

The University of Western Ontario  
Faculty of Information and Media Studies

LIS 9001 Perspectives on Library and Information Science

Instructor: Dr. Karen Nicholson (she/her)

Time & Place: Asynchronous, with synchronous classes Fridays, 1-2 p.m. (required)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11 a.m.-12 p.m.; Fridays 10-11 a.m. or by appointment

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TA: TBA

TA Office Hours: TBA

## Course Description

This course provides 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

This course will be delivered in a primarily asynchronous format, with required synchronous online meetings Fridays from 1-2 p.m. Eastern.

## Statement on Academic Offences

Information on Scholastic Discipline and Academic Appeals is available from

<https://grad.uwo.ca/administration/regulations/13.html>.

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 website:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf).

With the exception of group assignments, you are expected to submit your own independent, original work. Re-using your own work, in whole or in part, from other courses is an academic offence and will result in academic penalties, including a reduced or failing grade on your assignment. Plagiarizing the work of others, in whole or in part, is also an academic offence and will result in academic penalties, including a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or expulsion.

If you have any questions about the above, please ask and I will be happy to clarify.

## 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](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

If you are in emotional or mental distress, please refer to Mental Health@Western

(<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. More information about is also available from *Student Support and Assistance*

[https://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/policiesprocedures/student\\_support\\_and\\_assistance.html](https://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/policiesprocedures/student_support_and_assistance.html).

For help with research, see <https://www.lib.uwo.ca/researchskillsworkshops/index.html>

For help with reading, studying, time management, see <https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/index.html>

For help with writing, see <http://writing.uwo.ca/>

## Accommodations and Absences

If you need an academic accommodation, please contact Student Accessibility Services

[www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd](http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd). If you require other kinds of accommodation (e.g., medical, compassionate, religious),

please contact me so that we can discuss how to best meet your needs. For more information, please refer to the *Academic Accommodation and Consideration* page:

[https://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/policiesprocedures/academic\\_accommodation.html](https://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/policiesprocedures/academic_accommodation.html)

If you will be absent from class, please let me know in advance. It is your responsibility to obtain course materials, notes etc. for classes you missed from your classmates.

## Course Requirements

In order to successfully complete this course, you must:

- Do the readings
- Attend synchronous lectures
- Engage in collegial and respectful dialogue with your classmates, the instructor, and our guest lecturers
- Be open to new ideas and perspectives

You must also successfully complete the following assignments:

1. Critical Reflection Papers (3) (15% each)
2. Reading Responses (in small groups) (complete any 10 during Weeks 2-12) (30%)
3. Topic Brief (in small groups) 15%
4. Participation (Self-assessment 5%; Peer assessment 5%) 10%

## Course Materials

There is no textbook for this course; all readings are available online. Wherever possible, I've selected materials (articles, blog posts, conference presentations) written by librarians. Please note that even if some of the readings were written a long time ago, they remain highly relevant to librarianship today.

## Course Structure

The course is divided into four modules:

1. Libraries and Librarianship
  2. The Information Society: Impacts on Libraries and Librarianship
  3. Professional Values
  4. Contemporary Issues
- Each module comprises 3 or 4 weeks. Modules begin on Sundays and end on Saturdays.
  - Each week, we will consider a different topic.
  - Reading Responses, due Tuesdays, 11:55 pm, will be completed in small groups. You will work in your assigned groups throughout the semester. These Responses are intended to help you keep up with the reading, exchange ideas and work collaboratively with your classmates, and demonstrate your understanding of the concepts addressed.
  - Critical Reflection Papers, due Sundays, 11:55 pm, will be completed individually. This assignment asks you to integrate what you have learned in each module, think critically about it, and improve your written communication skills.
  - Topic Briefs will be completed in groups. You will choose your groups and your topic (from a list). The topic you select will determine the due date; there is some flexibility, therefore, in both topics and dates. This assignment will provide you with an opportunity to learn more about issues of concern to librarianship today, outside of those addressed in the course, work collaboratively with your classmates, and improve your written communication skills.

## Assignments

Detailed instructions for the assignments will be available at a later date.

## Participation

*Online Discussions*

You are expected to engage in online discussions in OWL during at least three weeks of the course. You will assess your contributions as part of your Self-Assessment. More details will be provided at a later date.

### *Synchronous classes*

Synchronous classes will be a combination of lecture/discussion. They will also feature professional librarians as guest lecturers who will draw your attention to the ways that the issues we explore in this course play out in the profession today. Lectures will provide you with an opportunity to engage with the instructor and your colleagues, gain clarity on the course content, gain insights into the profession, and make professional contacts. Please come prepared by having completed the assigned readings.

Turning on your cameras during synchronous classes is optional. Posing questions via chat is encouraged. We will also try to use the breakout rooms for small group discussion.

### *Group Work*

Reading Responses and Topic Brief assignments will be completed in small groups. You will be assigned to your Reading Response group but you will choose your own groups for the Topic Brief. For each of these assignments, your group members will assess your contributions; these assessments will count toward your participation grade.