
INLS 203

Human Information Behavior

Fall 2023

Mondays 9:05 AM – 11:50 AM

Manning Hall, RM 001

Instructors:

Earl Bailey, PhD

Email: earl.bailey@gmail.com

Rachael Clemens, PhD

email: rclemens@unc.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

SYLLABUS

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 do not need to know what your reason might be.

Course Management

This course will be managed using the UNC Canvas system at:

<http://canvas.unc.edu>

Materials

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

Evaluation

Your assignments for this course are:

- Participation (30%)
- Bias Presentation (10%)
- Context Presentation (20%)
- Platform Analysis Presentation (25%)
- Reflections Paper (15%)

Milestones

Aug 28 Bias Presentation

Sept 18 Context Presentation

Nov 27 Platform Presentation

Dec 12 Final Reflection Paper

Methods of Assessment & Grading

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 I am 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. Any incidence of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will result in an F for the course.

ASSIGNMENTS

CLASS PARTICIPATION (30%) 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** (7 points) – Earn 0.5 points for each class you attend. 14 total classes, one absence forgiven, 7 points maximum ($14 \times 0.5 = 7$).
- **Active Participation** (6 points) – 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) – Participation here means 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!
- **Small Group Activities** (6 points) – Participation here means being an active participant in the small group activities.
- **Five Minute Papers** (5 points) – At the end of 10 of the class sessions you will write and turn in a short reflection paper based upon the topic of the day. Papers should be your own thoughts on the topics presented in class and/or connections to prior topics or your other work. These papers should take no longer than 5 minutes to write. You must be present in class to get credit for these papers. You will earn 0.5 points for each paper you turn in, with a maximum of 5 points. **Papers should be written and submitted on Canvas.**

PRESENTATION ON A BIAS (10%) DUE August 28

During class session 1, you will select a cognitive bias to present for class session 2. Presentations should be 5 to 10 minutes and can include 1-3 slides if desired. You may also use the whiteboard as desired. **If slides are used, they must be uploaded to Canvas the night before class.** Presentations will be given in class on **August 28.**

Your presentation should:

- Define the bias
- Discuss where and how that bias might be experienced or encountered, especially any areas of particular importance.
- Discuss how it might impact decision making.
- Discuss any related biases, if any.
- 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? Did you discuss where it might be encountered?
- (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?

CONTEXT PRESENTATION (PAIRS) (20%) DUE September 18

For this assignment, you will work in pairs. Each pair will select a research paper that focuses on a specific context from the list provided during the first class session. You will present the research on that context to class on Sept 7th. Presentations should be 10-15 minutes and can include 1-5 slides if desired. **If slides are used, they must be uploaded to Canvas the night before class. The presentations will be given in class September 18th.**

Your goal here is to present the paper selected, focusing on aspects of information seeking and use.

- Describe the context being researched, including what might make it unique or worth study.
- What was the research question(s) the study is trying to answer? (may be explicit or implied)
- Describe the way the research was conducted (what did the researcher do to collect & analyze data?)
- Detail the significant findings.
- Discuss how the context might affect information seeking or use.
- Discuss your own reactions to the findings.

Evaluation criteria

The paper will be graded based upon your description of the important aspects of the context as well as the research itself.

- (5 points) Discussion of the context being researched.
- (5 points) Discussion of the research methods.
- (8 points) Thoughtful discussion of the findings.
- (2 points) Relating context to information use and seeking.

PLATFORM ANALYSIS PRESENTATIONS (GROUPS) (25%)

For this assignment you will form small groups based upon your interest in particular online platforms. These platforms will be discussed in class. Each group will meet during class time three times to discuss the assignment. During these meetings you will look at your 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 that day. Each paper will be worth 2 points. Papers should be submitted under Assignments on Canvas.

During class sessions 13 or 14, your group will work together to present your combined thoughts on the platform. This presentation should last 15 to 20 minutes and should include every member. Presentations should also include visual media – such as Power Point slides. Slides **must be uploaded to Canvas the day before class** – so we can bundle them into the class slides.

Your presentation should describe the platform briefly then discuss the platform with regards to class topics. 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 19-point scale.

- (3 point) Description of the platform – How well did your group describe the platform? Did you include the important parts of it?
- (3 points) Organization of overall presentation – Did the overall presentation flow well topically?
- (8 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?
- (5 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?

FINAL REFLECTIONS PAPERS (15%) DUE DECEMBER 12 BY 11:59PM

Instead of a final exam, each student will write an informal paper to sum up their entire class experience. Papers should be 4-6 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 December 12. There is no need to physically go to the class for the final exam – simply turn in your paper on Canvas under Assignments.

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.

- (3 points) Overall Structure of Narrative
- (2 points) Flow and Grammar
- (5 points) Discussion of Topics/Themes
- (5 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:

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. I 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.