



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.

INFO 456 Information Policy & Society – Course Syllabus (3)

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Program: | BA Minor in Informatics Bachelor of Media Studies |
| Year: | 2021-2022 W1 |
| Course Schedule: | Tuesdays, 2-4:50 |
| Location: | GEOG 101 |
| Instructor: | Dr. Lisa P. Nathan |
| Office location: | IKBLC 481 |
| Office phone: | 604-822-0051 |
| Virtual Office hours: | Fridays via Zoom 10-11am, or by appointment Zoom link in Canvas |
| E-mail address: | lisa.nathan@ubc.ca |
| Learning Management Site: | http://lthub.ubc.ca/guides/canvas/ |

Calendar Description: Develops capabilities required to assess the need for information policies in professional contexts, evaluate relevant socio-technical dimensions and envision likely implications for specific communities and practice settings.

Course Overview: This course provides students with the basic knowledge and skills needed to identify, evaluate, adapt and (re)design policy relating to information and communication technology (ICT) and media practices in contemporary societies. Students will develop skills that will enable them to: 1) identify the need for information policy in various media contexts; 2) articulate the different forms information policy can take; 3) determine relevant socio-technical dimensions that influence and are influenced by information policy implementations; and 4) investigate possible implications of information policy for different stakeholders and practice settings.

COVID-19 Uncertainty & Disruption (i.e., muddling through together)

We are all aware that the impact of COVID-19 has been devastating on all of our lives and communities. I will do my best to plan for contingencies, should circumstances change (e.g., I become ill) and we are unable to hold in person meetings and or activities as outlined below. Rest assured, **details on changes will be posted via Canvas** if this happens. I will be as transparent and clear as possible in my expectations if these changes occur. I ask that you, in turn, communicate with me about disruptions in your ability to engage in the course.

COVID-19 Safety: You are required to wear a non-medical mask during our class meetings, for your own protection and the safety and comfort of everyone else in the class. For our in-person meetings in this class, it is important that all of us feel as comfortable as possible engaging in class activities while sharing an indoor space. Non-medical masks that cover our noses and mouths are a primary tool for combating the spread of COVID-19. Further, according to the provincial mandate, masks are required in all indoor public spaces including lobbies, hallways, stairwells, elevators, classrooms and labs. There may be students who have medical accommodations for not wearing a mask. Please maintain a respectful environment.



Learning Outcomes (and Informatics Program Competencies):

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- [LO1] Explain the relationships between ethics and information policy [PC1]
- [LO2] Analyze the positions of various stakeholders on policy issues [PC1], [PC3]
- [LO3] Articulate examples of how information policy is enacted through different means (e.g., laws, regulations, tool functionality) [PC1], [PC3],
- [LO4] Write evaluations of policy issues (policy briefings) with sound justifications and clear arguments [PC1], [PC2] [PC3], [PC4], [PC5], [PC6]
- [LO5] Illustrate ethical, legal, and socio-political tensions being addressed through information policy by drawing upon contemporary examples [PC1], [PC2] [PC3], [PC4], [PC5], [PC6]
- [LO6] Identify key national and international policy issues affecting information/media-based organizations and the professionals working in those environments [PC1], [PC2] [PC3], [PC4], [PC5], [PC6]
- [LO7] Develop and present a policy analysis of a new/proposed ICT and associated technological practices (analysis of direct & indirect stakeholders and value tensions) [PC1], [PC2] [PC3], [PC4], [PC5], [PC6]

Course Topics:

- Values (Ethics) & ICTs
- Relationships Between Ethics, ICTs & Policy (i.e., Why is information policy needed?)
- Information Policy & Stakeholder Analysis
- Intellectual Property & Copyright
- Attempts to Shift Intellectual Property Regimes
- Privacy: Socio-Technical Dimensions & Controversies
- Freedom of Speech & Forms of Censorship
- Big Data, AI & Social Networking
- Professional ethic codes related to the use of information technologies by media professionals
- Contemporary Topics in Information Policy: Anonymity, Cyberwar, Genetic Discrimination, Digital Currencies, Biometrics, etc.

Prerequisites: INFO 250

Format of the course: The course will consist of reading, listening, and/or viewing assigned course material; in class activities, online discussion postings, in person (and potentially recorded) lectures, assignments, and presentations.

Required and Recommended Reading:

Material from books, journals, videos and websites will constitute required readings. These will be available via the course learning management system (i.e., Canvas) typically through collections provided by UBC Library. Assigned material may shift during the course as the topic areas covered in this class are often covered by mainstream media channels.



The materials for this course were chosen based on their coverage of and perspective on a few information policy topics. The positions presented are disputable and I count on you to help us find and articulate problematic (and generative) areas in argument, positioning, methodology, findings presented and/or conclusions drawn. Other factors that guide the selection of material are media type, length, novelty, longevity and influence of the author(s) on the topic area.

Your unique perspective (informed and constrained by identity, gender, spirituality, socio-cultural background, etc.) is valued in this course, as are the perspectives of your colleagues. There is not a single way to interpret these works.

You are expected to read all assigned material thoroughly and critically.

- Take notes (do not just highlight or underline).
- Put ideas into your own words
- Ask questions of the author(s)
- Bring these questions to class

Course Assignments and Assessment [Assignment Descriptions in Canvas]

| Assignment Name | Due Date | Weight | Learning Outcomes | Program Competencies |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Weekly Discussion Activities (Canvas) | <p>Part 1: Short, weekly discussion activities will be posted each Tuesday before class. Responses are due the following Tuesday @2pm.</p> <p>Part 2: Due Friday, Dec. 10@9 pm A final reflective essay (1-2 pages) based on your responses will be graded.</p> | 30% | LO1; LO2; LO3; LO5; LO6; | [PC1], [PC2] [PC3], [PC4], [PC5], [PC6] |
| Cautionary Tale Presentation | Student groups will present these throughout the term in class | 30% | LO1; LO2; LO5 | [PC1], [PC2] [PC3], [PC4], [PC5], [PC6] |
| 5. Briefing Project | | | | |
| a. Proposal | a. Oct. 19 (by 11 pm) | a. (-5 pts) | | [PC1], [PC2] |
| b. Draft | b. Nov. 16 (@2pm in class) | b. (-5 pts) | LO1; LO2; LO3; LO4; LO6; LO7 | [PC3], [PC4], [PC5], [PC6] |
| c. Final | c. Dec. 3 (by 11pm) | c. 35% | | |
| d. Presentation | d. Dec. 7 (in class) | d. 5% | | |



Course Schedule [week-by-week]:

| Week | Topic | Dates |
|------|--|-----------------|
| 1 | NO CLASS MEETING – IMAGINE DAY Visit Canvas to prepare for our first meeting September 14 | Sept. 7-10 |
| 2 | Introductions to: Each other; Information policy: ethical roots of information policy; why information policy matters to societies | Sept. 13-17 |
| 3 | Stories of values, ethics & stakeholders | Sept. 20-24 |
| 4 | Approaches to information policy; Policy analysis; Intro to intellectual property & copyright | Sept. 27-Oct. 1 |
| 5 | Intellectual property (copyright) – Negotiating the regime | Oct. 4-8 |
| 6 | Attempts to Shift Intellectual Property Regimes | Oct. 11-15 |
| 7 | Privacy & Technology: A new concern? | Oct. 18-22 |
| 8 | Privacy & Forgetting | Oct. 25-29 |
| 9 | Policy Analysis | Nov. 1-5 |
| 10 | Censorship | Nov. 8-12 |
| 11 | Big Data & AI | Nov. 15-19 |
| 12 | Infrastructure & cybersecurity: Surveillance and privacy | Nov. 22-26 |
| 13 | No required class meeting. Lisa will in GEOG 101 for meeting teams and advising on final briefings. | Nov. 29-Dec.3 |
| 14 | Professional & personal ethics; Final Briefing Pitches; Course Wrap Up <> | Dec. 6-7 |

Attendance:

- **If you are sick, it is important that you stay home.** Complete a self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms here: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>
- Participation in class-based exercises is an important aspect of student learning and there will be many ways to participate (in-person and online).
- If you know you are going to be absent or late, I *deeply appreciate* if you alert me beforehand if at all possible.
- Extended or frequent absence will require a note from the Centre for Accessibility.
- **If I am unwell**, I will not come to class. I will make every reasonable attempt to communicate plans for class as soon as possible (by email, on Canvas, etc.).



Evaluation: all assignments will be marked according to [UBC grading policy](#).

- Participation in class through in person and online discussion contributions, presentations and a final policy briefing submission will be graded to evaluate students' grasp of the main concepts and theoretical approaches introduced in the course.
- Course time should not be used to complete and upload your assignments.
- Late work is assessed at 5% of final mark per day, up to 7 days, after which work will not be accepted. Grace periods (i.e., no late deduction) may be offered under special circumstances when you contact the instructor **24 hours in advance of the due date**.

Required Materials: There are no additional materials required for this course beyond regular access to a computer and the internet. Please contact me if you have computer or internet challenges.

Academic Concession:

If you miss marked coursework for the first time (assignment, exam, presentation, participation in a Friday seminar) and the course is still in-progress, immediately submit a [Student Self-Declaration](#) to me so that your in-term concession case can be evaluated.

If this is **not** the first time you have requested concession or classes are over, fill out Arts Academic Advising's [online academic concession form](#) immediately, so that an advisor can evaluate your concession case.

If you are a student in a different Faculty, please consult [your Faculty's webpage on academic concession](#), and then contact me 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 misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, and self-plagiarism <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959> (§7)



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 LR7: Accommodation for Students with Disabilities \(Joint Senate and Board Policy\)](#). 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.