

INLS 697

Information Science Capstone

Fall 2023

Meets: Tuesdays, 2 – 4:45pm / Manning 208

Instructor: Professor Megan Winget

Schedule Meetings: <https://calendly.com/megan-winget/15min>

Course Objectives

INLS 697: Information Science Capstone: Contemporary topics of information science, information systems, information technology, information design, and information management. Assessment of future impact of new developments.

What that means in terms of this class:

Information Science is a vibrant and rapidly transforming field of study. New issues, topics, technologies, applications and terminologies are continually emerging. One of the key skills you must have as a BSIS major is the ability to analyze these emerging topics and assess new solutions within the context of the information age.

This section of INLS 697 will focus on three issues, which I think will launch students into the professional world with confidence and success:

1. **Skills:** I have developed a final group project that will allow students to bring together and use all of the skills they've learned throughout their SILS undergraduate coursework.
2. **Theory:** We will be reading a book and related articles regarding the technical, cultural, and economic foundations of social media, and how our society is reacting to those challenges.
3. **Creativity:** In my experience, one of the greatest skills in the workplace (or in graduate study, if that's what you're hoping to do) is the ability to think creatively and solve problems through an iterative process of trial and error. We will spend time every class on creativity, making things, and solving problems under unusual circumstances.

Each week we will introduce several new topics that will enable students to integrate and apply their academic background and experience. The primary objective of this course is to raise awareness and curiosity about contemporary and emerging topics of information science, information systems, information technology, and information management. As a result, students will be able to assess the future impact of new developments, and to envision the future of our field.

Learning objectives

At the end of this course, students will:

- Have experience integrating fundamental concepts and concerns associated with information studies into a creative project.
- Be able to relate theoretical concepts and concerns to current events, situations, and technologies.

- Be prepared to succeed after graduation.

Grading / Assessment

In uncertain times, we all need to avoid unnecessary anxiety. In this spirit, nothing in this course will be “graded” in the sense of working toward a “grade,” although all your work will be assessed, with the opportunity to improve, as described below.

As a baseline, all students who complete all course components to minimum proficiency standards will receive an B+.

In order to receive an B+ students must:

- Regularly attend class (as evidenced by participating 7/10 of the "reading comprehension quizzes" at the beginning of each class)
- Satisfy participation & mutual aid requirements. (Complete 6 [participation points](#))
- Complete and participate in book club presentations (as a presenter and as a participant) throughout the semester.
- Complete and participate in the group project to use design thinking to create a prototype tool or app that helps college students effectively and ethically use AI. We will have a pitch-fest at the end of the semester, where students will pitch their ideas to the rest of the class.

In order to receive an A-, students must:

- Complete 8 [participation points](#).

In order to receive an A, students must:

- Complete 10+ [participation points](#).

If a student does not meet the minimum standards of expectation (for example: never comes to class, does not participate in the group assignment, does not sign up for a book-club spot or doesn't get 6 participation points) that student will receive a failing grade in the class.

Assessments

Participation & Mutual Aid

Our time together will be oriented around discussion and group work. Generally, the first half of class will focus on the week's assigned readings and/or book club (described below), while the second half of class (3:45 – 4:45) will be oriented around group work. I expect everyone to participate in our discussions to the extent possible, and participation in these discussions must be respectful, well-reasoned, and should demonstrate knowledge of the topic (and/or the readings). This kind of participation is integral to the success of this class **and** will not be formally assessed. My expectation is that because we all want to have a successful, interesting, engaging class – each of us will do our best to participate in the discussion.

Some guidelines for successful discussions

Excellent participation typically involves these characteristics:

- Being prepared for synchronous class sessions.
- Enacting a non-judgmental space.
- Demonstrating engagement and attention.

- Supporting each other in mutual learning and growth.
- Exhibiting patience, flexibility, and respect for others.
- Showing interest in others' ideas, experiences, and values.
- Having the courage to embrace discomfort (perhaps by speaking up, perhaps by being silent; perhaps by offering constructive criticism, perhaps by receiving a response gracefully).
- Taking responsibility for our mutual mastery of the course material.

Some of the ways that we can achieve excellence include:

- Getting through the materials for each unit (readings, lectures, activities) before class.
- Attending class.
- Taking the time to participate thoughtfully and deliberately; not being afraid of awkward silences.
- If it's hard for you to speak, make an effort to try it; if it's hard for you to keep quiet, make an effort to listen ("step up/step back" according to your own strengths and challenges).
- Using active listening techniques during class, so that, even when muted in Zoom, it's clear that you are paying attention (for instance, gestures, reaction emojis, chat).
- Demonstrating flexibility and graciousness in the face of technical breakdowns and other distractions.
- Taking advantage of alternate modalities (in Zoom, chat and breakout rooms; forums in Sakai).
- Acknowledging and encouraging the contributions of others; letting people know that you want to hear them (for instance, asking open-ended questions, referencing what others have said, learning each others' names).
- Taking responsibility to ask questions or get help when necessary.
- Approaching disagreement respectfully.
- Providing constructive and useful feedback for project peer reviews.

I've recently been thinking about why I think participation is so important, and how to more equitably "grade" students on this very subjective metric. I've realized that participation is important because it's an element of community, and I definitely think building community is important. So I've come up with a way to measure participation in a way that's more equitable and perhaps will have a greater impact on the class. I'm calling this new form of participation "mutual aid"

At the end of the semester, students will be asked to give themselves points based on the ways they take care of each other in class.

Some examples of how to get mutual aid points:

- **Scribes:** Every class, we have two notetakers who will come together and post their notes online. This will include keeping track of discussion, finding any links mentioned in discussion, and providing an overview of upcoming due dates. Sign up at this link:
- **Timekeeper:** I will post the "Script" for a class session up with the timing of each step at the beginning of class, and this person will help me stay on-time. I'll ask at the beginning of class who wants to be the timekeeper. First to answer gets the job that week.
- **Class Contract:** Participate in making a class contract for shared expectations for how we all want to be treated (this is facilitated in the first two classes)
- **Work with me:** This involves doing the reading, thinking about it, and meeting with me before class (15-30 minutes) to have a brief discussion about what the class discussion questions might be. If class is on Tuesdays, best meeting day is Monday, but I'm flexible. Two people per class session. Sign up here:

- **Email an author** of a text and share how it changed your thinking. Please copy me on the message.
- **Suggest readings.** If you know of an interesting reading (or ethical standard that I've missed) please let me know and I'll look it over and add it to the syllabus!
- **Write a letter to future students:** on the last day, write a letter to next semester's students with tips and tricks for navigating the course (& my teaching/grading style) you wish they knew at the start.
- **Any form of mutual aid.** proof reading, showing the library, etc.
- **"Previously" narrator:** Summarize what we did last class at the start of class
- **"Next Week" narrator:** Summarize what's happening next week, what we're reading, what we're likely to be talking about, and any upcoming due dates.
- **Annotator:** Many people read texts better when they are marked up with highlights, definitions, notes, etc. Submit a PDF that is annotated for other readers and future classes & peers. Instructions here: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/10656558/> (Links to an external site.)
- **Breakout room reporter:** volunteer to take notes in the breakout rooms / small-group discussions and then report back for the group when we return to the main room.
- **Unanticipated awesome person:** Do something that helps your peers that this list did not anticipate. I am sure that we will have more items for the list every semester.

I will add to this list in Canvas, as the semester progresses. Students will keep track of their mutual aid points throughout the semester and provide a numbered review at the end of class. I will not be keeping track of these mutual aid points! Minimum level of expectation will be 7 points. **The only way to get a grade higher than an B+ is through mutual aid points.**

Book Club

We will, as a class, be reading one book. Each week a book club group will lead discussion on two chapters of that book. The book we will be reading is:

Thorp, J. (2021). Living in Data: A Citizen's Guide to a Better Information Future. MCD.

The book can be bought new from anywhere you buy books – but of course, Amazon has the best prices (new or used, or in kindle form). Please have the book by January 27. Book club presentations will begin the following week: February 3.

We will form book clubs in the first few weeks of class, and although one group will present two chapters at a time, the entire class will be reading along.

We will discuss the nature of the Book Club presentations on the first day of class.

Final Project Introduction - Design Thinking

"Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody has thought."

~Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, Nobel Prize winning biochemist and discoverer of Vitamin C

"A great many people think they are thinking when they are really rearranging their prejudices."

~William James, American philosopher and psychologist

“A designer knows he’s achieved perfection not when there is nothing left to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.” (Related to the gospel of German industrial designer and Steve Jobs’ mentor Dieter Rams (Braun): “Weniger aber besser” = “Less but better”)

~*Antoine de Saint-Exupery, author of The Little Prince*

“You can dream, design, create, and build the most wonderful place in the world, but it requires people to make the dream a reality.”

~*Walt Disney*

Design Thinking Overview

Design Thinking is a problem-solving methodology especially well-suited for investigating complicated problems. It uses methods derived from the field of design to match people’s needs with what is technically and organizationally feasible, and converting business strategy into customer / stakeholder value in a way that is financially viable. Design thinking is a mixture of needs / feasibility / strategy / value / \$\$.

Initially corporations developed this process so that they could quickly, creatively, and effectively develop new products and services. But this process is also very useful for the public and social sectors as well.

This project provides an introduction to design thinking for budding business titans, policy makers, social innovators and anyone else interested in learning more about an approach that can be applied to a variety of “wicked” problems.

We’ll begin with a review of the history and context of design thinking, then we’ll take a deep dive into the discipline using a step-by-step methodology used in a variety of settings. Design thinking is valuable for academic work, start-ups, and in large organizational settings. We’ll focus on four questions and ten key activities – we’ll complete some pre-defined templates and exercises, we’ll get experience with the design thinker’s toolkit and we’ll put theory into practice.

Design thinking touches on topics ranging from psychology and neuroscience to visual thinking and drawing pictures to work through problems.

In this part of the class we’ll have some lectures, discussions, readings, in-class exercises and a series of formal and informal design reviews that will encourage reflection on students’ process and insights. Success will depend on the degree of involvement in observing, listening, analyzing, storytelling and otherwise engaging key stakeholders to develop and prototype meaningful and transformative designs for products, services or other relevant outcomes.

Design thinking is a vast field. There are lots of topics, applications, methodologies and tools. This project will therefore act as an introduction to the main concepts, methods and general uses of design thinking in the public, private and social sectors. It’s directed to future problem solvers, and those who will be leading and overseeing their efforts.

I want this project to give students a good foundation: the concepts, tools and techniques that will be relevant and valuable for their career plans.

Readings (Available online through the library)

- (Jeanne Liedtka and Tim Ogilvie [Designing for Growth: A Design Thinking Tool Kit for Managers](#) (Columbia University Press, 2011)(no readings in this, but it might be useful to know it exists)
- Jeanne Liedtka, Tim Ogilvie, and Rachel Brozenske, [The Designing for Growth Field Book: A Step-by-Step Project Guide](#) (Columbia University Press, 2014)

Lectures / Readings Outline:

The design thinking part of the course is organized into 6 modules (one module per week):

- **Why Design Thinking and The Design Process** provides context and an introduction to key concepts, terminology, and structure for the course.
- **Scoping, The Design Brief and Visualization** introduces ways to clarify the scope of a project and its intent, questions to explore, target stakeholders, and establishes the importance of pictures and storytelling in the overall process.
- **Fundamentals of Ethnography** and Identifying Insights reviews how to observe users in their “natural habitat” and efficiently extract useful patterns from collected data.
- **Establishing Design Criteria and Brainstorming** shows how to develop a succinct expression of the ideal end state of a project, and deliberately generate many fresh alternatives to the status quo.
- **Concept Development and The Napkin Pitch** details how to choose the best ideas, assemble them into detailed solutions, and rationally evaluate them, as well introduce a simple, consistent format for summarizing and communicating new concepts.
- **Assumptions Testing and Prototyping** introduces a tool for surfacing key assumptions underlying the attractiveness of a new concept and using data to assess the likelihood that they are true, as well as ways to create visual manifestations of concepts.

Design thinking is an inherently collaborative process with a particular emphasis on team-centric activities. As a result, the majority of your final grade will be based on the results that your team produces and your contribution to those results with a smaller portion dedicated to solely individual work:

Design Thinking Project

Planning/Prototyping an AI Product

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~Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, Nobel Prize winning biochemist and discoverer of Vitamin C

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Group formation link here: <https://forms.gle/h8siRercRiMQwYs39>Links to an external site.

Required Readings (Available online through the library)

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- Jeanne Liedtka, Tim Ogilvie, and Rachel Brozenske, [The Designing for Growth Field Book: A Step-by-Step Project Guide Links to an external site.](#)(Columbia University Press, 2014)
- I've created a zip file of the design thinking templates from this book. ([LINK](#) [Download LINK](#))

Lectures / Readings Outline:

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Final Course Project

Your challenge is to create an AI app or tool to help university students effectively and ethically use AI. To do this, you will apply the “Four Questions, Ten Tools” process introduced in *Designing For Growth* to work through the design process.

To provide structure and rigor to the effort, as well as accelerate progress, teams will submit a series of design thinking templates at key junctures of investigation. These templates are:

- Design Brief. [Assignment Description & Turn in HERE](#)

- Design Criteria [Assignment Description & Turn in HERE](#)
- Napkin Pitch [Assignment Description & Turn in HERE](#)
- Key Assumptions [Assignment Description & Turn in HERE](#)

I will provide specific feedback in class the week after these assignments are due.

At the conclusion of the course, teams will synthesize all of their research, activities, templates, methods, artifacts, conclusions, and any other relevant materials to represent their “journey of discovery.” At a minimum, this deliverable should incorporate the following elements:

1. Project summary:
 1. Project Management: Reflection on the problem-solving approach, and how it worked for your team.
 2. Creative: Reflection on the design challenge, the team’s design decisions, and the process of bringing your product to completion.
2. Insights based on the design research conducted
 1. Description of the product, what it's unique value proposition is, what problem it's solving, and what solution it's replacing.
 2. Key themes and opportunity areas drawn from research insights
 3. Walk-thru of product use
 1. Prototype of the product/tool, which will include walk-through of use (decision tree, etc.)
 2. Three different walk-thrus/use cases of different paths users may take through product.
 4. Reflections on prototype testing. What would you change in the next iteration of the product?
 1. Ask testers to provide critical feedback after walking through the process of using the product. Please provide copies of these reviews in your documentation.
 2. Each group member will provide a <500 word reflection on this first iteration of the product. Please address whatever issues you find relevant.
 5. Submissions of these materials will be posted to Canvas and can take form in any digital format (e.g., PowerPoint, Word, PDF) that works for your team. [Assignment description & turn in HERE](#).

Your project team will have a full class periods at the end of the semester to present your product and any follow up material you’d like to provide.

Product Prototyping Exercise Overview

For this project, you will work collaboratively to research, design, construct, and run an app or product that university students can use to ensure the effective and ethical use of AI. This is a PROTOTYPE, does not have to be functional, is an idea that you are testing and running through the design-thinking process. You MAKE IT UP. The process of developing the prototype using the design thinking model is much more important than having a working product at the end of class. Your tool might be an AI tool, or it might be a tool that checks output from other AI tools

to ensure utility. It can be anything, so long as it's focused in some way on helping university students use AI. (I am choosing university students as the primary users because that is the population that students in this class has access to, but the tool does not have to be focused on university / scholarly use).

Part of this process entails writing and compiling the tool's accompanying technical documentation (detailed below). Because this project has many components, you will negotiate and select roles for each team member based on the descriptions below. There will be five (5) teams, each team will have around six (6) members. While everyone on the team will work together to ensure the tool is compelling, fun, and well-run, each team member will have specific duties.

*This project is based almost entirely on Tim Zak's Design Thinking short-course at Carnegie Mellon University.

Schedule

Schedule is located on Canvas on the course website.

Course Policies

Student Support

Please utilize me as a resource if you are having difficulty with the material or there are outside circumstances impeding your ability to learn (for example, housing insecurity, food insecurity, emotional insecurity, or need physical or mental health services). **You should also know that I am a mandatory reporter if you choose to confide in me.**

Mental Health: CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more. (*source: Student Safety and Wellness Proposal for EPC, Sep 2018*)

Basic needs security. Any student who faces challenges affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in this course, is encouraged to contact the Office of the Dean of Students. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide other resources I may know of. Other resources you may find helpful:

- [Student Support: Office of the Dean of Students](#)
- [Carolina Cupboard: Community Food Pantry \(on-campus\)](#)
- [Groceries for Neighbors in Need](#)

Accommodations: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability, or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs, and activities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email ars@unc.edu.

Title IX: Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Please contact the Director of Title IX Compliance (Adrienne Allison – Adrienne.allison@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsoc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Diversity & Inclusion: My intention as an educator is to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all learners. I work hard to include course materials and activities that promote diversity but Information & Library Science (and most disciplines in the academy) were founded by those from a privileged background. As a cisgender, straight, white, able-bodied woman, my standpoint may exclude important points of view. It is also possible that I will make unintentional mistakes. If this happens, please come, and speak to me directly. I promise to acknowledge your concerns as valid and learn from critiques. Likewise, I'm always looking for new scholarship by women, BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and non-Western thinkers – please share resources you think would be useful. Suggestions and improvements are encouraged and appreciated.

Instructor communication

Feel free to email me at (megan.winget@unc.edu) with questions, but you ****must** include your current best answer to the question, or what you've tried so far.**

During the week (Monday 9 a.m. – Friday 5 p.m.) You should receive a response within 24 hours. Weekends or holidays might take 2 or 3 days. If you do not receive a response by Monday at noon, please follow up. Please keep this in mind when you are scheduling your own activities, especially those related to discussion / escape room preparation. If you wait until the day before an something is due to ask me a clarification question, there is a good chance that you will not receive a response in time.

It is always helpful if your e-mail includes a targeted subject line that begins with “**INLS 697.**” Please use complete sentences and professional language in your e-mail.

For more complicated questions or help make an appointment to talk with me at a time that is convenient for you. I cannot discuss grades over e-mail; if you have a question about grading, you must talk with me via zoom. To make appointments, please use this link: <https://calendly.com/megan-winget/15min>

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 is fine. Three forms of address that are not fine: “Ma’am” and “Mrs.” or “Ms.”

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:

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

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.

Use of Generative AI

Introduction

ChatGPT and other Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) can produce text, images, and other media. These tools can assist with brainstorming, finding information, and even reading and creating materials; however, they must be used appropriately and ethically, and you must understand their limitations. Regardless of your use of any AI tools, you are responsible for the final product of your work, both academically and in the workforce. Generative AI is extremely useful; however, it has the following limitations:

- It is unclear how AI generates its content. The internal processes used to produce a particular output within the generative AI cannot be determined.
- The output is based on existing data (often scraped from online sources) and may reflect biases that should be acknowledged; it may also be inaccurate or entirely fabricated, even if it appears reliable or factual.
- AI evokes a range of intellectual property concerns; sourcing and ownership of information is unclear, and the status of AI output raises numerous questions—e.g., is output equivalent to a published resource? What citational responsibilities are in place for various AI interactions?

The following sections provide the philosophy and specific guidelines for using these tools and features (increasingly, generative AI capabilities will be integrated with everyday applications). **Unless I provide other guidelines for an assignment or exam, you should follow these guidelines.**

Usage Philosophy:

Use of generative AI in your coursework is based on the following principles:

1. **AI should help you think. Not think for you.** Use these tools to give you ideas, perform research (in compliance with point 2 below), and analyze problems. Do not use them to do your work for you, e.g., do not enter an assignment question into ChatGPT and copy & paste the response as your answer.
2. **Engage with AI Responsibly and Ethically:** Engage with AI technologies responsibly, critically evaluating AI-generated outputs and considering potential biases, limitations, and ethical implications in your analysis and discussions. Utilize AI technologies ethically, respecting privacy,

confidentiality, and intellectual property rights. Ensure that the data used for AI applications is obtained and shared responsibly and in compliance with relevant regulations.

3. **You are 100% responsible for your final product.** You are the user. If the AI makes a mistake, and you use it, it's your mistake. If you don't know whether a statement about *any item in the output* is true, then your responsibility is to research it. If you cannot verify it as factual, you should delete it. You hold full responsibility for AI-generated content as if you had produced the materials yourself. This means ideas must be attributed, facts are true, and sources must be verified.
4. **The use of AI must be open and documented.** The use of any AI in the creation of your work must be declared in your submission and explained. Details on how to source your AI usage are explained below.
5. **These guidelines are in effect unless I give you specific guidelines for an assignment or exam.** It is your responsibility to ensure you are following the correct guidelines.
6. **Data that are confidential or personal should not be entered into generative AI tools.** Putting confidential or personal data (e.g., your One Card details) into these tools exposes you and others to the loss of important information. Therefore, do not do so.

Online Class Statement

By enrolling as a student in this course, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the Acceptable Use of online resources. Please consult the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) on topics such as copyright, net etiquette and privacy protection.

As part of this course you may be asked to participate in online discussions or other online activities that may include personal information about you or other students in the course. Please be respectful of the rights and protection of other participants under the UNC-Chapel Hill [Information Security Policies](#) when participating in online classes.

When using online resources offered by organizations not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill such as Google or YouTube, please note that the Terms and Conditions of these companies and not the University's Terms and Conditions apply. These third parties may offer different degrees of privacy protection and access rights to online content. You should be well aware of this when posting content to sites not managed by UNC-Chapel Hill.

When links to sites outside of the [unc.edu](#) domain are inserted in class discussions, please be mindful that clicking on sites not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill may pose a risk for your computer due to the possible presence of malware on such sites.

Acknowledgements and thanks

Game idea is from Maggie Melo, and structure of design thinking project is directly from Tim Zak's Design Thinking short-course at Carnegie Mellon University.

