INST 650: Facilitating Youth Learning in Informal & Formal Environments

Fall 2016 Course Syllabus*

PROFESSOR
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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.
Course Description: Over the past 100 years, education in the United States has grown in size and—even more—in complexity. Part of this growth has involved the developing recognition of the importance of both informal and formal learning spaces in the lives of youth, defined as individuals from the ages of 0-18.

In order to function effectively within this system, information professionals who work with youth must understand a number of elements that affect their position in youths’ educational programs: the historical, organizational, and contemporary contexts of formal and informal learning spaces; the principles of teaching and learning that underlie the formal and informal learning spaces; and the leadership role that information professionals can play within education and information institutions, and communities.

This course will introduce students to various standards developed by information professionals who work with youth, including AASL’s Standards for the 21st Century Learner and the competencies for public librarians developed by the Association for Library Service to Children, among others. The course will also explore various theories and research models pertaining to youth and the information professionals who work with them and support youth learning.

Course Goals/Student Learning Outcomes: Below are the concepts that this course is intended to introduce students to as well as what students are expected to be able to do upon completion of the course:

Goal 1
Describe and define the landscape of the U.S. educational system within which children and youth learn.

Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to:
- Identify the formal organizational structures of federal, state, county, and local educational systems
- Describe the impact of each system on the development and improvement of library programs and other learning environments.
- Discuss and analyze major issues facing educators, policy makers, and parents and the impact these issues have on the development and improvement of library programs and other learning institutions, as well as on the roles and responsibilities of the information professional.

Goal 2
Identify the role of the information professional within youths’ formal and informal learning environments

Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to:
- Explain foundational concepts in information studies as they relate to the youth learning program and the roles of the information professional.
- Describe the relationship of professional standards and guidelines, state standards and expectations, and other appropriate documents to youth learning programs and the information professional.
- Identify the clients of youth learning environments (such as libraries, museums, community centers, virtual learning spaces, etc.) and describe results of recent research on the nature and effectiveness of these programs.

Goal 3
Identify issues and concepts related to youth teaching and learning processes as they affect the information professional.

Learning Outcomes
Students will be able to:
- Summarize current research models used in effective library programs and other youth learning environments.
- Describe the importance of collaboration and leadership in the development of an effective youth learning program.
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.


Readings: Required readings (articles, websites, etc.) 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: The primary method that you should use to contact me is the messaging function located within Canvas. 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 Skype session 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. Candidates who need to request an extension should discuss their concerns with the instructor: 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: Examining Your Learning Style (worth 50 points)
This assignment requires you to complete a brief learning style assessment and reflect on what the feedback suggests about your style of learning.

Assignment 2: Philosophy of Learning (worth 100 points)
You will use various resources to assist you with constructing a philosophy that describes your beliefs about how youth acquire knowledge.

Assignment 3: Evaluating the Information Professional's Impact on Learning (50)
For this assignment, you will examine multiple resources to guide you in creating a tool to evaluate an information professional's effectiveness while working with youth.

Assignment 4: Event Proposal (worth 100 points)
This assignment allows you to work in a team to propose a plan for an event that focuses on youth learning in a formal or informal space.

Assignment 5: Participation in Discussion Threads (worth 40 points)
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.
GRADING SCALE
The chart below shows how letter grades will be assigned based upon points earned for each assignment.

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<tr>
<th>POINTS EARNED</th>
<th>LETTER GRADE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>320-340</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>306-319</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>296-305</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>286-295</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>272-285</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>262-271</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79.9</td>
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<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>
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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

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/, and staff may be reached at 301-314-7682 or dissup@umd.edu.
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>1. Characterizing informal learning environments 2. Impact of informal learning environments on Youth</td>
<td>Recorded material</td>
<td>1. Ito, et al. (2013)</td>
<td>1. Discussion leaders post week 10/11 prompt</td>
</tr>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>1. Research/inquiry models</td>
<td>1. Mike Eisenberg’s Big 6 lecture: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjw3Oo_00N8">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjw3Oo_00N8</a></td>
<td>1. Eisenburg (2008)</td>
<td>1. Discussion leaders post week 12/14 prompt</td>
</tr>
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<td>Week 13</td>
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<td>HAPPY THANKSGIVING</td>
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Reading List

Below is the list of the items you must read this semester. The list also contains optional materials.

**WEEK 1: WELCOME & COURSE INTRODUCTION**

N/A

**WEEK 2: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES**


**WEEK 3: OVERVIEW OF LEARNING THEORIES/STYLES**


**WEEK 4: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS IN INFORMATION ENVIRONMENTS**


**WEEK 5: FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS ON YOUTH IN LIS**


**WEEK 6: FOCUS ON SCHOOL LIBRARIANS [PART 1]**

2. **Also note textbook readings on course calendar.**

**WEEK 7: FOCUS ON SCHOOL LIBRARIANS [PART 2]**

WEEK 15: COURSE WRAP UP


WEEK 9: FOCUS ON YOUTH LIBRARIANS & OTHER INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS
1. ALSC Guidelines http://www.alastore.ala.org/alsc/edcareeers/alsccorecomps

WEEK 10: INFORMAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: CHARACTERIZING & IMPACT

WEEK 11: YOUTH INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS AS COLLABORATORS

WEEK 12: RESEARCH/INQUIRY MODELS

WEEK 14: LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

WEEK 15: COURSE WRAP UP—No readings
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 23 to 2. I am a voracious reader and I enjoy a variety of topics and genres.

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

- Dr. Mega Subramaniam who designed this course and allowed me the opportunity to teach it.
- Lindsay Sarin who helped me get acclimated to the teaching environment in my new “home” at UMD's iSchool.
- Tricia Donovan and Lindsay Zerhusen who helped me make the transition from Blackboard to Canvas.