

LIS 9003: Information Sources & Services

Summer 2023

1. Course information

GRADLIS 9003 Information Sources & Services

Class meets: in-person on Thursdays 9:00-11:50 TC 303

Course website: [OWL](#)

Enrollment restrictions: Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the Master of Library and Information Science program at Western

2. Instructor information

Heather Hill, Associate Professor (she/her)

Email: hhill6@uwo.ca (please add 9003 to the subject line)

Office hours: zoom or in-person by appointment

3. Course description

Theory and practice of finding and using basic information sources and question negotiating techniques in information providing contexts, including libraries and information centres.

Appropriate and effective ways of providing personal assistance to users in pursuit of information. Introduction to the principles and practices of searching.

Course-level Learning Outcomes

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

1. apply a critical awareness of professional values, standards and ethics in the context of reference services (Program-level learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, 5);
2. prioritize from among a wide range of techniques to assess, recommend and create access to information in a variety of formats (Program-level learning outcomes 2, 4, 6, 8)
3. define the needs of particular user groups and develop collections, services, programs and policies to meet these needs (Program-level learning outcomes 3, 5, 8, 9);
4. prepare, write and deliver effective professional reports and presentations, independently and/or cooperatively with others (Program-level learning outcomes 4, 7, 9)

4. Course materials

All required readings are available electronically through the course OWL site. These readings will give us the basics, but you'll need to consult additional materials for assignments.

5. Methods of evaluation (tentative)

A. Participation and preparation (10%)

Coming to class is one aspect of participation, but it's really more fun when we can talk about a topic together. We'll have opportunities for small group and class discussions. Additionally, folks will sign up for different weeks to be 'conversation starters.' The conversation starters for the week are in charge of getting our conversation going for that day by a) closely reading/watching what is assigned for that week b) prepping some questions or comments that you think will help us start the conversation and c) bringing those up in class so that we can get going.

There are also several exercises that are required throughout the term. These are smaller activities that don't take much time. They are not graded but serve as a jumping off point for our discussion.

Overall, this grade will be a holistic assessment of your participation, preparations, and engagement throughout the term.

B. Search assignments (30%)

A variety of search assignments will be required throughout the term. These assignments will cover identifying search resources, exhibiting proficiency with search processes, and reflecting on searching practices.

C. Research topic (35%) This assignment has three parts:

- 1) 250-word proposal and preliminary reference list (10%)
- 2) Annotated reference list of at least ten items and a modified proposal (10%)
- 3) A short essay (~2500 words) plus references (15%)

D. Professional presentation based on your research topic (25%) This assignment has two parts:

- 1) This will be a ten-minute presentation to the class. (15%)
- 2) Additionally, you will be providing peer reviews of two presentations. These will be written anonymously (you will know who the presenter is, but they will not know your identity (5% x 2 = 10%)

Course Policies and other helpful information:

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.

Accessible Education Western (AEW)

Support services - Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Mental Health@Western](#) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

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.

Communication – Like you, I get a lot of email. Help me find your message faster. Include the course number in the subject line and it will send me an alert. If the course number is not there, it may take me longer to see your message. I keep some boundaries around email. I read and respond to email during set blocks of time Monday-Friday.

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. If something comes up – you may get sick or need to care for family – let me know what's up.

Attendance (official FIMS MLIS 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. Attendance requirements also include punctual arrival at classes. Late arrivals are discourteous, disruptive and unprofessional.

Grading – the points below provide insight into my general approach to grading

- General grading - I use the [MLIS Grade Grading System](#) to help me grade. I have these open and consult them when I am grading your work so be familiar with the way this system is laid out.
- Late papers – Life happens. I have no problem giving an extension or adjusting a due date when I can. There are no penalties for extensions or adjusting due dates. A non-exhaustive list of reasons folks have used in the past – they’re sick and they need an extension, they have a lot of due dates in a short time period and want to adjust a due date from me to spread out the workload, they are almost done with the paper but they’d like an extra day to fine tune things before they hand it in, etc. We’ll work together to plan a new due date. I can’t always adjust something, but if I can, I will.
- ‘I’m not happy with my grade’ - You are encouraged to ask me to reassess your paper if you think I’ve made an error or missed something. If this happens, send me an email letting me know what you believe was wrongly evaluated. I’m happy to take another look at your work.
- [Statement on academic offences](#) - Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy.