

Syllabus
Drexel University
College of Information Science and Technology
Summer, 2005
INFO 520: Professional, Social, Ethical , and Legal Aspects
of Information Services
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Course Description

Surveys the professional, social, ethical and legal issues that affect information service professionals and organizations. Addresses such topics as information law, access, ownership, and censorship. Studies professional organizations and the sociology of professions.

Overview of Class Schedule (Readings, assignments, and due dates.)

Week 1: Post your introduction to Discussion Board.

- Introduction to the Class – Blogs and Professional Development
- Foundations of Library and Information Service through the Lens of Professional Associations
- Social Context for Information Service: The Social Life of Information

Week 2: Journal Entry 1 Due

- Professional Ethics
- Codes of Ethics in the Information Profession
- Information Ethics

Week 3: Journal Entry/Blog 2 Due

- More on Professional Associations
- Sociology of Professions
- Requirements for Professions

Week 4: Journal Entry/Blog 3 Due

- Intellectual Freedom
- Censorship and Freedom of Speech

Week 5: Association Report Due

- Intellectual Property
- History of Copyright in the U.S.
- Copyright in the Information Age (a.k.a. Digital Age)
- Funding and Grant Proposals

Week 6: Post Your Ideas for Grant Proposal

Writing Grant Proposals

Week 7: Journal Entry/Blog 4 Due

- Privacy
- USA Patriot Act
- Acceptable Use Policy

Week 8: Journal Entry/Blog 5 Due

- Regulation, Control of Information, Policy
- Equitable Access to Information
- Information Rich/Information Poor

Week 9: Grant Proposal Due

- Serving the Underserved

Week 10: Journal Entry/Blog 6 Due

Complete Course Evaluation

- The Future: CyberLibrarians, Digital Libraries, and Virtual Reference

Expectations and Logistics

Thoughts on Class Participation

This course is designed as a seminar course. First, each week we will meet in class and you will also be able to refer to a written lecture on the Bb site. You will be responsible for reading a number of articles and Web sites. You will use your own bloglette (weblog) area on the Bb site to post your first journal entry starting in Week 2. In Week 1, everyone will post on the same Discussion Board Forum and practice informally posting on the bloglettes and responding to each other. I will divide you all into blog ring groups of four to five people. You will respond and interact to the people in your blog ring as a part of learning how to communicate in a professional manner.

Note all of the library/librarian blog sites on the web. You may also want to look for an article on blogs by Stephen Abram in the SLA journal Information Outlook. See if you can find it in the journals in Hagerty Library <http://www.sla.org> .

Active participation on the Discussion Boards and in the blog rings is part of your grade. Like email, listservs, web-based education, and virtual reference, electronic communication is central to professional development. You will want to engage these opportunities to get to know each other, more about the professional field, and boldly practice new patterns of communication.

Pace of the course and scheduling of activities: This course is a co-operative effort (like professional work) and requires everyone to maintain the movement of the course process. Your journal assignments will be due on the day of class. You should then post your entry to your blog forum and respond to the others in your blog group. The topics all relate to each other, so the idea is to create a meaningful narrative your own co-operative thoughts and insights.

Logistics

- On the lectures posted on Bb: These lectures have evolved with primary authorship Dr. Sandra Hughes-Hassell and Missy Harvey. I will be adding additional notes to some of them. The lectures focus on some basic issues and are a bit dated in some details. Use the readings, discussions, and other resources to explore recent developments and consider current implications.
- *Posting to Bb: You should post your journals on your bloglette, to the Digital Drop Box, and to me in my [email—marti.smith@cis.drexel.edu](mailto:marti.smith@cis.drexel.edu) Be prompt in posting and responding so that everyone can plan their time. We will keep the same blog rings for the whole quarter.*
- You will have your two major assignments in this course. Begin working on the Associations Assignment in Week 2; due Week 5 and on the Grant Project in Week 5; due Week 9. See the handouts on each assignment.
- *I have structured the course to encourage your active participation with the topics, with each other, and with me both in our class meetings and online. The assignments are designed to be shared, much more like work and real life than school. Some of these issues are controversial, and there will be a variety of opinions and beliefs. This is great because we need to understand how to appreciate various points of view and the relationship between personal perspectives and professional ideals and standards. You are encouraged to engage the material and your fellow students from*

your own backgrounds and in light of your career interests. Be willing to be experimental and push the envelope on professional communication.

- You will submit your major assignments in print in class, on the Digital Drop Box and to my email (as back up). Both in class and on the Discussion Board on Bb, I will aim to bring the threads of thought together and relate them to the major issues in our fields.

Evaluation and Grading

- **Class Discussion, Discussion Board/Blog Ring Participation:** 20 points
Respond and interact on a regular basis. Note that I want to give you credit for active engagement.
- **6 Journal/Blog Entries:** 30 points (5 points per entry) Your specific journal entry grades are on the contents and mastery evidenced in your individual journal entries
- **Association Report:** 20 points (Due Week 5)
- **Grant Proposal:** 30 points (Due Week 9)

Grading Scale:

A = 100 - 92 points
B = 91 - 86 points
C = 85 - 80 points
D = 79 - 75 points

University and IST Policies

- **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:** The highest standards of academic honesty and proper acknowledgement of others contributions will be practiced. Questions about the new digital challenges to academic honesty are welcome and are most appropriate in this course.
- **Incompletes:** Incompletes are only granted when a student has completed at least half of the class work and for serious medical or personal emergencies.
- **Learning Differences and the Requests for Accommodation:** Students needing special accommodation may contact the university office for disabilities. Faculty can not provide special services without complete documentation and instructions.
- **Final Course Evaluation:** Students are urged to complete the final university course evaluation. Evaluations are provided on the web and are confidential. These evaluations are very important to future planning. Interim evaluations will be included within the course. Your participation on feedback form will be appreciated and will help us all makes the course better.