

Faculty of Information and Media Studies
The University of Western Ontario

Privacy and Surveillance
LIS 9134: Winter 2024 (online)

Instructor	<i>Rachel Melis (MLIS; PhD)</i>
Email	<i>rmelis2@uwo.ca</i>
Active Time Zone	<i>EST (Eastern Standard Time)</i>
Meeting Time	<i>Synchronous and Asynchronous</i>
Office Hours	<i>By appointment via Zoom</i>
Class Location	<i>Online via OWL</i>
Meeting Location	<i>Online via Zoom</i>
Required Texts	<i>All required texts will be available via OWL</i>
Course Enrolment	<i>Enrolment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the Masters of Library and Information Science program.</i>

Course Description:

This is a graduate level introduction to contemporary challenges to privacy. We will explore these challenges through the examination of technological and institutional control systems as they are represented in the online environment and in the physical spaces of libraries and archives. The course is geared towards students who are interested in the theoretical discussions that underpin our values of privacy and autonomy, and who are interested in reflecting these values in their professional practice. We examine important and sometimes controversial research topics in libraries and privacy with the goal of balancing theory with practical applications.

Course Expectations:

Students are expected to complete all of the weekly readings that are assigned. They will also be expected to meet weekly, synchronously, with a small group of students and the instructor for critical discussion involving readings, relevant news items, and other media that inspire constructive and thoughtful discourse regarding the weekly topic and module over all.

Course Objectives:

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

- Practice independent learning by facilitating class discussions around individual interests aligned with course material **(PLO 1)**
- Examine and assess the role that information professionals play in the legal and ethical challenges that arise around issues of privacy and knowledge management **(PLO 2, 3)**

- Identify and critique professional and scholarly literature, as well as research data in the field, through assigned readings and analytical essays (**PLO 2**)
- Sharpen professional collaborative skills by critically engaging with your peers through a formal response to a student's research paper and by incorporating a student's critical assessment into an addendum to your own paper (**PLO 1, 3, 4**)
- Become familiar with transdisciplinary thinking by engaging with the theoretical, historical, and practical perspectives from across a variety of disciplines (ranging from the humanities and social sciences, to information technology and librarianship) (**PLO 5, 9**)

Assessment:

Annotated Bibliography 15%

Research Paper (2000 words) 25%

Peer Response to Research (800 w) 10%

Research Addendum (1000 w) 15%

Analytical Response Paper (1000 w) 15%

Critical Discussion 20% (Weekly Readings, Seminars in ZOOM + Presentations)

Required and Supplementary Materials

All of the weekly readings will be made available through OWL in the Resources section.

Technology

Basics - Necessary

Computer and high-speed Internet access is required. Your Internet speed should sufficiently support streaming for video-chat. 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. Please visit the University of Western Ontario's CyberSmart site for computer security information:

https://cybersmart.uwo.ca/securecomputing/home_computing/index.html.

You will also need a **microphone** and a **webcam** to participate in the **weekly** video-chat **seminars**.

Course Site

We have access to an OWL course site.

I 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 and to keep up with the *Forum* discussions.

Required Applications

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

Zoom

The critical participation grade is based on seminar presentations and seminar participation during the meetings that will be taking place using the Zoom platform.

We will use Zoom for Seminars and for Office Hours. This is a web-conferencing application that allows for audio, video, chat and desktop sharing.

To find out how to activate your Zoom account, please visit: https://wts.uwo.ca/zoom/getting_started.html

To learn how to join a Zoom room and download the necessary (but free) software for PC and Mac users, see this video: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-How-Do-I-Join-A-Meeting->

Privacy Policy

I believe that Zoom will respect your privacy in that it does not negatively impact your ability to develop and express your own ideas, and you retain intellectual rights to your creative content. I do not record our seminars. Regardless, you should review the Zoom policy to see if they respect your own personal privacy preferences.

<https://zoom.us/privacy>

Semester Breakdown & Seminar Schedule

The week for this course begins on a Monday. Seminars will be held on Thursday or Friday according to a schedule **to be discussed and determined in the first week**. Assignments are always due on a Sunday evening before midnight.

Module	Topic	Weeks*
One	Privacy	Weeks 1 - 4
Two	Identity	Weeks 5 - 7**
Three	Control	Weeks 8 - 11
Four	Space	Weeks 12 - 14

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

** Week 7 is Reading/Research Week - there are no seminars or readings required in Week 7.

Course Modules & Weekly Timeline

PRIVACY	
January 08	One - Introduction (no seminars this week)
January 15	Two - Definitions & Debates (first seminar)
January 22	Three – Law (seminar presentations)
January 29	Four - Libraries & Data (seminar presentations)

IDENTITY	
February 5	Five - Autonomy & Subjectivity (seminar presentations)
February 12	Six - Professional Identity & Ethics (seminar presentations)
February 19	Seven <i>READING WEEK</i>

CONTROL	
February 26	Eight - Surveillance Culture (seminar presentations)
March 4	Nine – State Surveillance (FILM) (seminar presentations)
March 11	Ten - Algorithmic Control (seminar presentations)
March 18	Eleven - Libraries & Freedoms (seminar presentations)

SPACE	
March 25	Twelve - Public vs. Private & Controlled Spaces (seminar presentations)
April 1	Thirteen - Smart Cities & IoT (seminar presentations)
April 8	Fourteen - Post-Privacy: Conclusion (no seminar presentations this week)

Overview of Assignments

Assignment	Points*	Due Date
Annotated Bibliography	15	January 28, Sunday / 11:59 PM
Research Paper	25	February 18, Sunday / 11:59 PM
Peer Response to Research	10	March 3, Sunday / 11:59 PM
Addendum to Research Paper	15	March 17, Sunday / 11:59 PM
Analytical Response Paper	15	April 7, Sunday / 11:59 PM
Seminar Presentations	2 x 5	Weekly in turn
Critical Participation	10	Weekly (12 weeks)

*Late assignments will be penalized **one point** per day late.

ACCOMMODATION

For accommodations and considerations please see the FIMS “Policies & Procedures” on the Intranet: <https://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/policiesprocedures/index.html>

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or **assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. It will be the Dean's Office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.

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 https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Student Support & 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 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. http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/academic_accomodation.html for more information.

Health & Wellness Services

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western <https://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Grading and Assessments

Grading Scale (from the [FIMS Academic Policy Handbook](#))

https://intranet.fims.uwo.ca/graduate/academic_programs/mlis/mlis_grading.html

Grade	Description
100 - 90	The assignment is exceptional in its originality, clarity of exposition, use of sources, and the quality of analysis and reasoning . The assignment is of high professional quality. It not only has no significant defects, but also is an exemplary treatment of the topic, capable of being used as a standard of highest excellence.
89-80	Assignments in this range are excellent to very good, demonstrating varying degrees of originality . An assignment towards the higher end of the range (89-85) brings fresh insights , showing an unusually clear grasp of the topic and ability to analyse it critically. The assignment is clearly focused, logically organized, and based upon advanced understanding of course material. Any defects it may have are small and such that if corrected, it would be an exemplary assignment. An assignment at the lower end of the scale (84-80) is very good, giving considerable evidence of originality , grasp of the topic, critical ability and sound writing practices. Correction of the assignment's defects would make this an excellent assignment.

Grade	Description
79-70	Assignments in this range are good to adequate , generally demonstrating competency and a comprehension of the topic but perhaps lacking the originality of thought that distinguishes assignments in the higher grade ranges. At the upper end of this grade range (77-79), an assignment shows good analysis , critical thinking, and independent thought . The conclusions are supported by reasonable evidence and good use of sources . The topic is addressed in a reasonable depth and/or breadth, and the presentation is well organized. An assignment at the mid-range of this grade range (74-76) shows adequate comprehension of the topic, but limited or no originality of thought . It has no serious flaws, but is not distinguished in any significant respect. At the lower end of this grade range (70-73), an assignment is not off-topic, nor are its conclusions invalid, but it contains flaws, such as problems with completeness, inadequate analysis or poor writing , that place the assignment on the borderline of inadequate work.
69-60	The assignment is inadequate , displaying noticeable gaps in the comprehension of the topic. It may give a poor summary of sources, or be considerably off-topic. The presentation is badly organized . The quality of the writing is very poor, with numerous difficulties evident in grammar, style, expression and/or argumentation. The assignment is not acceptable as professional or academic work.
Below 60	The assignment is not acceptable , showing little or no comprehension of the topic. The point of the assignment is not grasped. The assignment shows no capacity to solve the problem posed. The writing is extremely poor to the point of incomprehensibility. The overall performance is not merely an inadequate response to the assignment, but a failure to understand the issue and/or to express a coherent line of thought on the topic.

Critical Participation (20%)

The critical participation grade takes into account **three** areas of participation: 1) **readings** and **presence and discussion** in the weekly meetings; 2) **seminar presentation**; 3) posted **forum** discussion. The following scale applies to the participation in weekly synchronous meetings through ZOOM.

Grade	Description
Over 90	Exemplary preparedness and contributions to the overall opportunities for class learning. Demonstrates more than one of the indicators for positive participation (detailed below). Contributes in a collegial and scholarly manner.
80-89	Insightful and consistent contributions to class learning. Demonstrates strong interest in topic through positive participation (detailed below) and through collegial interactions.

Grade	Description
70-79	Contributes positively (detailed below) to class discussions. At the lower end of this grade range, demonstrates one or more indicators of negative participation (detailed below).
60-69	Inadequate or uninformed contributions to class discussions and activities. Demonstrates one or more indicators of negative participation (detailed below).
Below 60	Complete lack of contribution or engagement with the class and the material being covered. Demonstrates one or more indicators of negative participation (detailed below).

Positive Participation	Negative Participation
- weekly presence in ZOOM meetings - timely sign-in and greeting	- absence from ZOOM meetings and/or lateness in sign-in and greeting
- preparing in advance for class topics	- disregarding participation etiquette during meetings
- commenting on readings	- making irrelevant comments
- discussing relevant ideas	- interrupting speakers
- ongoing contribution of useful ideas	- monopolizing meeting time
- asking meaningful questions	- unprepared for meetings (readings)
- demonstrating respect for concepts being discussed	
- demonstrating respect for peers and instructors	
- contributing relevant experience, observations, insights	
- providing additional resources	
- clarifying course material	
- willingness to share	
- maintaining a professional demeanour	