THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
iSchool (Library, Archival & Information Studies)
Faculty of Arts

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the hәn̓q̓әmin̓әm̓ speaking Musqueam people.

iSchool Mission: Through innovative research, education and design, our mission is to enhance humanity's capacity to engage information in effective, creative and diverse ways.

LIBR 553 Information Users in Diverse Environments – Course Syllabus (3)

Program: MLIS, Dual
Year: 2019-2020
Course Schedule: Wednesdays, 9:00-11:50 a.m.
Location: IKBLC 461
Instructor: Dr. Heather O'Brien
Office location: IKBLC 486
Office phone: 604-827-5842
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Learning Management Site: http://lthub.ubc.ca/guides/canvas/

Course Goal:
Information interaction is concerned with the intersections of people, information and technology. The emphasis in this course is on *people*, and how they interact with information and technology in diverse contexts. The ability to understand the psychology of people, critically engage with the research and professional literature, and conduct quality research is pivotal for information professionals working in a variety of institutions and settings. In this course we will:
- Explore, synthesize and critique relevant theories, models, and research about the ways in which diverse groups of people interact with information.
- Promote learning and reflection, and an evidence-based orientation to understanding and evaluating user needs and information behaviours.
- Engage in the research process through a small project to appreciate the ways in which we can learn from users to improve or reimagine information services, programs and systems.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify, analyze and assess the information needs and behaviours of individuals, groups, and communities [1.1].
2. Apply an understanding of individuals, groups and communities to how information resources, services and systems are designed, used and evaluated, both within and beyond memory institutions, through in class interactions and assignments [1.1; 2.1].
3. Synthesize the research and professional literature about user needs and behaviours to identify and analyze significant theoretical and practical issues [4.1].
4. Design and execute a small research project informed by relevant theory, methods,

and prior research [4.1, 4.2].

5. Exemplify principles of ethical conduct in the design and conduct of a research project that involves human participants [5.1].
6. Help create and contribute to a respectful, collegial learning environment [5.1].
7. Communicate your understanding of this topic orally and in writing [2.1].

Course Topics:
- Constructs, models, theories, and approaches in human information interaction
- Information needs, seeking and use
- Methods for evaluating human information interaction
- Ethical engagements with research participants, communities, and stakeholder groups
- Information needs, behaviors and seeking of individuals and groups, or within specific settings
- Human information interaction and the design of services, programs and systems

Prerequisites:

MLIS and Dual: Completion of MLIS Core

MAS: completion of MAS Core and permission of iSchool Graduate Advisor
- MAS students and graduate students external to the iSchool (e.g., from the Designing for People Program) are welcome in this course.

Format of the course:

This course will involve instructor- and student-led, class discussions and activities, individual and group work, and instructor- and self-assessment. Each three-hour class period will be organized to allow time for engaging with course topics and working on course assignments, namely the term project.

Required and Recommended Reading:

September 18: Engaging with individuals, groups and communities

Boilevin, L., Chapman, J., Deane, L. Doerksen, C., Fresz, G., Joe, D.J., Leech-Crier, N., Marsh, S., McLeod, J. Neufeld, S., Pham, S., Shaver, L., Smith, P., Steward, M., Wilson, D., & Winter, P. (2019). *Research 101: A Manifesto for Research in the Downtown Eastside*. Available, http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/sfuwoodwards/PDF/CommunityEngagement/Research101_Manifesto.pdf

Nathan, L.P., Kaczmarek, M., castor, m., Cheng, S. & Mann, R. (2017). Good for whom? Unsettling research practice. In *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Communities and Technologies* (C&T '17). ACM, New York, NY, USA, 290-297. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1145/3083671.3083685

Tuck, E. (2011). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review, 79*, 409-427.

Recommended:

Assembly of First Nations (March 2009). Ethics in First Nations Research. Available, https://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/rp-research_ethics_final.pdf

UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB). *BREB Guidance Notes.* Available, https://ethics.research.ubc.ca/behavioural-research-ethics/breb-guidance-notes

September 23: Methods

Greyson, D., O'Brien, H., & Shoveller, J. (2017). Information world mapping: A participatory arts-based elicitation method for information behaviour interviews. *Library & Information Science Research*, *39*(2), 149-157.

Mitchell, C., De Lange, N., & Moletsane, R. (2017). Project design: Beginning with the end in mind. *Participatory Visual Methodologies: Social Change, Community and Policy* (pp. 19-45). Sage Publishing.

University of Edinburgh. Research and Knowledge Exchange – KE Projects. Available, https://www.ed.ac.uk/arts-humanities-soc-sci/research-ke/support-for-staff/knowledge-exchange-resources/ke-projects [look through a few of interest]

September 30, October 7, October 21, October 28, November 4
Readings for the student-led seminars will be updated once the term begins and people select topics.

November 18: Data analysis and thematic analysis

Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research, 15*(9), 1277-1288.

Course Assignments:

Assignment Name	Due Date	Weight	Graduate Competencies
Participation	Throughout term, but during specified classes	10%	1.1, 2.1, 5.1
Term project: Part 1, Student led seminar	Sign up for specific date	30%	1.1, 2.1, 4.1
Peer review of fellow student's seminar	Sign up for a specific date	10%	1.1, 5.1
Term project: Part 3, Poster presentation	November 25	15%	1.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1
Term project: Part 4, Final report	December 4	35%	1.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1

Assignments in Detail

1. Participation
It is the responsibility of all of us to create a stimulating and respectful learning environment where we can think critically and engage with course content and with each other. There will be three classes with in-class exercises, and it is expected that you will support each other on seminar days. See "Additional information" below regarding Attendance.

2. Assignment: Term project

The term project will allow students to develop and conduct a small study. The project is broken down into smaller stages and deliverables, and you will be provided with feedback at each stage. Students may this assignment individually or in pairs, and support and deliverables will be built into specific classes.

Part 1: Student led seminars

As a class we will decide on the themes for the student led seminars based on students' interests. Possible topics include: Children and young people; Academics; Everyday life (e.g., parents, hobbyists); Newcomers; Underrepresented groups; and Professionals (legal, healthcare, etc.). Students may suggest further groups and communities to focus on. You will sign up to do a seminar based on the day's theme and you will be able to define your own interests within the seminar days. For example, you might look at digital humanists during the day we do "academics."

You may do your seminar alone (individual grade) or with others who are presenting on the same day (group grade). If you do your seminar as an individual it is helpful to coordinate with the others to assess topic overlap. For instance, if two people are proposing to do their seminars on "Historians" you will want to take different perspectives.

The seminar presenter should:
- Share one key reading with the class well ahead of the scheduled seminar;
- Build upon the key reading shared with the class with additional research on your topic.
- Provide a sketch of the user group you have selected: What do we know about how this group interacts with information (e.g., sources, preferences)? How does the setting and context influence their information behaviour? What kinds of programs, services and systems have been designed for/with this group, and what do we know about their effectiveness?
- Include an interactive component, such as an activity or some questions for the class to reflect on and discuss.

Part 2: Interview with an information user

As part of the term project, you will conduct an interview with an information user based on the group of people you have selected to focus on in this course. Earlier in the term, we will discuss ethics and draft a consent form, and consider interview types, protocols and questions. You will work on these materials, set up and conduct your interview.

Before you can recruit your information user or conduct your interview you need to have the following approved by Heather:
1. Your informed consent form and process
2. Your recruitment strategy
3. Interview protocol, including how you will greet and debrief your interviewee, as well the interview questions
4. Debriefing form.

Note: This can mean several revisions. **I provide a quick turn around on this assignment,**

but your ability to move on rests with YOU and your ability to return revisions to me in a timely manner.

Part 3: Poster presentation
This assignment will provide you with the opportunity to enhance your presentation skills in a collegial environment and share the findings of your term project.

What you will be asked to do for this presentation:
1. Motivate your topic. Why was this user group interesting or important to you?
2. Briefly summarize the literature about this user group.
3. Share information about the person you interviewed (without identifying details), how you recruited them, and synopsis of the kinds of questions you asked them.
4. Highlight the main themes that emerged from your conversation.
5. Compare these themes with the literature – match or mismatch?

The final class will be a presentation of your term projects. It may take the form of a "poster" or oral presentation. Specific details will be worked out as a group based on your preferences for how you wish to share your work and the number of students in the course.

Part 4: Final report
The write up should be written in a similar in style as a journal article using clear language. The following is meant to be a guide to the contents (6-10 pages – approximately 3000-5000 words – not including references):
1. Introduction: what is the motivation? (1/2 -3/4 page)
2. Literature review: present a concise overview of part 1 from your seminar. (1-2 pages)
3. Methodology: outline what you did: description of participant, final instruments/materials, and procedure. (1-2 pages) Interview questions should be summarized here but the actual questions can be placed in an Appendix.
4. Results and discussion: What did you find? How did your interview findings compare with the literature? Note the limitations to your study and implications for this group based on what you learned, i.e., theoretical, methodological and professional, e.g., designing services. (2-3 pages)
5. Conclusion: sum it up. (1/2 – ¾ page)
6. References in APA format
7. Appendices: Must be labeled A, B, and so on and appear in the order in which they are referenced in the main text.
8. Data handling and storage: You must either take responsibility to delete or hand off to Heather for secure storage and deletion the following items: consent forms, completed surveys, data collection notes and observations

3. Peer review
You will act as a peer reviewer for one of your classmates during the seminar. We will develop a rubric for this in class. Your evaluation should be a mixture of quantitative and qualitative feedback that features concrete rationales for your evaluations, and specific examples of how your peer met/exceeded expectations for the assignment and areas for improvement. Your peer review will be due **1 week** after the seminar takes places. Your

evaluation will comprise 10% of your peer's grade, with the other 20% based on Heather's assessment. You will be graded for this assignment on the quality of your feedback.

Course Schedule [week-by-week]:

Date	Topic
Sept 9	Introduction to the course: syllabus, assignments and format Review of key terms and ideas in information behaviour Role of setting and context in understanding user behaviour
Sept 16	Engaging with individuals, groups and communities: • Ethics • Asset-based approaches • Inclusion and exclusion • University-based and community-generated protocols • *Drafting consent forms - Participation points* • *Constructing peer review assignment rubrics*
Sept 23	Methods (in person, online) • Interviewing, observation and surveying • Arts-based research, participatory design • *Drafting protocols and interview questions - Participation points*
Sept 30	Student led seminars
Oct 7	Student led seminars
Oct 14	Thanksgiving – no class
Oct 21	Student led seminars
Oct 28	Student led seminars
Nov 4	Student led seminars
Nov 11	Remembrance Day – no class
Nov 18	Approaches to data analysis and reporting on interviews • *Bring your interview data for thematic analysis - Participation points*
Nov 25	Poster presentations

Additional information

Attendance:
- Attendance is required in all class meetings. If you know you are going to be absent you must inform me beforehand if at all possible.
- Up to two excused absences are allowed with prior notification to me. Additional absences will require a note from a health professional or Access and Diversity. Failure to provide this documentation could result in a lower course mark.
- Any penalties imposed for excessive absences are at the discretion of the instructor.

Evaluation: All assignments will be marked using the evaluative criteria given on the iSchool web site. The instructor will make every attempt to provide explanatory feedback on assignments and to evaluate assignments consistently across students using rubrics. Students are welcome to seek additional feedback in person provided this is done in a respectful manner.

Late or missed in-class assignments will be handled at the discretion of the instructor. Students may be required to provide a note from a health care provider or Access and Diversity and should communicate honestly and openly with the instructor about late or missing work. In other words, if the student says they will hand in an assignment two days late and fails to do so, marks may be deducted.

Required Materials: This course will draw upon reading materials sourced from the UBC Library or general web. Students are required to present a poster. This may be done at no cost (digitally project a PowerPoint slide or PDF) or low cost (purchase inexpensive poster board and adhere printouts of text or illustrations).

Policies and Resources to Support Student Success: UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success)

Access & Diversity: Access & Diversity works with the University to create an inclusive living and learning environment in which all students can thrive. The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Access and Diversity unit: [https://students.ubc.ca/about-student-services/access-diversity]. You must register with the Disability Resource Centre to be granted special accommodations for any on-going conditions.

Religious Accommodation: The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably in the first week of class, if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for family obligations, or other similar commitments, cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss with the instructor before the course drop date. UBC policy on Religious Holidays: http://equity.ubc.ca/days-of-significance-calendar/

Academic Integrity
Plagiarism
The Faculty of Arts considers plagiarism to be the most serious academic offence that a student can commit. Regardless of whether or not it was committed intentionally, plagiarism has serious academic consequences and can result in expulsion from the university. Plagiarism involves the improper use of somebody else's words or ideas in one's work. The UBC policy on Academic Misconduct is available here:
http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959.

It is your responsibility to make sure you fully understand what plagiarism is. Many students who think they understand plagiarism do in fact commit what UBC calls "reckless plagiarism." The UBC Learning Commons has a resource page on how to avoid plagiarism, with policies on academic integrity and misconduct found here: [http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoid-plagiarism/

If after reading these materials you still are unsure about how to properly use sources in your work, please ask your instructor for clarification.

Other Course Policies: All assignments must conform to APA citation style for in-text citations and reference lists.