A. Catalog Description of Course
The social, policy, and information science and technology factors driving the current evaluation of e-government in the United States, its various forms of implementation (from simple online presence through intermediate levels of basic capability, service availability and mature delivery, to service transformation), the identification of best practices and lessons learned from the national and international community, and emerging issues (e.g., privacy, security, and digital divide).

B. More Detailed Description
This course will examine the nature, current impacts, and potential future impacts of e-government, also known as digital government or electronic government. E-government is the use of the Internet and other information and communication technologies to provide government information and services, as well as channels of communication to citizens, businesses, and other governments. The United States and many other governments around the world at local, state, federal, and supra-national levels have developed an online presence, ranging from simple information to complex services. These are collectively known as e-government. E-government, as a trend only ten years old, is still at the stage where its actual long-term role has yet to be determined. But it has as its roots a long history of government automation, and the attempt to integrate automation and services to the public. This course will examine what it is currently doing and what it can do both in the US and internationally. Specific areas of study will include the e-government’s relation to the political process and to information policy, what populations are and are not using e-government, challenges to access, the evaluation of e-government, public sphere entities that support e-government, and social networking applications and e-government, among other topics.

C. Goals of Course
The primary goals of this course are to prepare students to understand:
- The nature of e-government;
- The current and future social and political implications of e-government;
- Specific issues in e-government and the literature related to those issues;
- Different methods and types of e-government;
- How to analyze e-government within the larger policy environment and political context;
• The process of evaluating e-government websites; and
• The role of libraries in providing e-government services.

D. Course Approach and Expectations of Student Participation
The course is taught through a hybrid online and face-to-face approach. We will use BlackBoard as our main means of instruction, but will meet as a class five (5) times during the semester: September 4 & 25, October 16, and November 6 & 27. When we meet, we will meet Tuesdays from 5:30PM – 8:15PM in Hornbake 0103.

The course content is accessible via http://elms.umd.edu in the INST607 Sec – 0101 Fall 2012 E-Government: Information, Communication, and Policy site to which all registered students have access once logged into ELMS. The course material will consist of readings, recorded lectures, and other forms of making content available and interaction possible. We will also have guest speakers during most of our face-to-face classes.

The course will be conducted as a seminar. It is essential that each 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.

E. Assignments and Grading
Your grade will be based on five items:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>October 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>October 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website Review and Presentation</td>
<td>40% (15% presentation; 25% Review)*</td>
<td>Review due December Friday, December 14. Presentations on December 11.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Written materials for this course should be double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font. The margins should be 1 inch on each side. Citations—both in the text and in the references section—should conform to the most recent style manual of your choice (e.g., APA, Chicago). Pages should be numbered and the format consistent. Papers are to be submitted via ELMS on their specified due dates.

1. Classroom participation (20% of final grade). You are expected to read all of the assignments, to think through the issues they raise, and to articulate your thoughts on the materials. In this course, each week’s assignments include both reading assigned articles and examining assigned websites. As a hybrid course, our discussions will occur via discussion boards in BlackBoard (asynchronous) and in-person when we meet. Students should post to the discussion boards at least twice during the weeks we do not meet – once to initially answer or comment on posted questions and again to comment on/expand on posted comments by other
students. Students should feel free to introduce their own questions and observations based on
the readings to engage in further discussion.

Absences are excused in cases of illness, religious observances, and other reasons in line with
university policies.

2. Annotated Bibliography (20% of final grade). Develop an annotated bibliography of 15 e-
government pages/sites related by specific content (immigration, taxation, education, or health).
Include a brief description of the content selected, the URLs, and paragraph about what is
included in the content of each page/site. Then, compare what content is included across the sites
and potential reasons for the choices made. Sites for this assignment can be from abroad, U.S.
federal, state, or local websites, or professional web. You will use this annotated list to select a
website to review in more depth in your next assignment.

3. Comparative Paper (20% of final grade). A 5 to 7-page paper comparing 3 related e-
government agency sites of your choosing - include a brief description of each site, their URLs,
and how they are related (health agencies, tax agencies, portals, etc.). The majority of the paper
should focus on comparing how they are similar and how they are different in delivering the
information and services they are designed to provide, including balancing the strengths and
weaknesses of the sites and identifying their most effective elements. Explore if the origin of the
sites seems to play a role in their quality. Sites for this assignment can be U.S. and/or
international sites.

4. Website review and presentation (40% of your final grade). Select one of the websites from
your annotated bibliography. You will have a chance to publish your review in Government
Information Quarterly. If you choose to do this, please review in particular the April (Volume
29, number 2) and July (Volume 29, number 3) issues under Student Reviews. Also review other
issues of GIQ for reviews of government websites to ensure that you don’t repeat a review (we
did have some overlap in student reviews, this was part of our IMLS-funded E-government
Librarianship scholarship program). See below for assignment details.

Components of Website Review

A website review is a description, critical analysis, and an evaluation on the quality, presentation,
design, and content of a website. It should focus on the website’s purpose, content, authority,
service provision, and goal attainment. A critical website review is not a summary. It is your
assessment of the site, and should include a statement of what the designers tried to do, evaluate
how well (in the opinion of the reviewer) the designers have succeeded, and present evidence to
support this evaluation.

There is no right way to conduct a website assessment, though there are different approaches and
frameworks one could use – accessibility (i.e., 508 and usability, to name two). For this
assignment, we are asking you to look at the overall goals of the website from and e-government
service perspective and assess the extent to which the website achieves those goals: how it
succeeds; why it might fall short; how it could be improved; what works well.
The following are some suggestions for writing the review:

1. Write a statement giving essential information about the website: title, URL, Agency/Department, when designed/last modified, general content/service area, special features (maps, interactive services, visualizations, datasets, etc.).

2. State the website’s purpose. Why does this exist? There may be an “about” feature that can help identify this.

3. Identify key services offered on the site – data, online forms, interactive services/features, etc.

4. Assess the implementation, design, content:
   a. Is the material useful?
   b. What barriers or challenges did you encounter in trying to use the site?
   c. How might the general public use the site?
   d. In a service context (e.g., libraries), how might this site be useful or challenging to the public?
   e. Is the site usable (that is, you can find things easily, the design is “clean” and navigable)
   f. Is there room for improvement? How so?
   g. Examine the demographics of the community the web site is supposed to serve and describe its basic social, educational, and economic characteristics. Does the web site take any of the characteristics into account?
   h. Other observations.

5. Summarize (briefly), analyze, and comment on the website’s overall utility. State your general conclusions. Think of you as serving as someone who would recommend that other librarians or information professionals use this site to help the public.

*The presentation is a synopsis of your critical review of the website. Of particular interest is your assessment of the website’s utility, strengths, weaknesses, how it could be improved, and how from a library service or other professional perspective you would use the resource – or not.

F. Classroom Environment
As a graduate seminar, the classroom environment should be professional and respectful. Discussions should be based on course readings and critical thinking. 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 our in-person class sessions. If you use your laptop in the classroom, limit the usage of the computer to course-related reasons (i.e., taking notes).

G. 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.
H. Extensions
Timeliness is extremely important in 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 half of a letter grade for each day the paper is late, while unexcused delays in presentations will result in a deduction of half a letter grade for each class meeting the presentation is late.

I. 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.

J. Emergency Preparedness
Information about the status of the campus is available at www.umd.edu. If the campus is closed, please make sure to stay safe. Information about possible rescheduling of course activities will be provided via e-mail once the campus has reopened.

K. Office Hours & Contact Information
I am always available to you by appointment. Send me an e-mail (jbertot@umd.edu) and we will set up a time to meet – by phone, skype, or chat, or in person.

L. Weekly Topics, Readings, and Review Material
The class begins on September 4, 2012 (our first meeting, and it will be face-to-face) and ends December 11, 2012. With online content, class lectures and content will be available to students the Monday of each week that we do not meet as a class. Discussions will take place throughout the week via the discussion boards. I encourage students to bring in outside readings and observations to enhance our discussions.

M. Weekly Topics and Assignments

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTORY MATTERS; WHAT IS E-GOVERNMENT (SEPTEMBER 4 – IN PERSON CLASS)

A. Introduction to course and discussion of course expectations
B. Overview of topics and concepts to be covered
C. Preliminary discussion of e-government
D. The nature of e-government
E. The legal bases of e-government
F. The intents of e-government

Preparation:


**WEEK 2: BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR E-GOVERNMENT (SEPTEMBER 11)**

A. Technology infrastructure  
B. Broadband  
C. Interoperability  
D. Policy

Preparation:

• Federal Communications Commission (FCC) – National Broadband Plan.  


WEEK 3: ACCESS TO E-GOVERNMENT (SEPTEMBER 18)
A. Issues of access and acceptance

Preparation:
• Visit: http://www.pewinternet.org (search for current data on e-government access)

WEEK 4: USING E-GOVERNMENT (SEPTEMBER 25 – IN PERSON CLASS)
A. How citizens (want to) contact government
B. Trust of e-government
C. Citizens as customers?

Preparation:

Guest Speaker: Dr. Jeffrey Seiffert (Congressional Research Service)
WEEK 5: DESIGNING, DEVELOPING, AND IMPLEMENTING E-GOVERNMENT (OCTOBER 2)

A. Special populations
B. Design considerations

Preparation:
- Visit: http://www.houstontx.gov/disabilities/

DUE: Annotated Bibliography

WEEK 6 – OPEN GOVERNMENT AND TRANSPARENCY (OCTOBER 9)
A. What is open government?
B. What is transparency?
C. Significance of open and transparent government

Preparation:
- Patrice McDermott (2010), Building open government, Government Information Quarterly, Volume 27, Issue 4, Special Issue: Open/Transparent Government, October 2010, Pages 401-413
WEEK 7 – OPEN GOVERNMENT AND TRANSFORMATION (OCTOBER 16 – IN PERSON CLASS)
A. Making open government work
B. Transformational government through open government

Preparation:

• Review data.gov.

Guest Speaker: Mr. Dennis Linders (The World Bank and iSchool)

WEEK 8: WHO IS USING E-GOVERNMENT (OCTOBER 23)
A. Who uses e-government
B. Factors encouraging usage of e-government
C. Engagement

Preparation:


WEEK 9: BARRIERS TO E-GOVERNMENT (OCTOBER 30)
A. Who does not use e-government
B. Barriers to adoption and use
Preparation:


**DUE: Comparative Paper**

**WEEK 10: LIBRARIES AND E-GOVERNMENT (NOVEMBER 6 – IN PERSON CLASS)**

A. Roles of libraries in ensuring access and training for e-government
B. Implications for residents, communities, and governments

Preparation:


- We also have issue briefs and other information regarding libraries and e-government at [http://ipac.umd.edu/survey/analysis/e-government-public-libraries](http://ipac.umd.edu/survey/analysis/e-government-public-libraries).

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Paul Jaeger (iSchool)**

**WEEK 11: E-GOV 2.0 AND E-PARTICIPATION (NOVEMBER 13)**

A. Social media, networks and virtual worlds
B. E-gov 2.0
C. E-participation

Preparation:

government.html with an eye towards the discussion of mobile platforms and services.


**Week 12: International Efforts and Issues (November 20)**

A. General international issues  
B. Comparison of different international efforts and overview approaches

**Preparation:**

**Week 13: Evaluating E-government, Part I (November 27 – In Person Class)**

A. User-centered evaluation  
B. Policy-centered evaluation  
C. E-government maturity

**Preparation:**

Guest Speaker: Mr. Richard Davis (Chief Technology Officer, Government Printing Office)

WEEK 14: DEVELOPING ISSUES AND FUTURE RESEARCH (DECEMBER 4)
A. What is e-government really meant to do in the long run?
B. What are the directions of e-government research?

Preparation:
• Smart cities. Check out
  o http://www.amsterdamsmartcity.com/#/en (English version - Amsterdam).

WEEK 15: WRAP UP AND PRESENTATIONS (DECEMBER 11)

DUE: December 14 – Website Review

N. Syllabus Change Policy
This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.