UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

Information Policy (LBSC 625/INFM 718P) – 3 credit hours
Spring 2009 Syllabus

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Catalog Description of Course

The nature, structure, development, and application of information policy including the interactions of social objectives, stakeholders, technology, and other forces that shape policy decisions.

Detailed Description

The access, exchange, and management of information have been key recurring issues throughout the history of the United States, from the Declaration of the Independence through today. This course examines selected fundamental public policy questions relating to information and communications, with special attention to complex policy issues that involve value conflicts among information ownership rights, personal privacy rights, and public access rights to information. It focuses on constitutional principles, statutory provisions, laws and regulations, and federal policies. Topics include information equity, universal service, privacy, intellectual property, censorship, and e-government. The course focuses on providing library and information professionals with a fundamental understanding of the importance and impact of information policy on the information profession.

The course will introduce students to a variety of key information and telecommunications policy literature and issues. The intent of the class is to assist students:

• Understand the relationships among policy issues such as access rights, proprietary rights, consumer rights and privacy rights in the information and telecommunications policy arenas;
• Understand selected policy issues of importance to information professionals and to the general public;
• Become familiar with constitutional and statutory provisions, domestic laws, regulations and federal policies relating to selected information and telecommunications policy issues;
• Gain an appreciation for policy analysis and research; and
• Describe and analyze information policy issues.

At the completion of the course, students should be able to:

• Demonstrate a broad understanding of major information and telecommunications policy issues;
• Demonstrate familiarity with significant literature, constitutional and statutory provisions, domestic laws, regulations and federal policies relating to information and telecommunications policy issues;
• Describe and analyze information and telecommunications policy issues; and
• Demonstrate an awareness of the interrelationships among key information and telecommunications policy issues such as information access rights, universal service, and privacy.

This course is designed as a policy primer. Thus, students will be exposed to a number of policy issues and literature. Given the breadth and depth of a number of these issue areas, it will not be possible to cover all aspects of the issues throughout the course.

Course Approach and Expectations of Student Participation

This course meets once a week on Tuesdays from 6:00 to 8:45 p.m. in HBK 2119. The course will be conducted as a seminar. It is essential that every student participates in the discussions of course materials. Participation means active involvement in class discussions. Students read the assigned readings for each week PRIOR TO THAT WEEK. The students are expected to question, challenge, argue, and discuss issues and topics related to that session's readings. Failure to participate in the course will result in a letter grade of F for this component.

The class will include a number of guest speakers who are experts in the topic areas covered throughout the course.

Classroom Environment

As a graduate seminar, the classroom environment should be professional and respectful. Discussions should be based on course readings and critical thinking. Issues of policy can involve strongly held beliefs and current political controversies. Remember--your classmates may have different perspectives on issues than you, but they still deserve your respect. As another aspect of respect in the classroom environment, turn off or mute all phones and other communication devices during each class session. If you use your laptop in the classroom, limit the usage of the computer to course-related reasons (i.e., taking notes).

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Disability Support Services office, and (2) discuss any necessary academic accommodation with their teachers. This should be done at the beginning of the semester.

Extensions

Timeliness is an essential component of graduate work, and extensions will only be available during personal emergencies. Students who need to request an extension should discuss the matter in advance with the professor. If an extension is granted, the work must be submitted
within the extension period to avoid grade penalties. Unexcused delays in submission of the paper will result in a deduction of a letter grade for each day the paper is late, while unexcused delays in presentations will result in a deduction of a letter grade for each class meeting the presentation is late.

**Academic Honesty**

Work submitted in this course will be individual and original, in line with the University’s Academic Honor Code and Honor Pledge. Engaging in any academic dishonesty will result in consequences in line with university policies. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating, buying work, multiple submissions of the same paper, forging signatures, submitting fraudulent documents, and facilitating the academic dishonesty of others. When writing papers, be sure to carefully and thoroughly cite all materials you use in writing your paper and make sure all ideas and quotations are properly acknowledged.

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER ITEMS:**

There is no required text for the course. All readings will be available to students online or in another accessible format. Nearly all the required journal article readings are accessible through the University’s library e-journal/database holdings accessible at [http://www.lib.umd.edu](http://www.lib.umd.edu).

For this class, you will also need to register for the Communications Related Headlines listserv run by the Benton Foundation ([http://www.benton.org](http://www.benton.org)). From the Benton Web site, the Benton Foundation “works to realize the social benefits made possible by the public interest use of communications. Bridging the worlds of philanthropy, public policy, and community action, Benton seeks to shape the emerging communications environment and to demonstrate the value of communications for solving social problems.” The Headlines listserv provides you with a daily summary of the more significant communications policy events of the week.

To subscribe to the Benton Communications Related Headlines, you need to create an account first (link currently is in the upper left area of the homepage, entitled LOGIN) and then subscribe to the list as part of the account creation process.

The Benton Foundation content can also be accessed through a number of other means (e.g, RSS feeds). You may find having the summary come to you directly through subscription is more convenient.

The class also has a Blackboard site that you can access at [http://elms.umd.edu](http://elms.umd.edu). Once you login using your UMD id/password, you will see the link to the class (INF M718P LBSC625 Spring 2009: Selected Topics in Information Management: Information Policy). This will be used as a document, resource, and other items repository for the course. You will find a copy of the syllabus, speaker information, etc., on the site. We will also use the course website to submit assignment.
Assignments and Grading

Your grades will be based on five items, as detailed below:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Each class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Are My Legislators?</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>February 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Topics Article Analysis</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>March 3 &amp; 31, April 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Issue Op-Ed</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>March 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue Brief</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Individual or Pair</td>
<td>May 7</td>
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Except for the Current Topics Article Analysis which require a brief in-class presentation, assignments are due Thursdays. This allows final questions and assignment discussions during class.

More detailed assignment information is on the course website and at the end of this syllabus.

Office Hours & Contact Information

My office hours for Spring 2009 are Tuesdays from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. I am always available by e-mail (jbertot@umd.edu), phone (301-405-3267), and by appointment. Things do come up unexpectedly, but any advance notice of a meeting or issue is appreciated. That way I can be better prepared for any discussion.

Weekly Topics, Readings, and Review Material

The class begins on January 27, 2009 and ends May 5, 2009 for a total of 14 class sessions. There is no class the Spring Break week of March 16, 2009.

**WEEK 1: INTRODUCTORY MATTERS (JANUARY 27)**

A. Introduction to course and discussion of course expectations  
B. Sources of information policy and locating policy resources  
C. Overview of topics and concepts to be covered  
D. The differences between politics and policy

Preparation:
- U.S. Constitution, Articles 1-3, VI, Amendments I, IV, X, XIV. You can get an online version in the historical documents section on the Library of Congress' Thomas website (http://thomas.loc.gov)

**WEEK 2: ORIGINS OF INFORMATION POLICY (FEBRUARY 3)**

A. Constitutional origins of federal information policy  
B. Development of information policy  
C. Information policy and the political environment  
D. Stakeholders related to information policy
Preparation:


**WEEK 3: THE DIGITAL AND POLICY DIVIDES: STAKEHOLDERS AND ISSUES (FEBRUARY 10)**

A. What is the digital divide? Does it exist?
B. Who are the digitally divided?
C. Implications of the divide on policy, access, dissemination of government information, policies, and e-government

Guest Speaker: Dr. John Horrigan, Associate Director for Research, Pew Internet & American Life Project

Preparation:

- Go to the Pew Internet and American Life site (http://www.pewinternet.org/) and review the Home Broadband Penetration (current direct link is http://pewinternet.org/PPF/r/257/report_display.asp) and Internet Penetration and Impact (current direct link is http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/182/report_display.asp) reports. Look for trends in users, who has broadband, who doesn't; who uses the Internet, who doesn't. Also, note that there are many reports of interest and relevance under the Technology & Media Use and Internet Evolution topic areas that you may want to browse.

**WEEK 4: THE DIGITAL AND POLICY DIVIDES: CONT’D (FEBRUARY 17)**

A. Special and underserved populations
B. Implications of the divide on policy, access, dissemination of government information, policies, and e-government
C. Accessibility

Guest Speaker: Dr. Jonathan Lazar, Towson University

Preparation:


**Assignment Due:** Who Are My Legislators? (Thursday, February 19)

**WEEK 5: TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND UNIVERSAL SERVICE (FEBRUARY 24)**

A. Telecommunications policy  
B. Broadband policy  
C. Universal access to telecommunications

**Guest Speaker:** Mr. John Windhausen, Telopoly  

**Preparation:**


**Additional Resources:**

• Review the Universal Service Administration Company’s website, particularly the area for Schools and Libraries at [http://www.sl.universalservice.org/](http://www.sl.universalservice.org/). Review the application process information and application requirements for the Education Rate (E-rate) discount.


**WEEK 6: E-GOVERNMENT AND ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (MARCH 3)**

A. The E-government Act
B. Current state of e-government
C. E-government internationally

Preparation:
government, domestic, and international development. Government Information
Quarterly, 23(2), 207-235.
cities: A survey of Florida and Texas City managers. Government Information Quarterly,
24, 576-594.
• White House. (2009). It’s early in the Obama administration, but review
http://www.barackobama.com/issues/technology/. This provides an overview of the new
administration’s intended uses of technology for government, etc. You should expect to
see more of this migrate to the Whitehouse.gov site and become part of various policy
initiatives.

Assignment Due (IN CLASS): First Current Topic Analysis Presentations

WEEK 7: E-GOVERNMENT AND ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION CONT’D (MARCH 10)
A. E-government services
B. E-government challenges
C. Guest Speaker: Dr. Jeffrey Seifert, Library Research Service, Library of Congress

Preparation:
Available on the course website.
• Helbig, N., Gil-Garcia, J.R., & Ferro, E. (2009). Understanding the complexity of
electronic government: Implications from the digital divide literature. Government
• Listen to Kojo Nnandi Show (WAMU) from January 13, 2009, on “The Obama Era &
The Digital White House”. You can find the audio file at
http://www.wamu.org/programs/kn/09/01/13.php#23934. Participants in the segment
included: Lee Rainie, Founding Director, Pew Internet & American Life Project; Darrell
West, Vice President and Director, Governance Studies, Brookings Institution; and
Andrew Rasiej, Founder, Personal Democracy Forum; Co-Founder, techPresident.com.

Assignment Due: Information Policy Op-Ed (Thursday, March 12)

WEEK 8: SPRING BREAK (MARCH 17)

Note that this is also Sunshine Week, and you will see many initiatives around the country and in
the media about open government. Check out http://www.sunshineweek.org.
WEEK 9: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (MARCH 24)
A. The First Amendment
B. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
C. Bush administration Executive Orders
D. Obama administration on Transparency
Guest Speaker: Dr. Patrice McDermott, Executive Director, Open the Government
Preparation:

WEEK 10: INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM (MARCH 31)
A. The First Amendment
B. Banned Books
C. Materials Challenges
Guest Speaker: Dr. Paul Jaeger, College of Information Studies, University of Maryland
Preparation:
• Review the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom blog at http://www.oif.ala.org/oif/. Provides a range of topical discussions and issues.

Explore various challenges and issues associated with The Golden Compass:
• ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom
  (http://blogs.ala.org/oif.php?title=loriene_roy_responds_to_attempts_to_remo&more=1
  &c=1&tb=1&pb=1)
• http://www.catholicleague.org/release.php?id=1342 (Catholic League; a group opposed
to the book/movie)

Assignment Due (IN CLASS): Second Current Topic Analysis Presentations

WEEK 11: INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM IN THE NETWORKED ENVIRONMENT (APRIL 7)
A. Filtering
B. Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Deleting Online Predators Act (DOPA),
   Children’s Online Protection Act (COPA)
C. Network Neutrality

Preparation:
• Cerf, V. (2006). Prepared statement of Vinton G. Cerf to the U.S. Senate Committee on
   Commerce, Science, and Transportation Hearing on “Network Neutrality.” Available at
• There are a range of resources on network neutrality available on the Center for Digital
   Democracy’s website at http://www.democraticmedia.org/current_projects/net_neutrality
• Minow, M. (2004). Lawfully surfing the net: Disabling public library Internet filters to
   avoid more lawsuits in the United States. FirstMonday, 9(4): April. Available at
   that FirstMonday has been moving to a login environment, so you may need to register in
   order to get access.

WEEK 12: PRIVACY, SECRECY, & SECURITY (APRIL 14)
D. Information Privacy
E. The European Union and Canadian Approaches
F. Secrecy and Security

Preparation:
  32(4), 377-383.
  Government Information Quarterly, 21, 498-504.
• Regan, P. M. (2004). Old issues, new context: Privacy, information collection, and
  the United States’ Safe Harbor privacy principles. Currents: International Trade Law
  Journal, 9, 80-88.

Assignment Due (IN CLASS): Third Current Topic Analysis Presentations
WEEK 13: INFORMATION COLLECTION POST-9/11 (APRIL 21)

A. Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and the FISA Court
B. Homeland Security Act and USA PATRIOT Act
C. Data mining and information sharing
D. Issue Brief Discussion

Preparation:

- Watch the Frontline video (available through streaming) entitled "Spying on the Home Front". It is divided into several parts, and you can watch the show in QuickTime or Windows Media. Available at http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/homefront/
- Review Science Friday's area on the science of wiretapping at http://www.sciencefriday.com/news/080907/wiretapping0809071.html. The audio files with wiretapping experts are particularly useful.

WEEK 14: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY/COPYRIGHT (APRIL 28)

A. Digital Millennium Copyright Act
B. The networked environment and intellectual property
C. Patents, TRIPS, orphan works, and other intellectual property issues


Preparation:


**WEEK 15: COURSE WRAP-UP (MAY 5)**

A. Last Discussion Items  
B. Final Questions on Issue Brief  
C. Any Administrative Matters

Assignment: Issue Brief due Thursday, May 7.

**Key Characteristics of a Policy**

The word policy is used in a number of different ways, ranging from a large-scale meaning (“foreign policy”) to a very particular meaning (“the police chief’s policy of ticketing people driving yellow cars”).

In studying information policy, policy can be used collectively (“information policy in the United States”) to refer to particular policies (“the policy of filtering Internet access in public libraries”). As an area of study, information is rife with specific policy issues; often these policies have an acronym or shorthand descriptor—DOPA, CIPA, USA PATRIOT, DMCA, Section 508, IP, E-gov, etc.

In terms of policy research and analysis, a policy can be generated by executive or legislative arms of a local, state or provincial, or federal government; the judiciary; supranational organizations; and sometimes even professional or governing bodies. A policy can be articulated through the creation, enactment, implementation, or enforcement of legislation, executive orders, judicial holdings, administrative rules or guidelines, proposals, authorizations, programs, outputs, outcomes, or processes.

**Key Characteristics of Policy Research and Analysis**

1. It is about real social and political problems that exist in society.

2. It is oriented toward identifying and solving social and political problems that arise from the creation, implementation, and enforcement of public policy. It can also serve to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the policy process.

3. It is multi-disciplinary. Research methods, approaches, and perspectives can be drawn from numerous academic disciplines—primarily those of social science, behavioral science, and law—in analyzing policy. The methods can include quantitative and qualitative approaches. The tools used will depend heavily on the policy at hand and the design of the researcher.

4. It can employ literature reviews, scientific research methods, and interpretation and analysis based on the findings of the research.
5. It is influenced by contextual factors, often beyond the control of the researcher. Policy research does not occur in laboratory; as a result, the researcher cannot change many factors that influence a policy and its implementation. Research must be designed with such realities in mind.

6. It accounts for the populations, organizations, and government agencies affected by the policy and the significance of the impacts.

7. The findings and recommendations should be actionable. Findings from policy research can be innovative and creative, but they must also be practicable and practical.

**Major Areas in which to Analyze a Policy**

1. Clarity – Does it have a clear meaning? Can a reasonable person understand the intent? Are the key terms carefully defined? Are there examples or applications in the policy?

2. Consistency – Is the policy internally consistent?

3. Ambiguity – Can the policy be interpreted in multiple plausible ways? Are there established parameters for the policy? Does the policy cover one topic or multiple topics?

4. Contradiction – Does this policy run counter to another policy? Are there inherent contradictions within the policy? Does the policy comply with related judicial holdings? Is it constitutional?

5. Duplication – Does the policy duplicate another policy?

6. Implementation – Are methods of implementation defined? Are responsibilities in implementation defined? Are timelines for implementation defined?

7. Enforcement – Are methods of enforcement defined? Are responsibilities for enforcement defined? Are timelines for enforcement defined?

8. Gaps – Is additional guidance not in the document needed to implement it? Is there sufficient detail to implement and enforce the policy?

9. Combination – What happens when the policy is viewed in combination with other policies?

10. Evaluation – Are there mechanisms for citizen or agency input? Are there modification processes? Are there sunset clauses? Are there timeframes or benchmarks for policy evaluation or reevaluation?

11. Impacts – What populations, organizations, or government agencies are affected? Are there disproportionate impacts on certain populations? Is the policy biased in favor of or against
certain groups? What short-term and long-term social impacts can be reasonably foreseen from the policy? What is the best-case impact of the policy? What is the worst-case impact?

**Identifying and Focusing Policy Issues for Research**

Does the policy create a social or political problem?

Is the problem of significance?

Who is affected by the problem?

Is the problem solvable?

Can actions be taken?

**Research Materials**

In conducting policy research, there are several important types of materials.

1. Source policy documents. The laws, regulations, executive orders, guidelines, and other government documents are the literal source of public policy. These can be retrieved from Lexis-Nexis, Thomas, FirstGov, and other sources.

2. Scholarly materials. The following are key journals that feature scholarly materials related to information policy:

   *CQ Researcher*
   *Electronic Journal of E-Government*
   *First Monday* (online journal)
   *Foreign Policy*
   *Governance*
   *Government Information Quarterly*
   *Information, Communication & Society*
   *Information Research* (online journal)
   *Information Society*
   *International Journal of Electronic Government Research*
   *International Journal of Internet Research Ethics*
   *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*
   *Journal of Government Information*
   *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*
   *Library and Information Science Research*
   *Library Quarterly*
   *Media, Culture & Society*
   *New Media & Society*
Also, check for relevant scholarly books and academic studies. If you go trolling for materials on the Internets, make sure that they are from legitimate sources. There is a big difference in academic merit between reports from respected think tanks and reports from lobbying groups.

3. Popular media. The media often provide reports on perceptions or impacts of policies. Generally, it is best to use only materials from highly regarded media, such as major newspapers (i.e., New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post), major news magazines (i.e., Economist, Newsweek), and prominent news websites (i.e., CNN.com, MSNBC.com). Keep in mind that most media outlets, even the well-regarded ones, still will have a particular perspective on most policy issues.

4. Professional organizations. Perspectives on policy issues are often provided by related professional organizations, though these will directly reflect the goals of the organization.

**Who are My Legislators? Assignment**

This assignment intends to get you more familiar with your local political context. As you will discover, the context in which your organization (should you be employed) in general resides within a regulatory environment. The range and extent of regulation will vary depending on the nature of your organization – environmental impact, pharmaceutical, and similar organizations are subject to substantial regulation; libraries and information-based organizations tend to come in and out of the regulatory process as current issues arise – business records, privacy, decency, etc.

To better understand the policy context, you need to have a grasp on those who create the policies – your federal, state, and local representatives – as well as the legislative process. This assignment asks you to identify your representatives (the policy makers) and find out about their voting records on selected items (the legislative process).

For this assignment, please answer the following questions:

**U.S. Senate**

- Identify the two senators from your state (where you currently reside)
- Identify their respective political parties (e.g., Democrat, Independent, Republican)
- Identify the year in which they were first elected to the Senate
- Identify whether either is up for re-election this fall
• Identify at least one committee on which your senators serve
• Identify whether either of your Senators serves in a leadership position (e.g., majority leader, committee chair)
• What is the length of term of a Senator?

U.S. House of Representatives

• Identify your Congressional district (hint: there are 435, one for each member of the House)
• Identify your Congressman/woman
• Identify his/her political party (e.g., Democrat, Independent, Republican)
• Identify at least one committee on which your Member serves
• Identify whether your Member serves in a leadership position (e.g., majority leader, committee chair)
• What is the length of term of a Congressman/woman?

Voting Records for Congressman/woman and Senators

For your representatives (both Senate and House), find out how they voted on or support the following legislation:

i. USA PATRIOT Act (original and reauthorization)

ii. Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA)

iii. Telecommunications Act of 1996

iv. Deleting Online Predators Act (DOPA)

Note: Your Senator(s) or Member may not have been in Congress at the time of some of these bills/legislation.

As you look up the voting records of your representatives, take a few moments to review the legislative action on the above bills.

Some things to consider as you complete this assignment:

• Nearly all members of Congress have websites, etc., from which you can learn about them.
• Not all legislation is stand alone. In fact, you will soon discover that a bill may be incorporated into a larger bill for passage (typically, but not always, an appropriations bill). This is a common tactic used to get legislation enacted that would otherwise fail on its own.
• We have bicameral system (House and Senate). Legislation goes through both before final passage and signature (or veto). It is common for legislation from the House to be changed in the Senate (and vice versa), thus leading to a Conference.
An excellent place to start this assignment is on the Library of Congress’ Thomas website at http://thomas.loc.gov.

While not part of the assignment, it would be good for you to also begin familiarizing yourself with your local representatives – e.g., Mayor, City/County Council, state senator, and House/Assembly representative.

A key to understanding the policy environment is to know the political environment in which the policy context evolves.

**Current Topics Analysis and Presentation Assignment 1, 2, 3**

Each of you will only do one current topic analysis and presentation. I will randomly divide the class into thirds and let you know your presentation dates.

For this assignment, you are to find, analyze, and summarize a current information policy article. You will then provide a brief 5 minute presentation on the article, summarizing its key points and implications for the information policy issue. For this assignment, you may use online newspapers, news websites, and other resources (i.e., blogs) besides print newspapers, magazines, etc.

Search for a current article that reviews an information policy topic (e.g., digital divide, universal service, privacy, intellectual freedom). Summarize the article and include the following:

1. The overall issue about which the article is written;
2. The specific issue that the article addresses;
3. The key stakeholders regarding the issue and their stances on the issue; and
4. The potential impact of the policy issue on individuals and society at large.

Don’t forget to include the full citation of the article – author, title, name of newspaper/website, date, etc.

You will hand in your summary after the presentation.

If possible, please let the class know ahead of time the article on which you intend to present. You can inform the students through the course website e-mail feature.

**Policy Issue Op/Ed Assignment**

Write a 750-1000 word (three-four double-spaced typed pages) article of opinion/editorial in support of, in opposition to, or using as a point of departure any one of the following assertions. In addition to the below topics, students are encouraged to seek out their own articles/issues to
which to react. There are many policy-related issues in the news on a daily basis from which to choose. Don't be shy or hesitant. If an issue strikes you as interesting, please do pursue it!

1. "If words don't incite action, I'm in the wrong line of work. I'm a librarian. My life's work is based on the belief that words and images stimulate action....We can't support free expression by saying it won't do any harm." (John N. Berry III, "If Words Will Never Hurt Me, Then...", Library Journal, January 1992, p. 6).


3. "Too often, casual observers treat privacy as a singular trait. We either have privacy or we do not. Personal information is either within the control of the data subject or privacy does not exist....Analyzing privacy is considerably more complex than examining a light switch to see if it is on or off" (Robert Gellman, "Perspectives on Privacy and terrorism: All is not list -- yet," Government Information Quarterly, 19(3): 255-264, 2002).

4. "A new political system is taking shape in the United States. As we approach the twenty-first century, America is turning into an electronic republic, a democratic system that is vastly increasing the people's day-to-day influence on the decisions of state." (Grossman, Lawrence K. The Electronic Republic: Reshaping Democracy in the Information Age. New York: Viking, 1995, p. 3).


6. "Librarians live under the spell of a grand illusion. Since this is an Information Age, information equals power. Consequently librarianship should be a powerful 'profession.' After all, do not librarians dispense information all day long? Are they not the curators of a storehouse of information? "Wrong. Power does not emanate from information. Power is derived from having something somebody else wants, and having the ability to withhold it--for a price. Just ask Bill Gates." (Mark Plaiss, "On My Mind: Wheat-Paste Librarians and the Jesse Shera Band," American Libraries, March 1996, p. 29).

7. "The real privacy challenges are yet to come. Personal video recorders like ReplayTV and TiVo and the boom in online music raise the possibility that marketers will monitor what we watch and listen to. Continued interest in so-called dynamic pricing suggests that an individual's penchant for buying Madonna CDs might tempt a Web merchant to ‘customize’ the price on her next release by an extra buck or two. And wireless Web services will eventually be able to pinpoint your location in the real world as well as the virtual one." Thomas E. Weber, “To Opt In or Opt Out: That Is the Question When Mulling Privacy,” Wall Street Journal; New York, N.Y.; Oct 23, 2000.
8. “Seeking a regulator's nirvana of perfect competition, the feds enmeshed the local loop in a serpentine maze in which no one except lawyers and lobbyists could make any money. Squeezing most of the profit out of the mobile-phone business as well, the FCC required seven wireless carriers in every region and prevented consolidation, thus ensuring that many would go broke. The commission held spectrum auctions and then devalued the spectrum that it sold, causing invited bidders to go broke.” George Gilder and Bret Swanson, “Unleash Broadband,” Wall Street Journal; New York, N.Y.; Jul 8, 2002.

9. We live in a time when radical secularists will stop at nothing to advance their agenda. It is one thing to be indifferent toward religion, quite another to unleash an anti-religion crusade. This is exactly what the new atheism is all about—a dogmatic plundering of religion, especially Christianity, done in the name of tolerance. What makes Philip Pullman different from all the other militant atheists is his determination to proselytize children. Though the movie version of The Golden Compass promises to walk very carefully on the subject of religion, the fact remains that parents may be seduced into buying Pullman’s books, thinking they are in-nocuous. They are anything but. (Catholic League, “The Golden Compass: Agenda Unmasked,” Available at http://catholicleague.org/images/upload/image_200710053349.pdf)

Be aware that editorial writing is a different style of writing than normal descriptive prose. After you've decided which journal you are writing for, but before you start writing, read several editorials and letters to the editor in back issues of that publishing venue to get a sense of the style and tone of the "editorial voice."

Since your purpose is to persuade the reader that your opinion is the correct one, you need not be concerned about presenting a balanced view of the issue. Your text should not be documented or footnoted, but you may, if you wish, attach a list of "Sources" listing either relevant readings or relevant quotations from readings.

Many of you may not be aware of editorial/opinion articles. I recommend that you familiarize yourself with the editorial pages of at least one or two major newspapers. Both the New York Times (http://www.nytimes.com) and the Washington Post (http://www.washingtonpost.com) are available free of charge online, though you may have to go through a site registration process to access the sites. Finally, many of you have local and/or regional newspapers that are accessible via the Web (or you have delivered).

**Issue Brief Assignment**

The final assignment consists of writing an issue brief on an information policy topic of your choice. Students are to model their issue briefs on those of the Congressional Research Service (CRS), such as the CRS reading on the E-rate used in this class. Additional CRS reports are available online in a range of places, though not directly by CRS itself. A good place to start is http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/, a project by the University of North Texas library to digitize and make available CRS reports. This is a very useful resource.

Sample topics for the assignment include:
• Homeland security;
• NSA clandestine wiretapping;
• Digital wiretapping;
• Federal support of public television;
• The FCC mandate for digital television;
• Copyright protection of software and/or databases;
• Digital Copyright/fair use in the digital environment;
• Redefining universal service in the networked environment;
• Information access in the networked environment;
• Filtering of public access Internet workstations in schools and libraries;
• Fair use of on-line electronic journals;
• Hate speech and Internet hate sites;
• Confidentiality of personally identifiable medical records;
• Monitoring your Web surfing: is your clickstream your business?
• Regulating media/telecommunications mergers in the public interest;
• Network Neutrality;
• Digital divide;
• Accessibility;
• Access to government information;
• Privacy;
• E-government and libraries;
• E-government; and
• Topic of your own choosing.

If you do choose your own topic, please discuss this with the instructor PRIOR to working on the Brief.

The paper should follow the formatting and styling of a CRS issue brief. Remember, the purpose of an issue brief is to inform policy makers on a particular topic. This means that you will need to present technical, legislative, and policy issues in a concise and informative format. Policy makers have little time to digest large amounts of information, and yet need to be aware of the key issues and debates surrounding a particular topic. The briefs should be no longer than 10-12 pages (single spaced), excluding any charts, tables, graphs, or appendices you might include. Include a complete bibliography of source materials used, and follow a citation style with which you are familiar (e.g., APA or Chicago style).

If you choose, you may work in pairs on this assignment. Please let the instructor know that you are working as a pair.