

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
FACULTY OF INFORMATION AND MEDIA STUDIES**

**Information Policy – LIS 9130
Summer Term 2019**

Instructor: Dr. Louis D’Alton **Email:** ljdalton@uwo.ca
Classes: Tuesday 9am- 11:50 **Room:** FNB 2230
Office Hours: TBA and by appointment
Office: TC 21
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course introduces information policy concepts and issues with which practitioners need to be familiar. The course will consider information policy; the policy process and players; individual policies which influence information creation and access in Canada; and the role of librarians in policy development.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the course are:

1. Expand student awareness of macro-level (i.e. governmental and intergovernmental) policy making and how policy outcomes ultimately affect local and institutional information policy;
2. Promote awareness of the role of information policy as a driver of library policy;
3. Increase student awareness of the role of the library and information community as stakeholders in the policy process, and the role that individual library associations can play in policy development;
4. Provide students an opportunity to explore particular policy areas in depth;
5. Encourage students to become involved as professional leaders in national and international information developments.

CLASS FORMAT

The course is divided into 12 discrete weeks, however many of the issues being discussed are inter-connected and as such, recurring policy issues will manifest themselves throughout the course. Classes will generally begin with a discussion of current information policy issues gleaned from print, broadcast and online resources. This will be followed by a lecture from the instructor and, starting later in the term, a team presentation.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance: Attendance at and timely arrival to all classes is required and will be monitored each class. See the MLIS Student Handbook for details. Students needing to negotiate legitimate absences need to inform the instructor in advance in order to arrange for make-up work. In case

of emergency absences, students must contact the instructor as soon as possible afterwards. Students who are absent or late without permission may be required to complete additional assignments.

Computing device policy: While laptops, tablets and other computing devices are permitted in the classroom, please use them only for legitimate course related purposes. Checking email, browsing Facebook, etc. are inappropriate, distracting and disrespectful both to the instructor and fellow students.

Scholastic Offenses: Scholastic offenses are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Support Services: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To achieve a successful outcome in this course you must attend all classes, actively participate in class discussions and complete the required assignments. Assignments will consist of three policy questions and a team project. There will also be a grade given for participation in the course. The value of each of these items in the final course grade is listed below.

Policy Question 1	10%
Policy Question 2	20%
Policy Question 3	20%
Team Presentation	30%
Participation	20%

Assignment Submission:

All assignments are to be submitted electronically by midnight on the day of the class in which they are due. There is no official style manual for this course, but please ensure that the style chosen is appropriate and applied consistently. Marks will be deducted for poor grammar, style or spelling. Late assignments will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day (including weekends) or part thereof unless appropriate documentation is provided. Electronic submission in a Microsoft Word format is preferred, but paper submissions will be accepted.

Assignments

Policy Question 1

Value: 10%, **Length:** ~2 double spaced pages

The initial policy question assignment is designed as a relatively simple assignment to get students engaged with the topic of information policy. No outside research is required. A well written assignment will consider both the benefits and drawbacks of the question and will make a clear policy recommendation.

Policy Questions 2 & 3

Value: 20% each. **Length:** 6-8 double spaced pages

The second and third policy papers are intended to provide students with the opportunity to explore a topic in information policy in greater depth. Each paper should include at least 5 sources beyond the class materials. You are encouraged to discuss any issues or ideas regarding the paper with the instructor.

Team Project:

Value: 30%

The makeup of teams will be randomly selected by the instructor at the outset of the course. Each team will be given a topic provided by the instructor. The project will consist of three parts. The first is short analysis of the policy issue (approximately 6-8 pages), a final report including recommendations (approximately 7-10 pages) and a presentation to the class. Each part of the project is worth 10%. Presentations will take place later in the term.

READINGS

All the readings for the course are available on either the course owl, through the UWO library or on the Internet.

PARTICIPATION

Participation forms a significant portion of the grade in this class (20%). As attendance is required in all MLIS programs there will be no participation grades given for simply attending class – students are expected to participate. Because of the weight of the participation grade students are encouraged to participate throughout class drawing on their insights from the readings and personal or professional experience. The beginning of each class will include a discussion of any relevant information policy developments from the previous week. Students are reminded that it is the quality of participation that is examined when determining the participation grade not simply the quantity.