

Course Syllabus
INST 311: Information Organization
Section ESG1
TuThu 8:00 – 9:15
Building 2 - Room 3052

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Office hours by appointment

Course Description

This is an introductory course examining the theories, concepts, and principles of information, information presentation and representation, organization, record structures, description, and classification. Topics to be covered in this course include the methods and strategies to develop systems for storage, organization, and retrieval of information in a variety of organizational and institutional settings, as well as policy, ethical, and social implications of these systems.

Your Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Describe and evaluate information organization systems
- Select/compare suitable information organization systems, tools, and practices for specific contexts
- Identify, critically analyze, and discuss:
 - Formal information representations, structures, and their properties
 - Applications of classification principles and other standards for knowledge representation in information systems
 - Social and ethical aspects of classification and policies governing information organization
- Demonstrate ability to translate key concepts and practices across contexts
- Develop basic familiarity with key standards and tools for information organization

The Topics You'll Learn About

- Information resources and collections
- Metadata and metadata schemas
- Values and ethics in information work

- Classifications and controlled vocabularies
- Information architecture
- Information retrieval systems

Your Required Resources

- Course website: www.elms.umd.edu (<http://www.elms.umd.edu>)
- Readings, videos, tutorials, and other resources are referenced in the syllabus, which is posted on ELMS, and will be linked and posted in ELMS as appropriate throughout the semester.

Campus Policies

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland's policies that relate to all courses, which include topics like:

- Academic integrity
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Attendance and excused absences
- Grades and appeals
- Copyright and intellectual property

Please visit www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies and follow up with the instructor if you have questions.

Your Activities, Learning Assessments, & Expectations

- Please bring laptops (preferred) or tablets to class and to use them responsibly to take notes and engage with course related material. Phones are not an acceptable replacement for laptops or tablets.
- You may not use cell phones during class.
- Each week will combine lectures with small group discussions and activities so that you can further experience, unpack, and tease apart the concepts we have covered during the week.
- All readings are listed and linked in the syllabus. Please refer to this syllabus for all reading assignments. It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to complete each reading BEFORE the listed class date. Content from course readings is fair game for quizzes and exams, regardless of whether the content was included in the in-class slides and lecture.
- I adhere to the University's definitions of excused absences; you will never be penalized for an excused absence as long as you give timely notification to the instructor.

Policy on late work:

- There will be five individual, out-of-class homework assignments this semester. Late homework assignments will be penalized 1 point per day, beginning one minute after the due date/ time, and will not be accepted two or more days after the due date.
- Group assignments (discussion notes, etc.) must be handed in on time. Late group assignments will be penalized 1 point per day, beginning one minute after the due date/time, and will not be accepted three or more days after the due date.
- You will take 4 regular quizzes in ELMS. Your 5th quiz grade will be a duplicate of your highest quiz grade.
- Late quiz submissions will NOT be accepted unless you have made PRIOR arrangements with the instructor based on extenuating circumstances. A late submission is defined as beginning one minute after the due date/time.
- You will take a Midterm exam in class on paper.
- You will take your final exam on ELMS. The final will be published immediately after our last class session and will be due at a time to be announced later in the semester.
- Late exams (midterm or final) will not be accepted and will receive a grade of 0.
- You may use external resources (readings, lecture slides, notes, Web, etc.) during any quiz or exam, but all answers must be in your own words, and it is forbidden to consult with any other humans.
- By the end of Week 3, you will be assigned to a 4- or 5-person team. This will be your 311 Team for the duration of the semester. As a team, you will participate in small-group discussions and activities about course topics, and you will also work together on a team project to develop an app and the accompanying documentation, metadata schema, and sample data. You will learn together from each other through these experiences.
- 15% of your course grade is allocated for participation. Your participation score is assigned based on your CONSISTENT ATTENDANCE (more than one unexcused absence will receive a grade penalty, as will repeated episodes of lateness or leaving early), your PROFESSIONALISM (courtesy toward colleagues and instructor, appropriate use of technology), and your ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT in class discussions.

Get Some Help!

You are expected to take personal responsibility for your own learning. This includes acknowledging when your performance does not match your goals and doing something about it.

- Everyone can benefit from some expert guidance on time management, note taking, and exam preparation, so we encourage you to consider visiting <http://ter.ps/learn> (<http://ter.ps/learn>) and scheduling an appointment with an academic coach.
- Sharpen your communication skills (and improve your grade) by visiting <http://ter.ps/writing> (<http://ter.ps/writing>) and schedule an appointment with the campus Writing Center.
- Find guidance and counseling about your career and personal life at the campus Counseling Center, <http://www.counseling.umd.edu>

Everything is free because you have already paid for it, and everyone needs help... all you have to do is ask for it.

Grades

Grades are not given, but earned. Your grade is determined by your performance on the learning assessments in the course and is assigned individually (not curved). If earning a particular grade is important to you, please speak with me any time so that I can offer some helpful suggestions for achieving your goal.

You will receive all scores in ELMS. Occasionally, feedback will be given on paper and returned in class. If you would like to review any of your grades (including the exams), or have questions about how something was scored, please email me to schedule a time to meet and discuss. It's important that you feel as though you are treated fairly in this course, and there will never be a negative consequence to you for opening a conversation.

Learning Assessments

	Number	Points	Total Points	Weight
Quizzes: topic-based quizzes on reading & lecture; taken on ELMS.	5	10 (2 points each)	10	10%
Homework : hands-on assignments related to in-class topics	5	15 (3 each)	15	15%
Group Discussion Notes : summaries and observations based on in class group discussions and activities	2	10 (5 each)	10	10%
Group Project : develop metadata schema and practices for a specific collection of information and context AND present your work in an oral presentation	1	20	20	20%
Midterm Exam : assessment of understanding of course concepts	1	15	15	15%

from the first half of the course.				
Final Exam : assessment of understanding of course concepts from entire semester, with emphasis on second half of the course.	1	15	15	15%
Participation (attendance, professionalism and punctuality, and active involvement in class discussions). Please note that more than one unexcused absence will result in a reduction to your participation grade of one point per additional unexcused absence. Multiple instances of arriving late or leaving early (more than 2) will also result in reduction to your participation grade.	N/A	15	15	15%

Final Grade Cutoffs

A+ 97.00%	A 93.00%	A- 90.00%
B+ 87.00%	B 83.00%	B- 80.00%
C+ 77.00%	C 73.00%	C- 70.00%
D+ 67.00%	D 63.00%	D- 60.00%
F <60.0%		

Date	Details	Readings	Assignments
8/28, 8/30, 9/4	Unit 1: Course Intro, Collections & Resources,	<u>Glushko, Chapter 1. (available in ELMS)</u>	HW1: How are products organized? Due 11:59 PM 9/4

	Information Systems & Information Seeking		
9/6, 9/11, 9/13	Unit 2: Information Architecture	<p>Arthur, P. and Passini, R. Chapter 4: What are spatial orientation and wayfinding? & Chapter 5: How the wayfinding process works. In <i>Wayfinding: People, Signs, and Architecture</i>. Toronto: McGraw-Hill. pp. 22 - 34. The PDF goes through the end of Chapter 5, but you can stop reading when you reach the section called Sensory Modalities at the bottom of page 34. (Available in ELMS)</p> <p>Rosenfeld, L., Morville, P., & Arango, J. (2015). <i>Information Architecture: For the Web and Beyond</i>, 4th ed. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media. <u>Chapter 2: Defining information architecture</u>, and <u>Chapter 5: The anatomy of an information architecture</u>. (available in ELMS)</p> <p>Rosenfeld, L., Morville, P., & Arango, J. (2015). <i>Information Architecture: For the Web and Beyond</i>, 4th ed. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media. <u>Selection about Facets from Chapter 10: Thesauri, Controlled Vocabularies, and Metadata</u>. (available in ELMS)</p>	<p>HW2: Explore and describe a collection of information resources due 11:59 PM 9/11</p> <p>Quiz #1 due 11:59 PM 9/13</p>
9/18, 9/20 9/25	Unit 3: Metadata & Metadata Schemas	<p>Reading 1: Introduction to Metadata NISO (2004). Understanding metadata. Bethesda, MD: NISO Press.</p> <p>Reading 2: Metadata in iTunes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch this video to learn how musicians and producers input metadata for the iTunes store: https://itunespartner.apple.com/en/music/videos#itp-music (Links to an external site.) • Watch this video to learn how Apple advises iTunes uploaders to handle "compound artists" https://itunespartner.apple.com/en/music/videos#compound-artists (Links to an external site.) • Spend at least 20-30 minutes browsing the iTunes Store Music Style Guide https://help.apple.com/itc/musictstyleguide/ (Links to an external site.) 	<p>HW3: Information Architecture Awards due 11:59 PM 9/18</p> <p>Quiz #2 due 11:59 PM 9/25</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pay particular attention to the section of the Guide called "Data Standards and Style Guidelines." ○ Your objective with this reading is to get an idea for the level of detail and the many considerations that go into creating high-quality metadata for the iTunes Store. ○ Choose 2-3 passages from the reading to mention when we discuss this in class. Interesting passages might be rules that surprise you in their specificity, or guidelines that connect to how you search and select iTunes products, or guidelines that seem to strict or not strict enough. 	
<p>9/27, 10/2, 10/4</p>	<p>Unit 4: Categories & Classification</p>	<p>Selections from Glushko, Chapter 7. (available in ELMS) Selections from Glushko, Chapter 8. (Available in ELMS)</p> <p>The topics for this session are categories and classification. Briefly, categories are a <i>cognitive mechanism</i> ... they're part of how we think. Classifications are groupings of categories that are intentionally created, usually formally created by some organization or group, and used for some purpose. Categories exist in our minds. Classifications exist on paper or in the "real world," like the departments of a store, the bureaus of the Federal Government, or the call numbers in a library.</p> <p>These two passages from Chapters 7 and 8 in Glushko give you a good, in-depth, nuts & bolts introduction to categories and classifications, respectively.</p>	<p>Quiz #3 Due 11:59 PM 10/2</p> <p>Draft 1: Project Overview (turn in online AND be prepared to give a 5-10 minute oral summary to the class) Written portion due 11:59 PM 10/4 (be prepared to give your oral summary in class 10/4)</p>

		<p>Optional Readings for more depth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weinberger, pp. 219 - 222. <i>Everything is Miscellaneous: The Power of the New Digital Disorder.</i> Blog post from LISTheory: Can We Avoid Biases in Library Classification Systems? http://listtheory.prattsils.org/can-we-avoid-biases-in-library-classification-systems/ (Links to an external site.) <p>These two later readings delve into some of the more complicated implications of trying to classify people, ideas, and information into nice, neat boxes. It's not so easy!</p>	
10/9	Midterm		
10/11, 10/16, 10/18	Unit 5: Controlled Vocabularies	<p>Rowley, J. and Hartley, R. (2008) (Available in ELMS) <i>Organizing knowledge: An introduction to managing access to information.</i> Selections from Pp. 134 – 149.</p> <p>Read this passage for an introduction to the purpose and mechanics of controlled vocabularies (also called thesauri), including the kind of information that should be included about terms and the types of relationships that are commonly shown among terms.</p> <p>ERIC Thesaurus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First, visit this link (http://proquest.libguides.com/eric (Links to an external site.)) and read the three boxes in the middle of the page to learn about the ERIC database. Then, watch this 11-minute video about how the ERIC thesaurus is used to describe and search for articles. <p>Part 3 – How the Thesaurus Helps Enable Resource Discovery</p>	Quiz #4 due 11:59 PM 10/18
10/23	Meet in teams (online or in person)		

<p>10/25, 10/30, 11/1, 11/6</p>	<p>Unit 6: Values & Ethics</p>	<p>Read these two documents in the order listed, below. As you read the second reading - the ACM code of ethics - try to observe (and even jot down some notes) whether you see any of those ALA values embedded in the ACM moral imperatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues (Links to an external site.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read the whole page. • https://www.acm.org/about-acm/acm-code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct (Links to an external site.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read Section 1: General Moral Imperatives • Fox & Reece (2012) (available on ELMS). Which ethics? Whose morality? <i>Knowledge Organization</i>, 39(5). Read only section 4: pp. 378 - 381. <p>Other optional resources for increasing your understanding of ethical systems:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. www.ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/glossary/utilitarianism (Links to an external site.) 2. www.ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/glossary/deontology (Links to an external site.) 3. www.ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/glossary/veil-of-ignorance 	<p>HW4: Values & Ethics in Today's World due 11:59 PM 10/25</p> <p>Group Discussion Memo II: Examples of Values in Our Information Society due 11:59 PM 11/1</p> <p>Draft 2: Screen Mock-ups (turn in online AND be prepared to give a 5-10 minute oral summary to the class) Written portion due 11:59 PM 11/6; be prepared to give your oral summary in class 11/6.</p>
<p>11/8, 11/13, 11/15, 11/20</p>	<p>Unit 7: Search Engines (aka Information Retrieval Systems)</p>	<p>Start by watching this video from Google (also shown in class):</p> <p>How Search Works (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>Reading 2:</p> <p>Next, read these four short articles in Allotment Digital's tutorial about How Search Engines Work.</p>	<p>Group Discussion Memo III: Comparing search engines due 11:59 PM 11/13</p> <p>HW5: What questions should be on the final exam? due 11:59 PM 11/15</p> <p>Draft 3: Metadata schema</p>

		<p>https://allotment.digital/learn/technical-seo/how-search-engines-work/crawling/ (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>https://allotment.digital/learn/technical-seo/how-search-engines-work/indexing/ (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>https://allotment.digital/learn/technical-seo/how-search-engines-work/processing/ (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>https://allotment.digital/learn/technical-seo/how-search-engines-work/ir-ranking/ (Links to an external site.)</p> <p>Reading 3:</p> <p>Read or watch this segment from CBS News's <i>60 Minutes</i> about Google's dominance in the world of search. This piece highlights the intersection between technology, ethics, and business practices. Finish the <i>60 Minutes</i> reading before class on Monday, July 23. It might be important for your conversation for the next Group Discussion Memo!</p> <p>https://www.cbsnews.com/news/how-did-google-get-so-big/ (Links to an external site.)</p>	(turn in online AND be prepared to give a 5-10 minute oral summary to the class) due 11:59 PM 11/20; be prepared to give your oral summary in class 11/20.
11/22	No Class – Thanksgiving Break		
11/27	Meet in teams (online or in person) to plan and refine ORAL presentation.		
11/29	Group Project Presentations	TBD	
12/4	Meet in teams (online or in person) to plan and refine WRITTEN project		
12/6	Group Project Presentations	TBD	Group Project WRITTEN portion is due 11:59 PM on 12/8 to allow you to incorporate any instructor or colleague feedback from your ORAL PRESENTATION.
12/11	READING DAY	Reading Day—no class	

12/13	FINAL EXAM	Final exam must be submitted 11:59 PM 12/13. Late exam submissions will NOT be accepted.	
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