INST 620: Diverse Populations, Inclusion, and Information

Fall 2017 Course Syllabus*

**PROFESSOR**

Dr. Renee F. Hill
University of Maryland
College of Information Studies
4121A Hornbake Building South Wing
College Park, MD 20742
Office phone: 301-405-9445
Email: rfhill@umd.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

* Please consider the syllabus a living document that is subject to modification with prior notification and based upon the needs of all class members.
GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Pre/Corequisites: None

Course Description: Information underlies virtually every interaction, is a vital social and political equalizer, and is a unifying thread throughout all human actions. Given the importance of equal access to information by all members of society, the study of information must be framed in the most inclusive terms possible, including issues of socio-economic status, education, geography, language, literacy, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, and national origin.

This course is designed to prepare future information professionals to develop and provide inclusive services to diverse and underrepresented populations, and to analyze and evaluate services to ensure equality of access to information in a range of institutional settings.

Course Goals: This course is intended to introduce students to the following concepts:

- Inclusion and equal access in terms of information;
- Social, political, and technological barriers to access in society;
- Specific information needs of various diverse and underrepresented populations;
- Means of designing, implementing, analyzing, assessing, and evaluating information services in terms of equal access;
- Issues of diversity and underrepresentation in information education; and
- The importance of equality of information access to society.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

- Define specific terms related to effectively serving diverse populations;
- Articulate principles of inclusion for all information seekers;
- Identify general characteristics of specific underserved information seeking groups;
- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for delivering effective services to diverse information seekers.

Course Delivery: Our course is hosted using Canvas. Each distance learning course offered through the College of Information Studies has its own space within this system which typically includes the syllabus, lectures, a forum for class discussions, and a place to submit assignments. Access our course site at: https://myelms.umd.edu/login. For questions regarding technical aspects of the course site please visit: http://helpdesk.umd.edu/.

Course Materials: In order to fully participate in and successfully complete this course, students must have:

1. Reliable access to the Internet.
2. The ability to record and upload text, audio, and video documents.

Textbook/Readings: The required textbook for this course is


**Additional required readings will be made available through our course site.
**COURSE COMMUNICATION**

**Bi-weekly Discussions:** You will participate in discussions that focus on issues related to course topics. To allow for sufficient time to consider the topic and post thoughtful responses, each discussion thread will take place over a two-week period. The expectation is that discussions will involve robust interactions among students. You are expected to actively engage with your classmates during each discussion thread; guidelines for responses will appear in each discussion prompt. To keep discussion threads manageable, you will be assigned to a specific discussion group; a student or pair of students will be designated to lead each discussion thread. Please be sure to make discussion posts in your assigned discussion area unless otherwise instructed. The professor will monitor all discussions and will post responses and/or questions as appropriate/necessary.

Contributions to discussion threads are graded. Each post should be well thought out and clearly stated and will be assessed on these criteria. The content of each post should indicate that required documents have been read in their entirety. You may include anecdotes from work and/or personal experiences, completed assignments, things learned in other courses, or descriptions of other relevant readings, etc. Please keep these discussions on the specified topic.

**Other Discussion Boards:** A “Faculty Office” discussion board is provided so that you may post questions of a general nature to Professor Hill. If a question posted in this forum does not receive a response within 48 hours, please feel free to send me an email asking me to check the board. Questions related to your specific situation should be sent via email.

A “Student Café” discussion board is provided for you to post additional comments on a discussion topic or for informal discussions on other relevant topics. The decision to read messages in the Student Café is optional. Discussions specific to individual students are not appropriate for placement in the Student Café and should take place via email or other forms of private communication.

**Direct/Private Communication with Professor Hill:** You can contact me via either the messaging function located within Canvas or by sending me an email. If you do not receive a response to your message within 48 hours, please feel free to send me a gentle reminder via email: rfhill@umd.edu

**Other Means of Communication:** You may also request a video conference or phone conversation.
ASSIGNMENTS & ASSESSMENT

You will be assessed via the following methods:
1. Individual assignments.
2. Participation in bi-weekly discussions.

All assignments must be submitted on by 11:59 p.m. on the date listed. Timeliness is extremely important in graduate work, and extensions will only be available during personal emergencies. If you need to request an extension, please contact me. If an extension is granted, the work must be submitted within the extension period to avoid grade penalties.

Unexcused delays in submission of assignments will result in a deduction of one full letter grade for each day the assignment is late.

Assignment Formatting: Unless otherwise specified, all written assignments should be formatted as follows:
1. Use either Arial or Times New Roman in 12-point font;
2. Save your assignments as .doc or .docx;
3. Always include your name, date, course name/number, and assignment title on the first page; no running head is required on subsequent pages;
4. Pages must be double spaced, numbered, and include a one-inch margin all around (unless otherwise noted in the assignment instructions);
5. Use consistent section titles/subtitles to organize your papers;
6. Use American Psychological Association (APA) format for citations/references. It is best to purchase the latest edition of the APA Publication Manual but an excellent resource is found at Purdue University's Online Writing Lab at:
   http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Brief Assignment Descriptions (Full descriptions and grading rubrics appear on course site):

Assignment 1: One Sentence Mission Statement (worth 50 points)
It is important for you to be clear about why you want to be an information professional. This assignment requires you to think deeply about what you believe and value with respect to information provision. Once you have articulated a set of values and beliefs, you will construct a succinct (one sentence) mission statement that clearly states your purpose as an information professional.

Assignment 2: User Analysis/Needs Assessment (worth 100 points)
This assignment requires you to conduct research about a specific population that is considered underserved through libraries (or other information-providing institutions).

Assignment 3: Infographic (worth 50 points)
Through this assignment, you will draw upon the data you collected in assignment two and create an infographic that uses text and images to present information.

Assignment 4: Recommendations for Serving a Specific Population (worth 100 points)
This assignment requires you to use the information you uncovered in the first three assignments to create a PowerPoint presentation that shares recommendations for improving services for a specific underserved population and to record yourself presenting the information.
Assignment 5: Participation in Discussion Threads (worth 40 points)
To facilitate regular interactions, you will be assigned to a discussion group to participate in discussion threads. Discussion prompts will be posted by discussion leaders bi-weekly (two discussion threads will be facilitated by your instructor). The participation portion of your final grade will consist of an assessment of the quality of your posts related to each discussion topic.

GRADING SCALE
The chart below shows how letter grades will be assigned based upon points earned for each assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POINTS EARNED</th>
<th>LETTER GRADE</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>320-340</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>306-319</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>296-305</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>286-295</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>272-285</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>262-271</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>252-261</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>237-251</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FINAL NOTE ABOUT ASSIGNMENTS
Your instructor is not a proponent of “busy work.” Each assignment has been designed to allow for creativity and authentic assessment. I am very interested in your perspective and I believe that everyone will be successful in this class. My expectation is that you will create and submit assignments reflective of high-quality graduate work. I know you won’t let me down!
UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

**Academic Integrity:** The academic community of the University of Maryland, the College of Information Studies, and your instructor require the highest standards of professional ethics and personal integrity from all members of the community. Work submitted in this course will be individual (unless indicated as group work) 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 without prior approval, forging signatures, submitting fraudulent documents, and facilitating the academic dishonesty of others. When writing papers, be sure to carefully and thoroughly cite all resources you use and make sure all ideas and quotations are properly acknowledged.

The University's Code of Academic Integrity is found at: [http://president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-iii-academic-affairs/iii-100a](http://president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-iii-academic-affairs/iii-100a)

**Students with Disabilities:** Our community values diversity and seeks to promote meaningful access to educational opportunities for all students. The University of Maryland, College of Information Studies, and your instructor are committed to your success and also to supporting section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the university’s Disability Support Services Office (DSS) to request a consultation. DSS is located in the Shoemaker Building, room 0106, its website is [http://www.counseling.umd.edu/dss/](http://www.counseling.umd.edu/dss/), and staff may be reached at 301-314-7682 or dissup@umd.edu.

Please discuss any necessary academic accommodation with me by the second week of class.
# COURSE CALENDAR

**Notes:** 1. Links to each week’s readings and activities appear on the course site.
2. Full references for weekly readings appear in readings list below calendar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK/DATES</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>READ/VIEW</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1 8/28-9/3  | • Introductions  
                  • Course overview | **READ**  
                  1. Syllabus  
                  2. Course Calendar  
                  3. Cooke, Chapter 1  
                  **VIEW**  
                  1. Lecture: Course Overview  
                  2. Let's Talk Diversity & Inclusion: TEDx Talk by Courtney Tritch | • Record & post intro video (due by 11:59 PM, 9/3)  
                  • View classmates' intros |
| Week 2 9/4-9/10  | • Defining cultural competence | **READ**  
                  1. Cooke, Chapter 2  
                  **VIEW**  
                  1. Lecture: Tenets of Cultural Competence | • Read Week 2/3 discussion prompt [posted by Professor Hill]  
                  • Sign up for discussion topic you will lead/co-lead  
                  • Determine underserved population to focus on during semester; email to Professor Hill by 9/10 |
| Week 3 9/11-9/17 | • LIS and inclusion            | **READ**  
                  1. ALA Library Bill of Rights  
                  **VIEW**  
                  1. Lecture: Tolerance is Not Enough  
                  2. The Science of Inclusion: TEDx talk by Quinetta Roberson | • Engage in Week 2/3 discussion |
| Week 4 9/18-9/24 | • Political, social, and      | **READ**  
                  technological divides | • Discussion leaders post Week 4/5 discussion prompt  
                  • Submit assignment #1: One Sentence Mission Statement (due 11:59 PM, 9/24) |
| Week 5 9/25-10/1 | • Information poverty and     | **READ**  
                  socio-economic status  | • Engage in Week 4/5 discussion |
| Week 6 10/2-10/8 | • Underserved patron          | **READ**  
                  populations | • Discussion leaders post Week 6/7 discussion prompt |
| Week 7 10/9-10/15| • Adult English language      | **READ**  
                  learners  
                  • Adults with low/no literacy | • Engage in Week 6/7 discussion |

---
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK/DATES</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>READ/VIEW</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 13 11/20-11/26</strong></td>
<td><strong><strong>HAPPY THANKSGIVING</strong></strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 15 12/4-12/10</td>
<td>Semester wrap-up</td>
<td><strong>READ</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Cooke, Chapter 6&lt;br&gt;2. Getting Started as a Library Advocate [Website link available on course site]&lt;br&gt;3. Singh, R. (2014)&lt;br&gt;<strong>VIEW</strong>&lt;br&gt;Wrap Up Lecture</td>
<td><strong>Week 15 Final discussion posts [Professor Hill posts prompt]</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Submit assignment #4: Outreach Recommendations (due 11:59 PM, Friday, 12/15)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reading List

Below is a full listing of the required and optional readings for the semester.

**WEEK 1: WELCOME & COURSE INTRODUCTION**
1. Cooke, Chapter 1.

**WEEK 2: DEFINING CULTURAL COMPETENCE**
1. Cooke, Chapter 2

**WEEK 3: LIS AND INCLUSION**

**WEEK 4: POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL DIVIDES**

**WEEK 5: INFORMATION POVERTY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS**

**WEEK 6: UNDERSERVED PATRON POPULATIONS**
1. Cooke, Chapter 3.

**WEEK 7: ADULT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS/ADULTS WITH LOW/NO LITERACY**
1. Cooke, Chapter 4, pp. 47-61 (Introduction through Reference Services for Older Adults)
WEEK 8: PATRONS WITH DISABILITIES

WEEK 9: LIBRARY ACCESSIBILITY
1. Cooke, Chapter 4, pp. 61-71.

WEEK 10: PATRONS WHO ARE INCARCERATED

WEEK 11: SERVING LGBTQ PATRONS

WEEK 12: SERVING PATRONS WHO ARE HOMELESS

WEEK 13: THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO READINGS

WEEK 14: EVALUATION & ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES FOR DIVERSE POPULATIONS
2. Cooke, Chapter 5, pp. 93-105.

WEEK 15: SEMESTER WRAP-UP
ABOUT YOUR PROFESSOR

Dr. Renee F. Hill

I am passionate about and committed to researching and teaching about issues that involve examining methods for increasing understanding of diversity issues in Library and Information Studies. My work focuses on examining information needs and information access as they relate to diverse populations (e.g., members of various racial/ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities).

I earned a Bachelor’s degree in Exceptional Student Education at Florida Atlantic University and taught middle school special education for a period of time. Both my Master’s and Ph.D. were earned in Library and Information Studies at Florida State University.

On a personal note, I was born in Houston, TX and raised in Fort Lauderdale, FL. I have joined UMD’s iSchool after having been a faculty member at Syracuse University since 2007 and am excited to move to the great state of Maryland. I am married to Thomas Hill and we have five children ranging in age from 3 to 24. I am a voracious reader and I enjoy a variety of topics and genres.

**Acknowledgements:** My sincerest thanks go to:

- Each of the experts who shared their knowledge, experiences, and time during the recorded interviews for our class.
- Dr. Paul Jaeger for realizing the significance of a course like this and making it happen.
- Lindsay Sarin and Erin Zerhusen who continue to help me get acclimated to my new “home” at the iSchool.
- All of you for enrolling in this class and being engaged learners and conscientious information specialists.