

The University of Western Ontario  
Faculty of Information and Media Studies

**LIS 9001: Perspectives on Library and Information Science**

**Graduate Course Outline  
Fall Term 2023**

**1. Course Information**

**Time & Place:** Wednesdays, 9:00-11:50 am, FNB 3220  
**Office Hours:** Thursdays, 11 am – 12 pm, FNB 4079 (or by appointment)  
**Telephone:** (519) 661-2111 x 85616  
**Email:** [apyati@uwo.ca](mailto:apyati@uwo.ca)

**2. Instructor Information**

Dr. Ajit Pyati  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Information and Media Studies (FIMS)  
FIMS website: [http://www.fims.uwo.ca/people/profiles/ajit\\_pyati.html](http://www.fims.uwo.ca/people/profiles/ajit_pyati.html)

**3. 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 the Goals and Objectives of the MLIS Program (Learning Outcomes)*

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

1. demonstrate an awareness of professional values and standards (Goal 2, Obj. 1a);
2. respond to change in a spirit of intellectual inquiry (Goal 2, Obj. 1b);
3. analyze major problems of the discipline and profession in a spirit of creativity and critical inquiry (Goal 2, Obj. 1e);
4. understand the nature of particular user groups, and the collections, services, and facilities required to meet these needs (Goal 2, Obj. 1h).

*Enrollment in this course is restricted to students in the MLIS program*

**4. Course Topics and Readings**

Please note that all the course readings are available on the course website. It is the responsibility of students to make their own copies of readings. Details about the readings will be on the final course syllabus, which students will receive on the first day of class (September 13, 2023).

Topics covered in this class include (but are not limited to):

Professionalism within LIS; Understanding the development of “information” and the “information society”; The economics of information; Public sphere theory; Professional values and information ethics; Copyright; Surveillance; Information privacy; Information equity and social justice; etc.

Please note that all the course readings are available on the course website under the ‘Resources’ folder. It is the responsibility of students to print out their own copies of readings. *Please come to class having done the readings.*

**Week 1 – September 13: Course Introduction**

**Week 2 – September 20: The Information Professional**

**Week 3 – September 27: Defining ‘Information’**

**Week 4 – October 4: Information, Society, and Democracy**

**Week 5 – October 11: Economics of Information**

**Week 6 – October 18: Intellectual Freedom**

**Week 7 – October 25: Copyright**

**Week 8 – November 1- *\*\*No Class\*\** - Research Week**

**Week 10 – November 15: Surveillance and Privacy**

**Week 11 – November 22: Diversity and Race**

**Week 12 – November 29: Social Justice & Decolonization**

**Week 13 – December 6: Contemplative Librarianship**

**Week 14 – December 13: *\*\*No Class\*\** (End of Semester Flex Time)**

**5. Methods of Evaluation**

*MLIS Grade Guidelines and Late Assignments*

The MLIS Student Handbook contains criteria used to grade assignments:  
[https://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/academic\\_programs/mlis/mlis\\_grading.html](https://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/academic_programs/mlis/mlis_grading.html). Late assignments will be penalized at 5% per day, unless appropriate documentation was provided. Assignments that are more than five days late will not be accepted.

### *Course Requirements*

To complete this course, you must do the following assignments:

1. Short Paper	15%
2. Essay #1	25%
3. Essay #2	25%
4. Reading Responses	25%
5. Participation	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Assignments and Grading**

#### Short Paper – 15% (due for *everyone* on **September 20**)

The first written assignment will be a short paper (in the range of 3 to 4 double spaced pages) due on **September 20**. This paper must be uploaded in **Microsoft Word** format electronically onto the course website no later than 11:55 pm of this day. The details of this assignment will be presented on the first day of class.

#### Essays – 50% (25%; 25%)

Students are required to submit **two** essays over the course of the term. Each essay must be uploaded in **Microsoft Word** format electronically onto the course website no later than 11:55 pm of the appropriate date. You have some flexibility with regard to which date to turn your essay in, based on which topic you choose to write on. The due dates are as follows: Essay #1 (**October 18 or 25**); Essay #2 (**November 29 or December 6**). More details about the essays will be given in a separate document.

#### Reading Responses (5 @ 5% each) = 25%

You will need to do **five** reading responses (**5% each**), which can be done for any week starting from **September 27** onwards (excluding Research Week). There is no need to sign up for these responses or let myself or Kevin know in advance which week you will write on. Simply choose five weekly class topics that you would like to write on and paste your reading response in the appropriate area under 'Forums' » 'Reading Responses.' More details about this assignment will be given in a separate document.

#### Class Participation – 10%

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.

### *Further Discussion*

In addition, you are encouraged to periodically participate in class-related discussions by creating conversations and posts through the 'Further Discussion' topic link on the course website (under 'Forums' on the left navigation bar). This is another opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way outside of the specified class time. Substantive and thoughtful contributions can positively contribute to a student's overall participation grade.

## **6. 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/handbook/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)

## **7. 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.

## **8. Accessible Education Western (AEW)**

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with **Accessible Education Western (AEW)**, a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both **AEW** and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

## **9. Enrollment Restrictions**

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) program, as well as any student that has obtained special permission to enroll in this course from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student's home program.