Faculty of Information and Media Studies
The University of Western Ontario

9378: Information in the Age of Google
Fall 2023 (distance)

Time:	Online September 7 – December 13
Active Time Zone:	EST (Eastern Standard Time)
Meeting Time:	Mondays 9:00 – 10:30 or 10:30-12:00
Class Location:	Online via OWL
Meeting Location:	Online via Zoom
Required Texts:	All readings will be available via OWL
Prerequisites:	9001, 9002
Instructors:	Lucia Cedeira Serantes (MLIS, PhD); Rachel Melis (MLIS, PhD)
Office Hours:	By appointment via Zoom
Email:	lcedeir@uwo.ca, rmelis2@uwo.ca
	Please use the OWL message system

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

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Information systems based on big data, predictive analytics and recommender algorithms are changing traditional methods of information organization, curation and access in libraries. Even as libraries integrate their tools with interfaces of search engines and streaming services, libraries must confront fresh implications regarding metadata and how it could be used.

Expectations:

Students are expected to complete the module readings that are assigned, and they will also be **expected to meet synchronously four times (once per module)** during the term with a small group of students for critical discussion. Part of the critical participation grade will involve keeping abreast of relevant news involving Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Apple.

Students should expect to spend approximately 10 hours per week (approx. 30hrs per Module) on reading (i.e. required reading, elective reading and research), viewing and listening to resources, course engagement, assignments, etc. Online learning needs and takes time, so students should try to plan accordingly as much as they can. If this is your first online course or you would like some advice about how to organize yourself, you may want to check this resource about how to get ready to learn online.

Course-Level Learning Outcomes

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

1. Understand how the values and principles of information organization, access and curation, which are central to the field of LIS, can be exercised and aligned with emerging data policies while preserving an awareness that our social responsibility for providing progressive public service must be preserved in an information environment which sometimes challenges those values, principles and responsibility. (Program-Level Learning Outcome 2)
2. Use an enhanced understanding of the technologies of big data for information organization and dissemination to assess the opportunities and consequences of adopting or aligning with current and emerging technologies of information dissemination based on predictive analytics and various algorithms. (Program-Level Learning Outcome 4)
3. Understand how the practices and roles of librarians and information professionals concerned with information organization, curation and access are changing due to the changing social and technological environments brought about by big data, predictive analytics, and machine learning. (Program-Level Learning Outcome 5)

II. METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Assignment	Points*	Due Date
Annotated Bibliography	15	October 8
Newsletter	15	October 22
Short Research Paper	15	November 5
Response to Research Paper	10	November 17
Addendum to Research Paper	05	November 26
Free-Range Creative Contribution	15	December 13
Critical Participation	25	Ongoing

*__Late assignments are not accepted__ *UNLESS the student contacts us ahead of time (at least 48 hours) or it is an emergency. Extension will only be given in extraordinary circumstances*

Breakdown of the Critical Participation: This participation will consist of a combination of written contributions during each Module, and attendance and active engagement in Module Seminars. We expect ***that you come with a plan to participate***: a question or comment about the readings, connections you make between the readings and the content prompts you will be given, or other notes that may arise from your engagement with the course materials and work. Remember to come with specific annotations for your contributions (article title, pages, quotes, etc.) You will not be evaluated on the frequency of your contributions but on their quality. ***A well-***

thought-out question is more constructive than a mere statement of fact.

How much do we expect you to participate? *The expectation of frequent and substantive participation should not be understood as an invitation to speak at every opportunity.* You need to be aware and acknowledge the context of your participation within the group. Likewise, not contributing at all or speaking only when prompted by the instructor will be evaluated accordingly.

Semester Breakdown

Module	Topic	Dates*
One	Data Principles	September 7 – September 29
Two	Platform Society	October 2 – October 27
Break for Reading and Research	*October 31 – November 5*	
Three	Algorithmic Justice	November 6 – November 26
Four	Algorithmic Power	November 27 – December 13

* These are tentatively organized. The time/readings devoted to each topic may vary slightly according to student interest and engagement.*

III. COURSE MATERIALS

Required and Supplementary Materials
Most of the weekly readings will be made available through OWL

Technology
Basics
Internet and computer access is required. Your Internet speed should sufficiently support uploading and downloading of large file sizes. Your computer should be up-to-date with the latest operating system in order to support the required application listed below; it should also have anti-virus software. You will need a microphone and a webcam.

Course Site
We have access to an OWL course site. We will use this site as a way to send announcements, post updates, store documents, receive assignments, and to communicate generally through the Forum, or by class email, among other things. It is your responsibility to review the course site multiple times a week.

Required Applications
The following application is required for you to participate successfully in this course.

Zoom: We will use [Zoom through UWO](#) for Seminars and for Office Hours. This is a web-

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conferencing application that allows for audio, video, chat and desktop sharing. If you have any questions about your privacy or data, you may read this section.

IV. STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Students in this class are reminded that plagiarism – using another's work, ideas, or words without giving credit -- is a serious scholastic offence. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence to create content that is submitted as one's own. Students who use AI-content generators (such as ChatGPT) to complete assignments without attribution or permission from the instructor are committing a scholastic offence.

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

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism-detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

V. SUPPORT SERVICES

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.

Indigenous Student Centre: For culturally relevant, wholistic and strength-based programs and services geared toward Indigenous students at Western. See also, **Indigenous Initiatives at Western.**

FIMS Graduate Library: For help with research in FIMS graduate programs, consult with the FGL staff.