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LIB 1030
INFORMATION SOURCES AND SERVICES
Three Credit Hours
Spring 2009

Course Description (catalog version): The student will learn how to identify and evaluate information from various formats, sources and services using basic and advanced searching techniques. They will gain an understanding of the cultural and social context in which information is produced and disseminated, and how to integrate information into their professional lives. Issues of ethical and legal use of information, including copyright, intellectual property, and plagiarism will be explored within the context of current trends in academic plagiarism and media piracy.

Attendance Policy: Please be aware that through the Blackboard administrator's panel, I can monitor whether or not you log-on to the course site. Your log-in(s) signify your attendance in this course. Log-ins will be noted and computed as part of your participation grade.

Course Requirements: Students are required to complete all assignments on time, read the assigned texts, and participate frequently via the discussion list or by email with the instructor.

Course Objectives: The goal of this course is to introduce information searching techniques and methods of evaluating information sources on both basic and advanced levels. While developing these skills, students will learn about the wider contexts of information production and dissemination in scholarly, scientific, federal, and corporate agencies. At the conclusion of the course, successful students will be able to:

1. Access information efficiently and effectively from a variety of sources and formats
2. Evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into their undergraduate learning experience
3. Understand the legal, ethical, and socio-economic issues surrounding information and information technology

4. Use information critically to accomplish the course assignments and take-home exams.

Textbooks: There are no required textbooks for this course, but there is required reading. Required texts will be provided on the Blackboard page.

Weekly Topics and Assignments

Module 1/Part 1

NO PROJECT DUE

An Overview of Information

What produces information?

How much information is out there?

How has the flow of information changed the world?

Module 1/Part 2

Words, Words, Words

Keywords

Descriptors

Using Boolean Operators

LC Subject Headings

Location, Location, Location

LC Call Numbers

Dewey Classification

Learning Outcomes for Module 1:

- *Recognize the differences between DDC and LCC numbering systems.*
- *Identify the values and differences of sources in a variety of formats*
- *Recognize the importance of using keywords in a search*
- *Differentiate between a book and a journal, or other periodical publication*
- *Consider the feasibility and usefulness of using open-source search engines to satisfy an information need by reflecting on the scale of the Information Universe.*

By meeting these outcomes, you are learning how to access information more efficiently and effectively. (Course Objective 1)

Module 2/Part 1

PROJECT 1: Boolean and Keywords

Reference Materials/Indexes and Databases

Selecting Information Resources

Limiting and/or Narrowing Topics

Truncation and Wildcarding

Module 2/Part 2

The Structure of Information

- The Information Cycle
- Primary and Secondary Sources
- Scholarly, Popular, and Trade Sources
- Archives and Records

Learning Outcomes for Module 2:

- *Differentiate popular or trade sources from scholarly sources*
- *Apply Boolean operators in order to narrow and/or broaden searches*
- *Modify a search using Boolean and truncation techniques*
- *Identify the various stages of the information cycle.*
- *Contrast archival sources with library sources and determine their usefulness*

By meeting these outcomes, you are more able to evaluate information from a variety of formats and sources. (Course Objective 2)

By completing TEST for Modules 1 and 2, you are fulfilling Course Objectives 1, 2 and 4

Module 3/Part 1

NO PROJECT DUE

Dissemination of Information

- Commercial Information Packaging—the curious case of a young Harvard author
- “Unofficial” Sources and the Wisdom of Crowds—Blogs, Wikis, and social networking
- Competitive Intelligence: Pearls of Wisdom Hiding in Plain Sight

Module 3/Part 2

The Internet

- How it works:
 - Trucks or Tubes: How the Internet is constructed
 - Relevancy and Semantic Processing
 - Metadata and Metatagging
 - Search Engines and Spiders

Learning Outcomes for Module 3

- *Demonstrate an understanding of what constitutes plagiarism*
- *Compare the role and usefulness of blogs with more formalized information sources*
- *Realize that information is constructed from raw data and from open-sources*
- *Describe how search engines and relevancy actually work in practice*

By meeting these outcomes, you are developing a stronger awareness of how information is influenced by socio-economic forces, and how information may be used ethically (Course

Objective 3). You are also continuing to learn how to access information effectively and efficiently. (Course Objective 1)

Module 4/Part 1

Project 2: Truth or Truthiness

A Closer Look at the Information Cycle or, Truthiness Observed

The aging of news in the 24-hour cable news cycle

Information vs. Entertainment vs. “Infotainment”

Newspapers, Advertising, and Media Conglomeration

Module 4/Part 2

Project 2: Truth or Truthiness Continued

Going Viral: Images, Contexts, and Words in Cyberspace

A brief review of your father’s information distribution system.

Broadsheets, Newspapers, Radio, Television, and the USPS

Reading as a Continuous Activity

The effects of digital media on knowledge making and meaning

The strange career of the political sound bite

A history of the televised image—from 7 seconds to 1.5 seconds

Powers of Persuasion and Repetition

Learning Outcomes for Module 4:

- ***Explain how technology has changed the human activity of information seeking and understanding.***
- ***Identify the trends which are leading to greater media consolidation***
- ***Make inferences about the nature and accuracy of information based on trends of media consolidation***
- ***Analyze media sources for inherent manipulation or bias.***
- ***Compare the different roles of “information” and “infotainment” in society***

By meeting these outcomes, you are moving toward completing Course Objectives 1, 2, and 3.

Module 5/Part 1

NO PROJECT DUE

Federal Government Information

Government Documents, SUDOC call number system, and the FDLP

Finding Government Documents in the Watson Library

Grey Literature and the “Hidden Web”

Searching and Evaluating Government Statistics

Classification, De-Classification, FOIA, and the Public Interest

Module 5/Part 2

Surveys, Polls, and Consumer/Voter Information

How and Why they are conducted

Where to Find non-proprietary polling and survey data
How marketing analysts use data to predict your future decisions

Learning Outcomes for Module 5:

- *Describe how federal government information is classified and arranged according to agency.*
- *Tell how to access government information through the NSU Libraries and via the Internet*
- *Discuss how government and grey literature is different from periodical publications and monographs.*
- *Identify the methods used for compiling and using survey data*
- *Infer how survey methods and marketing strategies make an impact on your decision-making*

By meeting these outcomes, you are fulfilling Course Objectives 1-3

Module 6/Part 1

Project 3: Annotated Bibliography

Copyrights and Copy-Cats

What is Copyright?

Unique Work vs. Work for Hire

Fair Use Doctrine

Intellectual Property—Whom owns your thoughts and why

The RIAA, Napster, and File-Sharing

Citing Sources and Plagiarism

Why Proper Citation is Important

What is Plagiarism?

Using Information Ethically

Module 6/Part 2

Project 3: Annotated Bibliography Continued

The Information Age in the 21st Century

Total Information Awareness: Data Mining and You

Information and the Global Economy—Much Ado about Outsourcing

Digital Divides based on race and income

Does the Quality of Information Improve the Quality of Life?

Learning Outcomes for Module 6:

- *Demonstrate an understanding of intellectual property and copyright and fair use of materials*
- *Explain how current technologies have altered traditional concepts of intellectual property and copyright*

- *Describe how social and economic forces determine information equity and access*
- *Select and prepare an annotated bibliography in MLA format using proper conventions of grammar and spelling.*

By meeting these outcomes, you are fulfilling ALL Course Objectives.

Module 7

Project 4: Reflective Essay

Learning Outcomes for Module 7:

- *Review and analyze the course content for applications to daily life*
- *Assess how information is produced, organized, and disseminated, and how social and economic forces influence those processes*
- *Combine various insights and theories about information into an essay which reflects on your own abilities as a researcher*
- *Defend your conclusion with pertinent facts, ideas, and information from the course*
- *Support your thesis with examples and materials properly using MLA citation format*

By meeting these outcomes, you are fulfilling ALL Course Objectives AND integrating the information from this course into your worldview and daily life!

Student Activities and Experiences:

Projects (4 Projects, 2 X 100 points each, 2 X 250 points each = 700 Points)

For your research assignments, you will be required to search, evaluate, and synthesize information based on the weekly topics. Remember, the research assignments are brief in scope and content, but their value adds up over time.

Discussion List Postings (One posting per week including response. 30 points each week for a total of 300 points)

You are required to articles and/or book excerpts each week. These materials will be posted on Blackboard in "Documents" section. When posting your comments, please follow the protocols listed in the Online Class Civility Statement (see below).

Tests (2 Self-Assessments 50 points, 2 Tests X 100 Points = 250 Points)

Tests will be a combination of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank and essay questions. The content of the exams will be partially based on the research assignments which precede them. When completing the essay portions of the exam, you will be expected to write in complete sentences, and closely follow rules of grammar and syntax.

BONUS: A maximum of 10 Database Briefings, offered for ten points each for a total of 100 points)

For a database briefing, you will complete a report which details several aspects of a database assigned by the instructor. Aspects and features of the database which you must profile include, but are not limited to: search interface, thesauri, controlled vocabulary, contents (whether scholarly, popular, or both), and full-text availability. At least one of your database briefings must be about the online Library Catalog.

GRADING:

A (100%-90%) = 1250-1125 Points

B (89%-80%) = 1124-1000 Points

C (79%-70%) = 999-875 Points

D (69%-60%) = 874-750 Points

F (59%-below) = 749 Points

Remember: Ten Database Briefings could add 100 Points to your grade!

Evaluation Policy: Students are expected to log-in at least twice a week, participate in discussions, peruse all course readings, and complete all assignments. LIB 1030 is worth three undergraduate credit hours. Therefore, you should spend at least 6 hours/week preparing for this course.

- All written work should be done using MLA style. Take special care to properly cite the materials you use.
- All assignments are due on the dates indicated. Late work will be lowered by one letter grade (or ten points) each day. To count as "on-time" assignments must be submitted by 12:00 a.m. midnight.
- No incompletes (I) will be given, unless approved by the instructor AND the dean of the College of Business at least two weeks before the end of the semester.

Policy on Academic Honesty: If you are caught cheating or plagiarizing your total course grade will be reduced by twenty points, which means that if you otherwise perform at an "A" level, you will receive a "C". If you repeat the same or similar offense, you will be expelled from the course post-haste and given an "F".

As a safeguard against plagiarism, you are also required to submit all of your written assignments in electronic format to the Turnitin.com system, using the following procedure: <http://www.nsula.edu/ece/PDFs/Turnitin%20Student%20Guide.pdf>. Turnitin.com is highly efficient and cunning software program that accurately detects plagiarism from a wide variety of sources, including term-paper mills.

You may also wish to review the Watson Library's user guide "How to Prevent Plagiarism and Citing Sources" available online at:

http://www.nsula.edu/watson_library/users_guides/Preventing%20Plagiarism%20&%20Citing%20Sources.pdf

(Online) Classroom Civility Statement: Every Northwestern State University student is encouraged to help create an environment that promotes learning, dignity, and mutual respect for everyone in the learning environment. Students who are abusive, display defiance or disrespect to others, or behave aggressively toward others in their discussion list postings or in emails, will be asked to leave the class and subjected to disciplinary action under the Northwestern State University Student Code of Conduct and Sanctions (Article VII Sanctions).

ADA Compliance Statement: Services for students with disabilities include making reasonable accommodations necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. Some reasonable accommodations include, but are not limited to: extending time limits on examinations, allowing lectures to be tape-recorded when disabilities impair a student's ability to take notes and providing scribes for students with motor impairments. Provisions are also made for registration assistance, interpreters, and many other accommodations. For more information, call Disability Services at (318) 357-6950 or TTD (318) 357-4393.

*"But then, all delight for me is shattered;
I do not pretend to worthwhile knowledge,
Don't flatter myself I can teach in college
How men might be converted or bettered."
--Faust*