COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this course, we will investigate the fields of Consumer Health Informatics and Information Behavior, focusing most heavily on their intersection – Consumer Health Information Behavior. We will explore whether, how, and why people seek out and use health information and the types of health information they need and find useful. During the second half of the course, we will focus on the important concept of health justice – an ideal state in which everyone has an adequate and equitable capability to be healthy. We will identify populations that frequently experience social injustice and explore the information-related causes and broader consequences of the health inequities members of these populations tend to face. In the final weeks of the course, we will draw upon what we know about the health-related information behaviors of particular disadvantaged populations and the health disparities they face to envision potential information-related solutions to the current lack of health justice in the U.S. and many other countries worldwide.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a familiarity with the fields of consumer health informatics and information behavior, particularly their intersection, consumer health information behavior.
2. Identify and describe the major types of factors found to influence people’s health-related information behaviors.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the major models of information behavior and of consumer health information behavior, in particular.
4. Recognize the potential applicability and usefulness of various information behavior models for particular patient populations.
5. Identify, understand, and critically appraise empirical studies of various populations’ health-related information behaviors.
6. Describe the concept of health justice and explain the types, causes, and consequences of the health inequities faced by different types of disadvantaged populations.
7. Apply findings from previous empirical studies concerning the health-related information behaviors of a particular disadvantaged population and the health inequities they face in order to envisage future research investigations and potential solutions to improve their situations.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS: This course will be taught in a seminar fashion. The primary methods of instruction for this course will be lecture, course readings, and presentations and in-class discussion relevant to course readings. You will be expected to have read the assigned readings in preparation for each class meeting. Additionally, you will be expected to actively participate in class discussions.
**READING MATERIALS:** We will be using two textbooks for this course. Please note that all required readings for this course will be available as pdf’s in the “Files” section of our class Canvas site.


[e-book available: https://umarylandonworldcat.org/oclc/855504972]

These two textbooks, as well as the following additional books, are all being placed on reserve at McKeldin:


Although it is not required for this course, you may also wish to browse through some of the following relevant journals/magazines and/or sign up to receive automatic alerts as new issues come out:

**General Information Behavior:**

- *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology (JASIS&T)*
- *Library & Information Science Research (LISR)*
- *Journal of Information Science*
- *Information Society*
- *Information Processing & Management (IP&M)*
- *Journal of Documentation (JDOC)*
- *Library Quarterly*
- *Library Trends*
- *Information Retrieval Journal*
- *Computers in Human Behavior*
- *Information Research* (http://informationr.net/ir/)
- *First Monday* (http://www.firstmonday.org/)
- *D-Lib Magazine* (http://www.dlib.org/)

**Specifically Health-Related:**

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance: Students are expected to attend every class and to be present on time. If you will be unable to make a class, please e-mail me beforehand and please be sure to check in with a fellow student following class so that you can catch up on anything you missed. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session. Absences will only be excused in accordance with University policy (illness, religious observances, participation in University activities at the request of University authorities, and compelling circumstances beyond your control). Any planned absences due to religious observances must be communicated to me in writing during the first two weeks of class. Students may miss one class session with no penalty; thereafter, each unexcused absence will result in your grade being lowered by one step (for example, an A- will become a B+). Repeated tardiness may be considered an unexcused absence.

Class Participation: Students are expected to actively participate in every class. This will require that you finish all assigned readings prior to each class session. Participation forms an integral part of your own learning experience, as well as that of your classmates. Your participation in classroom discussions will count for 10% of your final grade. Class participation grades will take into account both the quantity and quality of your contributions to class discussions; however, the quality of your contributions (whether questions, viewpoints, responses to others’ questions, etc.) to a meaningful, ongoing discussion will be much more heavily weighted. Classroom discussions should remain professional and respectful at all times. Please be sure to silence your cell phones before entering class. Laptop use is permitted during class, but only for class-related activities.

Written Work: All written work should be proofread and revised as necessary before you submit it. Use Times New Roman 12-point font and one-inch margins. All documents should be single-spaced. Be sure to organize your papers, using section and subsection headings to identify portions of your work. Use APA Style for in-text citations and reference lists. There are many resources about APA style available on the Internet. See, for example, https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/. The American Psychological Association (APA) has a very helpful FAQ available here: http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx.

Submitting Assignments: Each assignment must be submitted before the beginning of class on the indicated due date through our Canvas site. Please submit only one file per assignment (Word or pdf format for papers; PowerPoint for presentations).

Late Work: Unless you are facing an emergency situation AND you request an extension from me at least 48 hours in advance of the due date, late work will automatically be graded down by one step (e.g., an A- will become a B+) for each day that it is late. Assignments more than seven days late will not be accepted.

Academic Integrity: The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these
standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit www.shc.umd.edu. To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, remember to type and sign the Honor Pledge on all examinations and assignments: “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).” When submitting an assignment electronically, there is no need to sign the pledge – your submission of the assignment with this sentence included implies your signature.

All assignments in this class must reflect your own original work. You must cite and properly attribute any material quoted or paraphrased from some other source. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating, buying assignments, submitting the same paper more than once, forging signatures, submitting fraudulent documents, facilitating the academic dishonesty of others, etc. Infractions may result in a penalty, such as a failing grade on a specific assignment or for the entire course or even expulsion from the University. Please read and adhere to the University of Maryland Code of Academic Integrity (http://wwwpresident.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf). You may also find this Office of Student Conduct definition of academic dishonesty to be helpful: http://osc.umd.edu/OSC/AcademicDishonesty.aspx.

**Emergency Preparedness:** Please see the University’s Emergency Preparedness Website (http://prepare.umd.edu/) for information about the current status of the campus. If a class session needs to be rescheduled, I will e-mail you as soon as possible.

**Syllabus Change Policy:** This syllabus is subject to change with advance notice. If a change becomes necessary, I will announce the change in class and e-mail all of you. The version posted on Canvas will always be the most up-to-date.

**Student Course Evaluations (CourseEvalUM):** Toward the end of the semester, you will have an opportunity to evaluate this course. Your participation in these evaluations is integral to the success of our school. Your feedback will remain completely confidential and will be immensely valuable in improving our school’s teaching effectiveness and learning environments. I will e-mail you to let you know when the course evaluation system will be available. At that time, please go to https://www.courseevalum.umd.edu/ to complete your evaluation of this course. If over 70% of the students in the class complete their evaluation, you will be able to access the aggregate results through Testudo (if you have completed all of your course evaluations).

**Special Accommodations:** If you need any accommodations due to a disability, please first register with the Accessibility & Disability Service (ADS) Office (https://www.counseling.umd.edu/ads/) and file any required documentation, and then see me as early as possible in the semester to let me know. We can then work with ADS to determine how to best accommodate your needs.

**Academic Assistance:** Learning Assistance Service (https://www.counseling.umd.edu/las/): If you are experiencing difficulties in keeping up with the academic demands of this course, please consider contacting the Learning Assistance Service, 2202 Shoemaker Building, 301-314-7651. Their educational counselors can help with time management, reading, math learning skills, note-taking and exam preparation skills. All of their services are free to UMD students.
EVALUATION:

Your final grade will be calculated based on the weighting of course assignments shown in the following table. All assignments must be submitted through our class Canvas site prior to the start of class on the due date indicated. Please note that your slides or any other electronic materials you’ve prepared for your final presentation need to be uploaded to the Assignments section of our Canvas site by 5:00 PM on Monday, May 7th. Also, your final paper needs to be uploaded to Canvas by noon on Monday, May 14th.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-P</td>
<td>Final Project Proposal</td>
<td>February 19, 2018</td>
<td>Check-off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Health Information Seeking Account</td>
<td>March 5, 2018</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Health Justice Presentations</td>
<td>March 26, 2018 (5:00 PM)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-AB</td>
<td>Final Project: Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>April 9, 2018</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Pr</td>
<td>Final Project: Presentation</td>
<td>May 7, 2018 (5:00 PM)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Pa</td>
<td>Final Project: Paper</td>
<td>May 14, 2018 (noon)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please see the last few pages of this syllabus for specific instructions regarding each of the assignments. The weighted average of your grades on all of the assignments (including your class participation grade) will be converted to a letter grade according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted Average</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97.0 and above</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94.0-96.9</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90.0-93.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87.0-89.9</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84.0-86.9</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.0-83.9</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77.0-79.9</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.0-76.9</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.0-73.9</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.0-69.9</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64.0-66.9</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60.0-63.9</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 60.0</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 11   | 4/9  | Health Literacy: Week 2 | **Guest Speaker: Eun Kyoung Choe, Assistant Professor, University of Maryland iSchool: TBA**  
Final Project: Annotated Bibliography due |
| 13   | 4/23 | Facilitating Health Information Seeking and Health as a Human Right | **Guest Speaker: Paul Jaeger, Professor and MLIS Program Director, University of Maryland iSchool: TBA**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 14   | 4/30  | Strategies to Promote Health Justice | **Guest Speaker: Amanda Lazar, Assistant Professor, University of Maryland iSchool:** “Working with disadvantaged populations and health care practitioners to promote health justice”  
 **Required:**  
| 15   | 5/7   | *** 3-Pr Final Project Presentations *** |  |
|      |       | **3-Pa Final Project Paper:** Post by noon on Monday, May 14th |  |

3-Pa Final Project Paper: Post by noon on Monday, May 14th
For this assignment, either recall a recent time when you went looking for health-related information or interview someone else about a recent time when he/she went looking for health-related information. Prepare a 3- to 4-page (single-spaced) paper describing:

- The information need, the factors that brought about the information need, and the overall context in which the need occurred;
- The information-seeking actions undertaken or not undertaken (including the specific sources consulted, why they were chosen, and how useful they were);
- The ways in which, and the reasons why, the information obtained was put to use (or not);
- Whether there is anything that you (or your interviewee) would change about your (or your interviewee’s) information seeking and/or information use processes should you encounter a similar type of information need in the future;
- Any barriers you (or your interviewee) encountered during information seeking/use;
- How satisfied you (or your interviewee) were with the outcomes of information seeking / use;
- Whether you feel you (or your interviewee) had any advantages in this process, whether due to your (or your interviewee’s) education, training, prior knowledge, or something else.

In the final section of your paper, select one information behavior model from our readings and discuss its applicability to your (or your interviewee’s) information behaviors. Does this model or theory adequately/accurately describe and/or explain your (or your interviewee’s) information behaviors? Why or why not? How might the model be adjusted to better fit your (or your interviewee’s) experiences?
Assignment 2: Health Justice Presentation

Due Dates:
   a) Sign up: February 12, 2018
   b) Presentation: Due by 5:00 PM on March 26, 2018 (20%)

For this assignment, select a particular population that often experiences social injustice, such as women, members of racial/ethnic minorities, socioeconomically disadvantaged people, LGBTQ+ people, older people, immigrants, refugees, prisoners, homeless people, etc. You might want to skim the table of contents in our Levy and Sidel (2013) textbook (Social Injustice and Public Health) to get some ideas of populations you might select. Please come to class on February 12th prepared to discuss the population you would like to select.

Based on our discussion on February 12th, each of you will have a unique population that you will then research in depth. Please read the relevant chapter in our Levy and Sidel textbook and find two additional articles that describe results from recent empirical studies focused on the health-related information behaviors of your selected population. Based on your research, please prepare to give a 10-minute presentation and lead a 5-minute class discussion in class on March 26th.

Please upload your presentation file to the Assignments section of our Canvas site by 5:00 PM on March 26th. Please include a slide (and/or provide a hand-out) that lists all of the readings that formed the basis for your presentation. You may also wish to provide a list of suggestions for further reading in case we would like to learn more about your selected population. Please use APA style for both of these lists.
Assignment 3: Final Project

Due Dates:
   a) Proposal (3-P): Due February 19, 2018 (check-off)
   b) Annotated Bibliography (3-AB): Due April 9, 2018 (15%)
   c) Presentation (3-Pr): Due by 5:00 PM on May 7, 2018 (15%)
   d) Paper (3-Pa): Due by noon on May 14, 2018 (25%)

Your final project for this course will be a research paper involving a more in-depth investigation into the health-related information behaviors of a particular population, the health inequities faced by this population, the causes and the consequences of these health inequities, and potential solutions to reduce these inequities.

First, select a population that routinely faces social injustice. Next, identify at least five journal articles that report empirical results on the health-related information behavior of your selected population and at least three journal articles that discuss the health inequities faced by this population. Prepare a 6- to 8-page (single-spaced) paper and a 15-minute presentation (12 minutes followed by 3 minutes for Q&A) that each include the following sections:

1. Introduction: Which population did you decide to focus on? Why? What will you be discussing in the remainder of your paper/presentation?

2. Literature Review:
   a. What do we know about the health-related information behavior of this particular population?
   b. What types of health inequities does your population face? What are the causes and consequences of these health inequities?

3. Discussion:
   a. How do the health-related information behaviors of your population likely influence the health inequities they tend to face?
   b. How do the health inequities faced by your population likely impact their health-related information behaviors?

4. Conclusion: Propose some potential solutions to the health inequities faced by your population. These solutions might include ideas for future research; proposed information-related processes, tools, or systems; suggestions for resources, programs, and/or services that might be helpful for your population; recommendations regarding new or amended policies, laws, etc. All proposed solutions should be informed by what is known about the health-related information behavior of your selected population and the nature, causes, and consequences of the health inequities they face.

5. References (APA style)

By February 19th, submit a very brief proposal (approximately 1 page) in which you indicate and briefly describe the population that you have chosen to focus on. Please also explain your motivation for selecting this population. Your proposal also needs to include citations (APA style) for at least five journal articles that report empirical results regarding the health-related information behavior of your selected population, as well as citations (APA style) for at least three journal articles that discuss the health inequities faced by this population. All of these articles should be ones that you are planning to read and use for your final project.

By April 9th, submit an annotated bibliography. For each article you will be using for your final project, provide a citation in APA style, a brief summary, and a critical appraisal. Be sure to also explain how each article is relevant to your final project. The annotated bibliography should be approximately 4 pages long (approximately one-half page for each article you discuss).

Final project presentations will take place in class on May 7th. Final project papers will be due by noon on Monday, May 14th.