LIS 9325: Accessibility and Information Environments
Summer 2020

Instructor: Dr. Heather Hill, Associate Professor (she/her they/them)
Phone: (519) 661-2111 ext. 88013
Email: hhill6@uwo.ca
Office: FNB 4031
Office hours: by appointment
Class meets: asynchronously
Class website: https://rollingacademic.ca/lis-9325-accessibility-information-environments/
Class forum: https://owl.uwo.ca

Course description

This course will introduce future information professionals to the theories and practices surrounding disability and accessibility in a variety of information settings. Students will develop an understanding of legislation and organizational policy around accessibility. In addition, students will analyze the accessibility of both the physical and online environments of various organizations.

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

1. articulate a variety of theoretical and practical approaches to accessibility (PLLO 1, 2)
2. Define the needs of underrepresented and underserved populations in relations to policy, services, and resources in the information setting (PLLO 2, 3, 4, 6)
3. analyze accessibility in both the physical and virtual information environments and make recommendations for improvement (PLLO 6, 7, 8)
4. reflect on and critique their own perceptions and misperceptions of disability and accessibility (PLLO 3,6,7)

Course policies

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.

Class Accessibility and Inclusion - if you need a reasonable (or even unreasonable) accommodation, please let me know and I'll try make it happen. This goes triply for folks with non-visible disabilities or who pass or mask or compensate. No need to do that here.

Attendance – The text below is the official statement, but here's the thing – I want you to contribute to our class as your thoughts and ideas are important to our discussion and learning. We're asynchronous so there's flexibility for when you

contribute each week, but if something comes up – you may get sick or need to care for family – let me know what's up.

Attendance (official policy) – As there are generally no formal written examinations in the MLIS program, attendance at and participation in classes is an essential part of the learning experience and provides part of the basis for academic assessment of a student's knowledge. Students should therefore notify the instructor if they need to be absent from class due to inclement weather, conference attendance, serious illness, family emergencies or co-op or other job interviews. If the situation involves more than one absence, particularly in more than one course, the student should contact FIMS Graduate Student Services at 519-661-2111 Ext. 88494 or e-mail bborman@uwo.ca. Attendance requirements also include punctual arrival at classes. Late arrivals are discourteous, disruptive and unprofessional.

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.

Course Materials

Required text: Uncanny Magazine – Disabled people destroy science fiction https://uncannymagazine.com/issues/uncanny-magazine-issue-twenty-four/

All other required readings are on reserve in the GRC, available electronically through Western Libraries or freely available online.

Methods of Evaluation

Assignment	**Weight**	**Due Dates**
Participation and Preparation	20%	Throughout term: There will be general forum postings as well as individual and/or group exercises from week to week
Reflective essays	15%	3 essays, due weeks 1, 7, 13
Accessibility audit	30%	~week 6
Accessibility research paper	35%	~week 12