creators of that tool are defining the world, how they’ve defined the problem, and how their definition of the problem has informed their solution. Bloggy!
  - This week’s reading was about a utopian future based on an all-encompassing classification. Do you know of any utopian visions? How might they be defining the world so that their vision “works”? Any examples (fictional or non) of utopian / all-encompassing classification systems? Share them with the class on the blog!
- Investigate the selection, categorization, and arrangement of either men’s or women’s “work shoes” at the following Web sites:  
*Amazon / Zappos / Shoes.com*
  - Be sure to find the categories associated with “work” shoes (in other words, what OTHER categories will return “work shoes”?).
  - How does the selection, description, and arrangement of “work shoes” present an interpretation of what “work shoes” are and what “work” is?
- Prepare draft of organizing system explanation and bring two copies to class to exchange with peer reviewers.

## In-class Activity

- Discussion
- Game
- Project Work

## **Week 15: Complications & Frustrations (April 21)**

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### Reading (Lecture: )

- Marres, N. (2018). Why We Can't Have Our Facts Back. *Engaging Science, Technology, and Society*, 4, 423–443. (PDF)

### Prepare for Class

- Blog: What are some innovative, fun ways that people are connecting with each other online? Virtual happy hours? Netflix with Friends? Test it out, and report back to us.
- *Prepare written comments on your colleagues' drafts.*

### In-Class Activity

- Discussion with peer reviewers

## **Week 15: Book Reports & Potluck (April 21)**

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*Last day of class we will share our zines, bring in food and celebrate the end of the semester*

## Adverse Conditions: Reduced Campus Operations and Services

# INLS 520 – Spring 2020

Tuesdays. Professor Megan Winget

## Honor Code & Course Policies

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### Policies

#### Instructor communication

For specific, concrete questions, e-mail is the most reliable means of contact for me. You should receive a response within a day or so, but sometimes it may take 2–3 days. If you do not receive a response after a few days, please follow up. It is always helpful if your e-mail includes a targeted subject line that begins with “INLS 520.”

For more complicated questions or help, my office hours are Thursdays 12:30 – 4pm. Please email ([megan.winget@unc.edu](mailto:megan.winget@unc.edu)) to let me know that you are coming, so I will be in my office, available, and ready at the appropriate time.

#### Off Campus Office Hours

- Mondays 3–5pm – Cocoa Cinnamon, Chapel Hill St. / Lakewood / Durham
- (Most) Wednesdays 12 – 3pm – Market Street Coffee / Elliot Road

You are welcome to call me by my first name (“Megan”). However, you may also use “Dr. Winget” or “Professor Winget” if that is more comfortable for you. Any of these is fine.

### Attendance

Attendance is not taken. You do not need to inform me of absences, nor do you need to “make up” anything if you are absent. While participation is an important part of your grade, and attendance is important, there are no requirements for mandatory attendance.

### **Late work**

Late work is not acceptable.

If an assignment is late, ten percent of the possible points will be deducted from the score.

### **Example**

If the descriptive schema, worth 40 points, is one day late, the maximum number of points is 36, or  $40 - 4$ . An assignment is one day late when the time it is due is passed, and it continues to be one day late until 24 hours later (that is, if an assignment is due at 12 p.m., when class begins, it is late at 12:30 p.m., and it is one day late until 12 p.m. the next day).

### **Extensions**

Extensions for project work may be granted under reasonable circumstances, *when negotiated with the instructor in advance*. A request for an extension minutes before a due date will likely be denied. A request for an extension made a month before the due date is likely to be accepted.

Students who anticipate difficulties with completing work on time, or who encounter unexpected and severe challenges, should consult with the instructor as soon as possible so that alternate solutions can be discussed.

### **Academic integrity**

The UNC Honor Code states that:

It shall be the responsibility of every student enrolled at the University of North Carolina to support the principles of academic integrity and to refrain from all forms of academic dishonesty...

This includes prohibitions against the following:

- Plagiarism
- Falsification, fabrication, or misrepresentation of data or citations
- Unauthorized assistance or collaboration
- Cheating

All scholarship builds on previous work, and all scholarship is a form of collaboration, even when working independently. Incorporating the work of others, and collaborating with colleagues, is welcomed in academic work. However, the honor code clarifies that you must always acknowledge when you make use of the ideas, words, or assistance of others in your work. This is typically accomplished through practices of reference, quotation, and citation.

If you are not certain what constitutes proper procedures for acknowledging the work of others, please ask the instructor for assistance. It is your responsibility to ensure that the honor code is appropriately followed. (The UNC Office of Student Conduct provides a variety of honor code resources.)

The UNC Libraries has online tutorials on citation practices and plagiarism that you might find helpful.

### **Students with disabilities**

Students with disabilities should request accommodations from the UNC office of Accessibility Resources and Service. (<https://accessibility.unc.edu/> ).

### **Acknowledgements & Thanks**

This course is based on INLS 520 developed and taught by Melanie Feinberg.