LIS 598 Technology, Information and Society

Course Outline

Winter 2018

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: Michael B. McNally
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Phone: 780-492-3934

Office Hours:
By Appointment

Calendar Description:
A critical and interdisciplinary examination, from human and social perspectives, of technology in the context of libraries and information organizations and of the complex relationships among technology, information, and society.

Course Objectives:
After completing this course, students who meaningfully engage with course material, actively participate and successfully complete their required course work should be able to:

■ Understand, articulate and critique, the complex human, social, and sociotechnical contexts surrounding libraries, information, and technology.
■ Identify the cognitive, social, technical, historical, cultural, political, and organizational factors shaping the relationships among technology, information, and society.
■ Recognize research and practice trends in the design, adoption, and use of technology in libraries and information organizations.
■ Use theoretical and practical knowledge and skills required to critically assess the design, adoption, and use of technology in libraries and information organizations from human and social perspectives.
■ Understand, critique, and apply research on the human, social, and sociotechnical contexts of information to professional activities and practices in LIS.

Student Learning Outcomes:
After completing this course, students who meaningfully engage with course material, actively participate and successfully complete their required course work should be able to:

■ Understand the relationship among technology, information and society from a critical perspective based on completion of readings and participation in class discussions (connects to Program Learning Outcome 2)
Evaluate how disruptive technologies will affect power relations involving libraries or other information workplace environments through the completion of a group assignment examining disruptive technologies (connects to Program Learning Outcome 3).

Understand the impact of capitalist social relations on the use of technology and information in LIS contexts based on course readings, participation in class discussion and completion of a final paper (connects to Program Learning Outcome 9).

Program Learning Outcomes:

Relevant Program Learning Outcomes for this course are:

2. Evince complex and ethical awareness of major issues, research, trends, and dilemmas in library and information studies.

Objective: students will, within appropriate institutional, organizational, or professional constructs be ready to debate local, national, and global information issues and policies in a cross-disciplinary, analog, or digital context that includes, but is not limited to the responsibility of librarians and information specialists with respect to the free flow of ideas and access to information.

3. Demonstrate critical thinking, analytical capacities, and problem-solving skills.

Objective: students will possess the skills and theoretical knowledge necessary to evaluate and improve library and information systems and services.

9. Examine the impact, importance, and limitations of technologies in personal, professional, and social contexts as well as in library and information studies settings.

Objective: students will understand current information technology as an integral part of the operations and services of libraries and information agencies.

Content:

Technological neutrality, technological determinism, myth and technology, technology and ideology, innovation, progress, communication, connectivity, surveillance, labour, automation, machinery, value, commodification and surplus accumulation.

Methods:

Lectures, readings, online discussions and assignments.

Course Relationships:

Prerequisite: LIS 501 Foundations in LIS

Required Texts:

None. Copies of required readings are available through University of Alberta Libraries, publicly available on the internet or are copied into eClass in compliance with the University of Alberta’s Fair Dealing Guidelines and the Copyright Act s. 29 provisions.
Assignments and Weighting:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Discussion and Participation (ongoing throughout term)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disruptive Technologies Group Assignment (due Mar. 16)</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper Outline and Reference List (due Feb. 9)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper (due Apr. 13)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Late Assignment Policy

Students are expected to submit assignments by the due date. There are no late penalties for assignments handed in after the due date. Assignments handed in after the due date will be returned later than assignments handed in on the due date. All assignments must be submitted by 11:59pm MDT on April 13, 2018. Any assignments not handed in by this deadline will receive a mark of 0 without exception.

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. Grades are calculated in accordance with the SLIS Grading Procedure.

**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 stands 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 Behavior (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 an/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense 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 or chronic health condition affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Student Accessibility Services.

**Recording of Lectures:**

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Policy about academic regulations can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.