

The University of Western Ontario
Faculty of Information and Media Studies
LIS 9001: Perspectives on Library and Information Science
Course Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Karen Nicholson (she/her)

Time & Place: Fridays, 1:30-4:20 FNB 3220

Office Hours: Fridays 10-12 FNB 4134

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Course Website: GRADLIS 9001B 001 GW19 in OWL

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Course Description

This course is an overview of issues, perspectives and concerns of importance to information professionals and the discipline of library and information science. It provides an introduction to different information environments and considers the social, political, economic, cultural, historical, and intellectual contexts of information.

Relationship to MLIS Program-Level Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of readings, assignments, and class participation, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a critical awareness of professional values, ethics and standards (programme level learning outcomes, 3)
2. Critically analyze and synthesize key themes and ideas in foundational texts of the field (programme level learning outcomes, 2, 9, 5)
3. Construct coherent arguments in a written form about major current information issues and how they impact the professions (programme level learning outcomes, 1, 9)
4. Demonstrate a deep understanding through discussion of the various contextual factors that affect the information professions and the field of library and information science (LIS)(programme level learning outcomes, 5, 9)

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 miss more than two classes without a legitimate reason will fail the course.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences 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

MLIS Grade Guidelines and Late Assignments

The MLIS Student Handbook contains criteria used to grade assignments:
http://intra.fims.uwo.ca/students/handbooks/mlis/mlis-handbook-04.htm#P251_25303. Late assignments will be penalized at 5% per day, unless appropriate documentation is provided. Assignments that are more than five days late will not be accepted.

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

This course is intended to help you to develop an understanding of librarianship as a profession, in both historical and contemporary contexts, and the issues affecting the profession today so that you may begin to situate yourself, as a future information professional, in relation to them.

In order to successfully complete this course, you must:

- Read the required readings and be prepared to discuss them in class
- Engage in collegial and respectful dialogue with your classmates and the instructor
- Be open to new ideas and perspectives

You must also successfully complete the following assignments:

1. Critical Reflection Paper 15%
2. Topic Report #1 25%
3. Topic Report #2 25%
4. Team Presentation 20%
5. Participation (includes in-class Reading Reflections) 15%

Total 100%

Assignments and grading

Critical Reflection Paper – 15%

The first written assignment will be a short paper (approximately 4 double spaced pages, not including references and the cover page) due January 31 at 11:59 pm. You will submit your assignments in MS Word via the Dropbox on the course website. The details of this assignment will be presented on the first day of class.

Topic Reports – 50% (2 X 25%)

You are required to submit two topic reports over the course of the term. Students have some flexibility with regard to which date they can turn their reports in, based on which topic they choose to write about. The due dates are as follows: Topic Report #1: February 7 or February 14; Topic Report #2: March 14 or March 21.

Assignments are due at 11:59 pm on each respective date. You will submit your assignments in MS Word via the Dropbox on the course website. More details about the topic reports will be given in a separate document.

Team Presentation - 20%

Each student will be assigned to a group and the group will choose a topic for presentation from a list. Presentations will take place in class in Weeks 12-14 (March 29, April 5, April 12). Students will have some flexibility with regard to the presentation date, based on the topic they choose. Groups and topics will be assigned early in the term to allow for sufficient preparation. More details about presentations will be provided in a separate document.

Participation – 15%

a) Reading Responses (completed in class)

At the beginning of class in Weeks 2-11 (with the exception of Week 7, Reading Week), you will write a response to a question about the readings assigned for that week. These will be written and a hard copy returned in class. You may not use any notes or external resources. The purpose of these responses is to demonstrate that you have completed the readings and to prompt you to reflect on the ways that the readings contribute to your developing perspectives and values as a new information professional.

b) Class Participation

Class will be conducted as a forum for discussion. Students are expected to have read the assigned material and come to class prepared to discuss, critique, and analyze these readings. Discussions will involve clarifying or defending points of view, commenting on and/or critiquing the literature, analyzing perspectives brought up in the literature and by classmates, and identifying what is missing from the debate. Factors to be considered in class participation include, but are not limited to: positive presence (attentive, participatory, and engaged), preparation, attitude, group interaction, and contributions (i.e. active participation, bringing outside sources into class for possible discussion and analysis, etc.). Guidelines for participation grades can also be found in the MLIS handbook.

Technology Use Policy

As a courtesy to the instructor and to your fellow classmates, please limit the use of electronic devices (laptops, tablets, mobile phones) for purposes that only support the intellectual climate of the classroom. In other words, kindly do not use these devices for excessive email checking, social media use, etc. In an age of distraction and information overload, the university classroom can still play a role as a space for meaningful inquiry, communication, and engagement. Limiting non-essential uses of Internet-enabled devices in the classroom can play a large role in helping to foster this potential.

Course Readings

Please note that all the course readings are available online. It is the responsibility of students to make their own printouts of readings if desired. All readings are required unless otherwise indicated; as such, you must have done at least this minimum amount of reading before class. Supplemental readings are recommended and will deepen your knowledge of the topics presented. These supplemental readings will be highly useful (and in fact necessary) as you prepare to write the Reading Reflection Paper and Topic Reports.

Week 1 – January 11: Course Introduction

What is library and information science (LIS)? Why did you choose this profession? What kind of work do you hope to do? How does LIS relate to wider social, political, and economic contexts in society? What are effective ways to approach the readings and assignments in this course?

Bold, J. (2011, March 18). What is there to argue about in library science? Well, how about everything... *Hack Library School*. Retrieved from <https://hacklibraryschool.com/2011/03/18/argue/>

McGlynn Bellamy, L. (2015, Aug. 10). Theory matters: Constructing a personal philosophy of librarianship. *Hack Library School*. Retrieved from <https://hacklibraryschool.com/2015/08/10/theory-matters-constructing-a-personal-philosophy-of-librarianship/>

Preater, A. (2018, April 14). Engagement with scholarly work as professional development. *Andrew Preater. Always already librarianing. Bread and roses*. Retrieved from <https://www.preater.com/2018/04/14/engagement-with-scholarly-work-as-professional-development/>

Week 2 January 18: Libraries and Librarianship I

Reading Response (addresses readings for Week 2)

American Library Association. (1939, 1996). *Library bill of rights*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill>

Fister, Barbara. (2018, February 3). This is why we can have nice things. *Barbara Fister*. Retrieved from <https://barbarafister.net/libraries/why-we-can-have-nice-things/>

Blanke, H.T. (1989). Librarianship and political values: Neutrality or commitment? *Library Journal* 114(12): 39-43. Available online through Western Libraries.

Week 3 January 25: Libraries and Librarianship II

Reading Response (addresses readings for Week 3)

American Library Association. *Core values of librarianship*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues>

Harris, R. M. (1993). The quest for status. *Librarianship: The erosion of a woman's profession* (pp. 3-21). Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing. Available as a PDF on the course website under Resources.

Ettarh, F. (2018, Jan. 10). Vocational awe and librarianship: The lies we tell ourselves. *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*. Retrieved from <http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2018/vocational-awe/>

Week 4 February 1: Understanding the Development of “Information” and the “Information Society”

Reading Response (addresses readings for Week 4)

Webster, F. (2014). Definitions. *Theories of the information society* (4th ed.) (pp. 10-23). London: Routledge. Available as a PDF under the Resources section of the course.

Harris, R. M. (1992). Information technology and the de-skilling of librarians; or, The erosion of a woman's profession. *Computers in Libraries*, 12(1), 8, 10–16. Available online through Western Libraries.

Supplemental

Birdsall, W. F. (1994). Breaking the myth of the library as place. *The myth of the electronic library. Librarianship and social change in America* (pp. 22-29). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. Available on the course website under Resources.

Week 5 February 8: The Economics of Information and the Public Sphere

Reading Response (addresses readings for Week 5)

Trosow, S.E. (2014). The commodification of information and the public good: New challenges for a progressive librarianship. *Progressive Librarian*, 43, pp. 17-29. Retrieved from <http://www.progressivelibrariansguild.org/PL/PL43/017.pdf>

Habermas, J. (1974). The public sphere: An encyclopedia article. (S. Lennox & F. Lennox, Trans.). *New German Critique*, 3, 49-55. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/487737>

Supplemental

Buschman, J. (2005). Libraries and the decline of public purpose. *Public Library Quarterly*, 24(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1300/J118v24n01_01

Week 6 – February 15: Professional Values: Access

Reading Response (addresses readings for Week 6)

Guest Speaker: Ali Versluis, Open Educational Resources Librarian, University of Guelph

Rigling, L., Carlisle, E., & Waugh, C. (2018, July 25). In pursuit of equity: Applying design thinking to develop a values-based open access statement. *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*. Retrieved from <http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2018/oa-statement/>.

Supplemental

Crissinger, Sarah. (2015, October 21). A critical take on OER practices: Interrogating commercialization, colonialism, and content. *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*. Retrieved from <http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2015/a-critical-take-on-oer-practices-interrogating-commercialization-colonialism-and-content/>

Week 7 – February 22: **No Class (Research Week)**

Week 8 March 1: Professional Values: Neutrality

Reading Response (addresses readings for Week 8)

Berninghausen, D. (1972, November 15). Social responsibility vs. the Library Bill of Rights. *Library Journal*, 365-81. Available as a PDF on the course website under Resources.

LaRue, J. (2018, February 11). Are libraries neutral? *James Larue*. Retrieved from <http://www.jlarue.com/2018/02/are-libraries-neutral.html>

Bourg, C. (2018, February 11). Debating y/our humanity, or are libraries neutral? *Feral Librarian*. Retrieved from <https://chrisbourg.wordpress.com/2018/02/11/debating-y-your-humanity-or-are-libraries-neutral/>

Supplemental

Drabinski, E. (2018, February 12). Are libraries neutral? *Emily Drabinski*. Retrieved from <http://www.emilydrabinski.com/are-libraries-neutral/>

Iverson, S. (1988/89). Librarianship and resistance. *Progressive Librarian*, 15, pp. 14-19. Retrieved from <http://www.progressivelibrariansguild.org/PL/PL15/014.pdf>

Week 9 March 8: Professional Values: Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice

Reading Response (addresses readings for Week 9)

Guest Speaker: Dave Hudson, Learning & Curriculum Support Librarian, University of Guelph

Ontario Library Association. (n.d.) *First Nations public libraries in Ontario*. Retrieved from http://www.accessola.org/web/OLA/Issues_Advocacy/First_Nation_Public_Library_Issues.aspx

CFLA-FACB. (2016, December 2). Truth and Reconciliation update. *CFLA-FACB*. Retrieved from <http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/monthly-update/truth-and-reconciliation-update/>

American Library Association. Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services. *Glossary of terms*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/odlos-glossary-terms>

Hussey, L. (2010). The diversity discussion: What are we saying? *Progressive Librarian*, 34/35, pp. 3-10. Retrieved from http://www.progressivelibrariansguild.org/PL/PL34_35/003.pdf

Supplemental

De Jesus, N. (2014, September 24). Locating the library in institutional oppression. *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*. Retrieved from <http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2014/locating-the-library-in-institutional-oppression/>

Week 10 March 15: Professional Values: Intellectual Freedom and Privacy

Reading Response (addresses readings for Week 10)

Diaz, E., & LaRue, J. (2017, Nov/Dec.) 50 years of intellectual freedom: The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom celebrates its history. *American Libraries*, 48(11/12), pp. 38-44. Retrieved from <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2017/11/01/50-years-office-intellectual-freedom/>

Lamdan, S. S. (2015). Social media privacy: A rallying cry to librarians. *The Library Quarterly*, 85(3), 261–277. <https://doi.org/10.1086/681610>

Supplemental

Oltmann, S.M. (2016). Intellectual freedom and freedom of speech: Three theoretical perspectives. *Library Quarterly* 86(2): 153-171. <https://doi.org/10.1086/685402>

Shockey, K. (2016). Intellectual freedom is not social justice. *Progressive Librarian*, 44, pp. 101-110. Retrieved from <http://www.progressivelibrariansguild.org/PL/PL44/101.pdf>

Week 11 March 22: Future of the Information Professions and Library Futures

Reading Response (addresses readings for Week 11)

American Library Association. Center for the Future of Libraries. (2014, December 3). *Resilience*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/tools/future/trends/resilience>

Winkelstein, J. A., & Terrile, V. (2017). Resilience—what's in a word? *SRRT Newsletter Social Responsibilities Round Table*, 199, 5. Retrieved from <http://libr.org/srrt/news/srrt199.php#5>

American Library Association. Center for the Future of Libraries. (2014, December 9). Fast casual. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/tools/future/trends/fastcasual>

American Library Association. Center for the Future of Libraries. (2014, September 15). Maker movement. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/tools/future/trends/makers>

Supplemental

Mirza, R., & Seale, M. Who killed the world? White masculinity and the technocratic library of the future. In Schlesselman-Tarango, G. (Ed.). *Topographies of whiteness: Mapping whiteness in LIS* (pp. 171-197).

Sacramento, CA: Library Juice Press, 2017. Retrieved from <http://mauraseale.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Mirza-Seale-Technocratic-Library.pdf>

Weeks 12-14 March 29, April 5, April 12 Student Presentations