

The University of Western Ontario  
Faculty of Information and Media Studies

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

**Graduate Course Outline  
Winter Term 2024**

**1. Course Information**

**Time & Place:** Thursdays, 9:00-11:50 am, FNB 2230  
**Office Hours:** By appointment (FNB 4079 or via Zoom)  
**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 (January 11, 2024).

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 – January 11: Course Introduction**

What is library and information science (LIS)? Why did you choose this profession? What kind of work do you hope to do? How does LIS relate to wider social, political, and economic contexts in society? What are effective ways to approach the readings and assignments in this course?

### **Week 2 – January 18: The Information Professional**

Harris, R. (1992). In pursuit of status. In *Librarianship: The erosion of a woman's profession*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex., pp. 3-21.

ALA Core Values of Librarianship: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/corevalues>

### **Week 3 – January 25: Defining ‘Information’**

Buckland, Michael (1991). Information as thing. *Journal of the American Society of Information Science* 42 (5): 351-360.

Wiegand, W.A. (2016). Tunnel vision and blind spots reconsidered: *Part of our lives* (2015) as a test case. *Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 85(4), 347-370.

### **Week 4 – February 1: Information, Society, and Democracy**

Webster, F. (2014). *Theories of the Information Society, 4<sup>th</sup> edition*. London: Routledge.

Chapter 2 - “Definitions”, pp. 10-23

Chapter 3 – “Quality,” pp. 24-37

Lund, B. (March 2021). The fourth industrial revolution: does it pose an existential threat to libraries? *Information Technology and Libraries*, 1-4: <https://doi.org/10.6017/ital.v40i1.13193>

Habermas, J. (1974). The public sphere: An encyclopedia article. (S. Lennox & F. Lennox, Trans.). *New German Critique*, 3, 49-55.

### **Week 5 – February 8: Economics of Information**

Trosow, S.E. (2014). The commodification of information and the public good: new challenges for a progressive librarianship. *Progressive Librarian* 43: 17-29.

Buschman, J. (2017). The library in the life of the public: implications of a neoliberal age. *Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 87(1): 55-70.

### **Week 6 – February 15: Copyright**

Murray, L.J. & Trosow, S.E. (2013). *Canadian copyright: a citizen's guide*. Toronto: Between the Lines.

Chapter 1: Copyright's Rationales, pp. 3-15

Chapter 3: Copyright's Scope, pp. 35-51

Chapter 5: Users' Rights, pp. 71-86

### **Week 7 – February 22 - \*\*No Class\*\* - Research Week**

### **Week 8 – February 29: Open Access & Scholarly Communication**

*Guest Speaker - Paul St-Pierre, University of Guelph Libraries*

Pinfield, S., Wakeling, S., Bawden, D., & Robinson, L. (2020). Chapter 1 - Open access: Beginnings and developments. In *Open Access in Theory and Practice*. Routledge: 13- 30. Retrieved from <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/oa-mono/10.4324/9780429276842-1/open-access-stephen-pinfield-simon-wakeling-david-bawden-lyn-robinson?context=ubx&refId=72b64105-8d8c-4739-ba7c-4e7fc92cfaa0>

Government of Canada, I. (2016). *Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications*. Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. Retrieved from [https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h\\_F6765465.html](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_F6765465.html)

### **Week 9 – March 7: Intellectual Freedom**

Oltmann, S.M. (2016). Intellectual freedom and freedom of speech: three theoretical perspectives. *Library Quarterly* 86(2) : 153-171.

Dudley, M.Q. and Wright, J. (2022). The role of multidimensional library neutrality in advancing social justice. *Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy*, 13-24.

Szydlowski, N. (2022). Intellectual freedom and social justice, together again. *Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy*, 25-33.

**Week 10 – March 14 - \*\*No Class\*\* (flex time)**

**Week 11 – March 21: Surveillance and Privacy**

*Guest Speaker - Matt Ward, FIMS*

Lyon, D. (2007). “Information, identification, inventory”, in *Surveillance Studies: An overview*. Cambridge UK: Polity. Chapter 4, pp. 73-93.

Lamdan, S.S. (2015). Social media privacy: a rallying cry to librarians. *Library Quarterly* 85(3): 261-277.

Magi, T.J. (2011). Fourteen reasons privacy matters: A multidisciplinary review of scholarly literature. *Library Quarterly* 81(2), 187-209.

**Week 12 – March 28: Diversity and Race**

Hudson, D. J. (2017). On “diversity” as anti-racism in Library and Information Studies: A critique. *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies*, 1(1).

Deli, K. and Caidi, N. (2017). Diversity by design. *Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 87(2): 88-98.

**Week 13 – April 4: Social Justice and Decolonization**

Gustina, M. and Guinnee, E. (June 1, 2017). Why social justice in the library? *Library Journal* 142(10): 52-55.

Helkenberg, D. et al. (2018). Education for the common good: A student perspective on including social justice in LIS education. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 59(4), 265-271.

Andrews, N. (2018, April 2). Reflections On Resistance, Decolonization, and the Historical Trauma of Libraries and Academia. <https://doi.org/10.31229/osf.io/mva35>

Pyati, A. (2022). Cultivating Space in University Life. *The Arrow: A Journal of Wakeful Society, Culture & Politics* 9(1): 63-67.

**Week 14 – April 11: Contemplative Librarianship**

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1994). “What is Mindfulness?” in *Wherever you go there you are: mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. New York, NY: Hachette, pp. 3-7

Levy, D.M. (2016). Mindful tech: developing a more contemplative and reflective relationship with our digital devices and apps. *Journal of Contemplative Inquiry* 3(1): 35-50.

Pyati, A.K. (2019). Public libraries as contemplative spaces: A framework for action and research. *Journal of the Australian Library and Information Association* 68(4): 356-370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24750158.2019.1670773>

## 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 **January 18**)

The first written assignment will be a short paper (in the range of 3 to 4 double spaced pages) due on **January 18**. 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 (**February 15 or 22**); Essay #2 (**April 4 or 11**). 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 of the week's readings starting from **January 25** onwards. 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/uwo.com/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.