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 hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ 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 593b Seminar (Information in Times of Crises) – Course Syllabus (3)

Program: Master of Library and Information Studies
Year: 2019-2020
Course Schedule: Asynchronous
Location: Online
Instructor: Luanne Freund & Lisa Nathan
Office location: Online
Office phone: 604-822-1574
Office hours: by appointment
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Learning Management Site: http://lthub.ubc.ca/guides/canvas/

Course Goal: to offer students the unique opportunity to examine the role of information in crises and develop conceptual frameworks for approaching this area of study and practice, while experiencing such a crisis in their own lives. The seminar format will enable students to direct their interests, to investigate the strengths and shortcomings of a range of perspectives, and to reflect upon the complexities and impacts of such crises, including the currently unfolding COVID-19 pandemic, on the field. Students will develop methods and skills to enable them to plan for and respond to crises as information professionals in a range of settings.

Note: this course will deal with challenging content and will require reflection on past and present situations that are likely to be upsetting, especially in light of the current pandemic.

FNCC specialization: The assignments in this course can serve the requirements of the First Nations Curriculum Concentration (FNCC). If students would like to take this course for FNCC credit, they are encouraged to do so and asked to inform your instructors so they can better support your interests.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:
1) Identify the major types of crises that impact human societies, and situate them within a temporal and theoretical conceptual framework informed by information studies and cognate fields; [4.1]

2) Analyze and assess the information needs and practices of people in crisis situations; [1.1]

3) Draw upon theory and documented cases to:
   a) Reflect critically on the role of information and information professionals in times of crisis; [1.4; 5.1]
   b) Reflect critically on the role of ICTs, infrastructures, and information flows in crisis situations; [1.4, 2.2, 4.1]

4) Design information resources and services to respond to the needs of individuals and communities in crisis; [1.1]

5) Describe and assess the key components of a disaster management plan for an information organization; [3.2]

6) Design and lead a virtual group learning experience (i.e., seminar discussion) using appropriate communication and instruction tools; [2.2, 3.1]

7) Design and share resources with the professional community to build knowledge and/or critical self-reflection regarding the COVID-19 pandemic [5.2, 5.3]

* Course objectives are stated in terms of student learning outcomes and reference the iSchool Statement on Graduate Competencies.

Course Topics:
At the outset of the seminar, we will work with students to select areas of focus from among these. We may not cover all these topics;

- Crisis Informatics
- Collapse Informatics
- Information needs, seeking and practices in crises/disasters
    - Trust, rumour and misinformation
- Information flows & Communication during crises
    - Indigenous community information: preparation and response to crises
    - Government Information: access and rights
    - The role of health and scientific information/data
    - Leadership and communication strategies
- Information ethics, values and decision-making in times of crisis
- Policy shifts during times of crises (e.g., Exceptions to BC Privacy Law for storing data on U.S. servers)
- Stewardship, preservation and destruction of Indigenous belongings and cultural heritage materials in natural disasters
- Crisis planning and disaster management in organizations; organizational learning
- Information- and community-based recovery and resilience
- Case studies of information issues in crises/disasters/pandemics

Prerequisites:
MLIS and Dual MAS/MLIS: Completion of MLIS Core
MAS: completion of MAS core and permission of the iSchool Graduate Advisor

Format of the course: Asynchronous online course, with small group, synchronous meetings; lectures; discussions; student directed seminars; and guest speakers. Participation in reflective and critical discussions of assigned course materials is required; sharing additional, related material with the class is expected.

Required and Recommended Reading: There is no required textbook for this course. Podcasts, books, journals, reports, videos and websites will constitute the required and recommended "readings". These will be available via the course learning management system (i.e., Canvas) typically through access provided by UBC libraries. Assigned material may shift during the course as the topic area of

this seminar will continue to be covered by mainstream media channels. Changes will be noted in Canvas.

The materials for this course were chosen based on their coverage of and perspective on information in times of crises. The positions presented are disputable and we count on each student to help find and articulate problematic (and generative) areas in argument, positioning, methodology, findings presented and/or conclusions drawn. Other factors that guide our selection of material for the course are media type, length, accessibility, novelty, longevity and influence of the author(s) on the field of information studies (or cognate fields).

You are expected to engage all assigned material thoroughly and critically.
- Take notes (do not just highlight or underline).
- Put ideas into your own words
- Ask questions of the arguments presented
- Bring these questions to our discussion areas in Canvas

Course Assignments:

Assignment Name	Due Date	Weight	Graduate Competencies

#1 Weekly Seminar Discussions
  a. Seminar Leader
 	
  b. Seminar Participant
	a. 1 times (TBD)
	
	b. Weekly
		a. 20%
		
		b. 20%
			1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1

#2 Major Project (small groups):
  a. Group Project Proposal
 	
  b. Group Project Deliverable
	a. June 26
	
	b. August 13
		a. 10%
		
		b. 25%
			1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3

**#3 Individual Journaling	Responses to prompts**	Weekly	25%	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1

NOTE: Assignment instructions are provided in Canvas to reduce the likelihood of inconsistent instructions do to modifications that may become necessary due to COVID-19 or other crises.

Course Schedule [week-by-week]:

Topic	Dates
MODULE 1: FRAMING • What kinds of crises affect human societies? • How have these been framed and experienced through information science and the information professions?	**WK 1: June 1 – 7**
MODULE 1: FRAMING • Information ethics, values and decision-making in times of crisis • Inequities in times of crisis • Policy shifts during times of crises	**WK 2: June 8 - 14**
MODULE 2: UNDERSTANDING • Information needs, seeking and practices in crises/disasters	**WK 3: June 15 - 21**
MODULE 2: UNDERSTANDING • What questions/problems are addressed by the disciplines of Crisis Informatics and Collapse Informatics? • What conceptual frameworks are useful in understanding the role of information and information professionals in times of crisis?	**WK 4: June 22 - 28**
MODULE 2: UNDERSTANDING • The role of social media and communication • The role and use of Social Media, Misinformation and rumour	**WK 5: June 29 – July 5**
MODULE 2: UNDERSTANDING • The role of expert information • Government Information: access and rights • Scientific and Health Information and data	**WK 6: July 6 - 12**
MODULE 3: Responding, Leadership & Reflection • Disaster planning, leadership and communication	**WK 7: July 13 - 19**

MODULE 3: Responding, Leadership & Reflection • Crisis response • Information tools and technologies • Indigenous community information: preparation and response to crises	**WK 8: July 20 - 26**
MODULE 3: Responding, Leadership & Reflection • Stewardship, preservation and destruction of Indigenous belongings and cultural heritage materials in natural disasters	**WK 9: July 27 – Aug. 2**
MODULE 3: Responding, Leadership & Reflection • Information- and community-based recovery and resilience • Public Libraries and Community-based organizations	**WK 10: Aug. 3 - 9**
MODULE 3: Responding, Leadership & Reflection • Course Wrap up and Final Reflections	**WK 11: Aug. 10 - 16**

Attendance: Engagement within the course Canvas site will be our proxy for "attendance" for this seminar course. It is not possible to fully participate in the learning for this course without engaging in online discussions and with provided course material. Please be aware that Canvas enables instructors to view specific details of when, where, and for how long each student visits Canvas. We will only view that data if we are concerned that specific students are not contributing to online discussions or their assignments are not providing evidence of you working through course materials.

Evaluation: All assignments will be marked using the evaluative criteria given on the iSchool web site.

A penalty of 1% per day will be imposed on assignments that are not handed in by the due date. Papers that are still outstanding one week after the due date will not be accepted. Extensions without penalty will only be granted in cases of illness or emergencies. A busy schedule is not an emergency. Extensions will not be granted for requests made on the due date for the assignment.

Required Materials: All material will be made available through the course learning management site (i.e., Canvas).

Academic Concession: If you miss marked coursework for the first time (assignment, exam, presentation, participation in class) and the course is still in-progress, **contact Lisa immediately** to find a solution for your missed coursework. Any concessions that will result in a change to the student record (such as late withdrawal from the course) will be referred to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for evaluation. If this is not the first time you have requested concession or classes are over, please consult the [Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' webpage on academic concession](#), and then contact Lisa where appropriate.

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)

Academic Integrity: The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply when the matter is referred to the Office of the Dean. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences. A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the [UBC Calendar: Student Conduct and Discipline.](#)

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Academic accommodations help students with a disability or ongoing medical condition overcome challenges that may affect their academic success. Students requiring academic accommodations must register with the [Centre for Accessibility](#) (previously known as Access & Diversity). The Centre will determine that student's eligibility for accommodations in accordance with [Policy 73: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Academic accommodations are not determined by your instructors, and instructors should not ask you about the nature of your disability or ongoing medical condition, or request copies of your disability documentation. However, your instructor may consult with the Centre for Accessibility should the accommodations affect the essential learning outcomes of a course.

Conflicting Responsibilities: UBC recognizes that students may occasionally have conflicting responsibilities that affect their ability to attend class or examinations. These may include: representing the University, the province or the country in a competition or performance; serving in the Canadian military; or observing a religious rite. They may also include a change in a student's situation that unexpectedly requires that student to work or take responsibility for the care of a family member, if these were not pre-existing situations at the start of term.

Students with conflicting responsibilities have a duty to arrange their course schedules so as to avoid, as much as possible, any conflicts with course requirements. As soon as conflicting responsibilities arise, students must notify either their instructor(s) or their Faculty Advising Office (e.g. Arts Academic Advising), and can request [academic concession](#). Instructors may not be able to comply with all such requests if the academic standards and integrity of the course or program would be compromised.

Varsity student-athletes should discuss any anticipated and unavoidable regular-season absences with the instructor at the start of term, and provide notice of playoff or championship absences in writing as soon as dates are confirmed.

Religious observance may preclude attending classes or examinations at certain times. In accordance with the UBC Policy on Religious Holidays, students who wish to be accommodated for religious reasons must notify their instructors in writing at least two weeks in advance. Instructors provide opportunity for such students to make up work or examinations missed without penalty.

Other Course Policies as Relevant:

Your Responsibilities

- You are required to keep up to date with information shared via Canvas

- Read the course syllabus and other available course information with care

- Keep track of due dates!

- Set aside a substantial amount of time for LIBR 593b. Online courses are time consuming and require careful time management.

- Read news sites to find materials that connect to class topics, and keep on top of assigned readings.

- Communicate effectively and efficiently. Please take time preparing your communications; in particular, review your contributions to the course for tone. Respectful, thoughtful, and considerate discourse is to be the norm in all course communication whether online or in person. We are all facing the myriad stressors of living through a pandemic and being kind to each other is one of the things we get to control.