LIS 598: Government Information

Course Outline

Spring 2017

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Office hours: By appointment

Calendar Description:

A current topic of significance to, or a special aspect of, library and information studies.

Course Objectives:

The Introduction to Government Information course is designed to provide students with an overview of government information and its dissemination and use in a library context. Much of the course will be devoted to an examination of the information policies and practices of Canadian federal, provincial and local governments. In some ways, however, the underlying nature of government information policies and processes is universal and competence in government information librarianship is a skill which is transferable. We will therefore devote some time to the publications of the American and British governments as well as key international governmental organizations (IGOs).

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

By the end of the course, students will:

1. have an understanding of the current policies and practices of Canadian federal, provincial and local governments in the publishing, recording of and access to government information.
2. be able to provide reference service using Canadian, foreign, principally American and British, national documents and international, principally UN, documents.

3. be able to evaluate and use the various bibliographical tools for finding and classifying information.

4. understand the problems of acquiring, classifying, using and promoting the use of government information.

5. be familiar with the challenges and opportunities related to the acquisition, use, and management of government information.

Content:

The following topics will be covered in this course. While each topic is designed to be a largely self-contained Unit of Study, they should be completed in the order in which they are presented:


● Parliamentary Papers: Journals; Debates; Reports and Proceedings of Committees; Sessional Papers. Bills.

● Parliamentary Procedure; Passage of Legislation.

● Laws and Regulations

● Royal Commissions; White Papers and Green Papers.

● Provincial and Local Government Information.

● Statistics.

● Foreign National Governments (US and historical UK focus).

● International Governmental Organizations (IGOs): UN Family.
- International Governmental Organizations (IGOs): OECD, Bretton Woods Institutions, EU.
- Issues in service delivery; Collection management; Professional development

**Methods:**

Will include recorded lectures, interactive online exercises and tutorials, readings, and online discussions.

**Course Relationships:**

Students should have successfully completed LIS 501.

**Required Texts:**

There are no specific texts for this course.

**Assignments and Weighting:**

1. Legislative Tracing Assignment. (20%)
2. Statute and Regulation Updating Assignment. (20%)
3. Current Issue Report. (30%)
4. Class Participation and Discussions. (30%)

**School of Library and Information Studies Grading Statement:**

Grades reflect professional judgements of student achievement made by instructors. These judgements are based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in class. The instructor should mark in terms of raw scores, rank the assignments in order of merit, and with due attention to the verbal descriptions of the various grades, assign an appropriate final letter grade.
Academic Integrity:

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/)) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

Students should also be mindful of the SLIS Copyright Policy ([http://www.slis.ualberta.ca/Resources/~media/slis/Documents/Resources/SLISPoliciesandDocuments/SLIS_Copyright_Policy.pdf](http://www.slis.ualberta.ca/Resources/~media/slis/Documents/Resources/SLISPoliciesandDocuments/SLIS_Copyright_Policy.pdf)).

Inclusive Language and Equity:

The Faculty of Education is committed to providing an environment of respect for all people within the university community and to educating faculty, staff, and students in developing teaching and learning contexts that are welcoming to all. The Faculty recommends that students and staff use inclusive language to create a classroom atmosphere in which students’ experiences and views are treated with equal respect and value in relation to their gender, racial background, sexual orientation and ethnic background. Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Specialized Support and Disability Services.

Recording of Lectures:

Recording of lectures is permitted only with the prior written consent of the professor or if recording is part of an approved accommodation plan.

Policy about course outlines can be found in [Section 23.4(2)](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/) of the University Calendar.