

INF 384C, Organizing Information

28370

Spring 2023

Updated: 1/6/2023

Class Meets: 6:30-9:30 pm, Most Thursdays, Online

Instructor: Christine Walczyk, known as Dr. Tine

Office: Remotely, Pacific Time Zone

Pronouns: she/her **Office hours:** Fridays from Noon-1pm and by appointment

Email: tine.walczyk@utexas.edu

Phone: 714-905-9290

Course Description

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course catalog description of this class is as follows:

Introduction to general principles and features of organizing and providing access to information, including varieties and numbers of information-bearing objects, different traditions of practice, user concerns, metadata and metadata formats, document representation and description, subject access, and information system features and evaluation.

This course provides a general introduction to the organization of information, concentrating on the core operations of describing, grouping, arranging, and relating objects. While the course will focus most heavily on the organization of documents, or bibliographic information, the objects most commonly organized in libraries and archives, we will not be unduly concerned with particular implementations for any specific institution. In other words, you will not learn traditional library cataloging or archival description in this class. You will, however, learn the principles that form the basis for all such systems. Accordingly, the assignments for the course emphasize the application of organization principles in designing mechanisms for organizing information.

Note, however, that the course concentrates on conceptual aspects of design, not technical ones; you will not learn implementation encodings (such as MARC for cataloging or RDF/XML for the Semantic Web) in this class.

Acknowledgement: This course is based on a course originally designed and taught at the University of Texas by Karen M. Wickett.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Compare and contrast subject languages and apply one
- Create metadata schema
- Analyze and implement a metadata standard

How Will You Learn?

STATEMENT OF LEARNING SUCCESS

Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently, and everyone struggles sometimes. You are not, ever, the only one having difficulty! If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we will develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT and I am happy to connect you with a person or Center if you would like.

TEACHING MODALITY INFORMATION

This course is taught synchronously through Zoom. There will be no alternative to “live” attendance, other than normal emergency accommodations. Any posted course recordings / lecture notes are in addition or for reinforcement of the online class sessions.

COMMUNICATION

In this course CANVAS e-mail and announcements will be used. You will be responsible for **checking CANVAS regularly** for updates on class work and other announcements. I will make every effort to answer your email in a timely fashion. However, you should not necessarily always expect to get an immediate reply. In particular, don't expect to get answers to questions about a homework or project assignment within the last few hours before that assignment is due. Please put **INF384C** as part of the subject line of your email; that will help us identify your emails more quickly.

The University has an official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. Read the policy: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>. You can find and change your official email address of record at https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/utd/all_my_addresses

ASKING FOR HELP

You are encouraged to email me through CANVAS if you have any questions or concerns regarding the materials or assignments in this course. I will be available by Zoom for office hours and for appointments.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed, and that the diversity that students bring to this class can be comfortably expressed and be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit to all students. Please come to me at any time with any concerns.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please refer to SSD's website for contact and more information:

<http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Books

Required – None. However, a list of required readings/articles are found within the course.

Optional – Joudrey, D. and Taylor, A. (2004). The organization of information, 4th edition. ISBN-13: 978-1598848588; ISBN-10: 9781598848588

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Class attendance: You will not be graded directly on attendance. However, we will be meeting synchronously most weeks and at least two sessions will include a graded in-class assignment.

Attendance includes being on video for the duration of each class.

Remember, it is easy to get behind in an online course. Please make sure to communicate any challenges are experiencing that may impact your ability to complete work on time. If you have to miss class for an extended period due to a protracted illness or similar reason, we will treat your needs as a special case, and I will do everything I can to help you survive.

Class participation: Class participation includes active participation in online sessions and discussion boards.

Professional Standards: You must prepare your assignments using a word processor and submit it by uploading to Canvas by the due date/time. Please always use appropriate three- or four-letter file extensions in submitted filename (e.g., .docx for Word files, .pdf for Adobe portable document format. Please avoid submitting zip files). Assignments usually may not be submitted via email to the professor.

Important: All documents that you are submitting should include on the front page of your submission your name, course number/name, instructor's name, semester, and the date of submission. For group work, if applicable, please also always include on the front page all group member names, your project group number, and your project short name (or title). **Warning:** If you do not follow these requirements, your submission may be returned without a grade and without a possibility to re-submit it.

ASSIGNMENTS

Designing a subject classification (20%)

After selecting and researching a subject area as their focus, students will define, label, and relate a set of 30-40 concepts which would serve to organizing objects. The classifications should encompass the conceptual landscape for the specified single subject area. (This assignment is multipart: a proposal – 10 pts and the complete product – 90 pts.)

In class activities (15%)

Conducting a subject analysis - One article will be provided for review. Students will initially conduct their own analysis, originating their own taxonomy. Then they will engage in a discussion to create a composite controlled vocabulary with their fellow classmates.

Using a Controlled Vocabulary – Students will interact with three different authority lists/controlled vocabularies to discover how they can be used to provide increased access to a collection.

Assigning a Classification – Students will review a synopsis of several objects and determine an appropriate subject classification. Then they will use a classification structure to assign a identifier.

Generating and analyzing a set of aggregated metadata records (40%)

As a class collaborative effort, we will create a "database" of metadata records using a schema we develop. Unlike a traditional group project, each student will be given the same conceptual structure and create their own set of records. These will be merged into an aggregated set. We will then examine, assess, and interpret this aggregate collection to determine both the extent of semantic diversity across the records and the function of this diversity. (This assignment is multi-phased. Each phase is dependent on all students' participation in a timely fashion. Significant penalties will be assessed for late submissions of phase 1 and 2.)

Participation / Leadership (25%)

Participation in this course is crucial. Student groups will create discussion topics throughout the semester.

Discussion topic and moderation (10%) – Each group will post 3 discussion questions for the class to respond to from the readings for the assigned week. Additionally, they will moderate the resulting discussion.

Discussion posts (15%) – When not leading the discussion topic for the week, students will respond to one of the prompts provided by their classmates. This post should be at least 250 words.

LATE WORK AND MAKING UP MISSED WORK

Unless otherwise indicated, all homework and project assignments must be turned in by the due date listed in Canvas by class start time. You should think of all due dates for assignments, especially project assignments, as firm. The tight schedule of deliverables throughout the whole semester makes it nearly impossible to slip or extend due dates. Any assignment that you do not

hand in on time may be penalized in grading. If you are not able to complete an assignment by the due date, it would be best for you to hand in as much of it as you have done. You must prepare your assignments using a word processor and submit it by uploading to Canvas by the due date/time. Please do **not** submit links to Google Docs. Assignments usually may not be submitted via email to the professor.

Late penalties of 1 point each will be assessed for all assignments later than 1 week, with the exception of the Aggregation assignment which will be assess for each day late.

GRADE BREAKS

Grade	Cutoff
A	94%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	84%
B-	80%
C+	77%
C	74%
C-	70%
D+	67%
D	64%
D-	60%
F	<60%

Course Outline

All instructions, assignments, readings, rubrics and essential information will be on the Canvas website at utexas.instructure.com. Check Canvas regularly. **Changes** to the schedule may be made at my discretion if circumstances require. I will announce any such changes in class and will also communicate them via a Canvas announcement. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced, and I will do my best to ensure that you are notified of changes with as much advance notice as possible.

Week / Module Dates	Topics / Module	Zoom?	Assignment Due
1. Thu Jan 12, 2023	Introductions Syllabus and Assignment Review Course Format and Expectations	Yes	
Module One - Foundation			
2. Thu Jan 19, 2023	1.1 What is information organization and what systems are used?	Yes	Week 2 Discussion <i>Question Posted by 1/16</i> <i>Answers Due by 1/19</i>
3. Thu Jan 26, 2023	1.2 Entities (objects and resources)	Yes	Descriptive Schema Proposal

4. Thu Feb 2, 2023	1.3 Attributes and values	Yes	Week 4 Discussion <i>Question Posted by 1/30</i> <i>Answers Due by 2/2</i>
Module Two – Consistency			
5. Thu Feb 9, 2023	2.1 Controlled vocabulary and authority control	Yes	In Class Activity – Using Controlled Vocabulary and Authority Control
6. Thu Feb 16, 2023	2.2 Building Schemas	Yes	Week 6 Discussion <i>Question Posted by 2/13</i> <i>Answers Due by 2/16</i>
7. Thu Feb 23, 2023	2.3 Interoperability and Standards	Yes	Descriptive Schema Creation
Module Three – Classification			
8. Thu Mar 2, 2023	3.1 Subjects and subject analysis	Yes	Subject Classification Proposal In Class Activity - Subject Analysis
9. Thu Mar 9, 2023 <i>Professor Traveling</i>	3.2 Subject Languages	No	Week 9 Discussion <i>Question Posted by 3/6</i> <i>Answers Due by 3/9</i>
March 13-19, 2023 - SPRING BREAK			
11. Thu Mar 23, 2023	3.3 Classification structures	Yes	Record Creation Assignment In Class Activity – Classification Exercise
12. Thu Mar 30, 2023	3.4 Faceted classification	Yes	Week 12 Discussion <i>Question Posted by 3/27</i> <i>Answers Due by 3/30</i>
Module Four – Metadata			
13. Thu Apr 6, 2023	4.1 Interpretive Diversity	Yes	Subject Classification
14. Thu Apr 13, 2023	4.2 Metadata in practice	Yes	Week 14 Discussion <i>Question Posted by 4/10</i> <i>Answers Due by 4/13</i>
15. Thu Apr 20, 2023	4.3 Metadata in the wild	Yes	Descriptive Schema Analysis (DUE April 24)

Course Policies and Disclosures

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY EXPECTATIONS

Plagiarism, as defined in the 1995 Random House Compact Unabridged Dictionary, is the "use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." (as cited in Plagiarism (2017). Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism>). If you use words or ideas that are not your own you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism. Here's a resource designed to help you avoid plagiarism: www.lib.utexas.edu/plagiarism

You are encouraged to discuss assignments with classmates, but anything submitted must reflect your own, original work. If in doubt, ask the instructor.

It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY as a student to avoid honor code violations. Neither ignorance nor accidents excuse violations. If in doubt, ask the instructor and/or err on the side of caution by quoting borrowed text and citing sources of borrowed ideas and text.

Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to severe disciplinary penalties, such as automatically failing the course and potentially being dismissed from the University. **PLEASE do not take the risk.** We are REQUIRED to automatically report any suspected case to central administration for investigation and disciplinary hearings. Honor code violations ultimately harm yourself as well as other students, and the integrity of the University, academic honesty is strictly enforced. For more information, see the Student Judicial Services site: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLASS RECORDINGS

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

GETTING HELP WITH TECHNOLOGY

Students needing help with technology in this course should contact the [ITS Service Desk](#).

CONTENT WARNING

Our classroom provides an open space for the critical and civil exchange of ideas. Some readings and other content in this course will include topics that some students may find offensive and/or traumatizing. I'll aim to forewarn students about potentially disturbing content and I ask all students to help to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and sensitivity.

SHARING OF COURSE MATERIALS IS PROHIBITED

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class without explicit, written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. The University is well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#) in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure of the course.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS

By [UT Austin policy](#), you must notify me of your pending absence as far in advance as possible of the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

NAMES AND PRONOUNS

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. I will gladly honor your request to address you by your chosen name and by the gender pronouns you use. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's chosen (not legal) name, if you have provided one. If you wish to provide or update a chosen name, that [can be done easily at this page](#), and you can [add your pronouns to Canvas](#).

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the Indigenous lands of Turtle Island, the ancestral name for what now is called North America. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge the Alabama-Coushatta, Caddo, Carrizo/Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Kickapoo, Lipan Apache, Tonkawa and Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas.

University Resources for Students

COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTER (CMHC)

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. Know you are not alone. If you or anyone you know is experiencing symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, academic concerns, loneliness, difficulty sleeping, or any other concern impacting your wellbeing – you are strongly encouraged to connect with CMHC. The Counseling and Mental Health Center provides a wide variety of mental health services to all UT students including crisis services, counseling services with immediate support and well-being resources. Additionally, CARE Counselors are located within the academic schools and colleges. These counselors get to know the concerns that are unique to their college's students. For more information on CMHC, visit <https://cmhc.utexas.edu> or call 512-471-3515.

UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES (UHS)

Your physical health and wellness are a priority. University Health Services is an on-campus high-quality medical facility providing care to all UT students. Services offered by UHS include general medicine, urgent care, a 24/7 nurse advice line, women's health, sports medicine, physical therapy, lab and radiology services, COVID-19 testing and vaccinations and much more. For additional information, visit <https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu> or call 512-471-4955.

STUDENT EMERGENCY SERVICES (SES)

Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students helps students and their families during difficult or emergency situations. Assistance includes outreach, advocacy, intervention, support, and referrals to relevant campus and community resources. If you need to be absent from class due to a family emergency, medical or mental health concern, or academic difficulty due to crisis or an emergency situation, you can work with Student Emergency Services. SES will document your situation and notify your professors. Additional information is available at <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/> or by calling 512-471-5017.

Important Safety Information

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or professors, contact BCCAL (the Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line) at <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line> or by calling 512-232-5050.

Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible, however the university may be required to release some information to appropriate parties.

CLASSROOM SAFETY AND COVID-19

To help preserve our in-person learning environment, the university recommends the following.

- Adhere to university [mask guidance](#). Masks are strongly recommended, but optional, inside university buildings for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, except when alone in a private office or single-occupant cubicle.
- [Vaccinations are widely available](#), free and not billed to health insurance. The vaccine will help protect against the transmission of the virus to others and reduce serious symptoms in those who are vaccinated.
- [Proactive Community Testing](#) remains an important part of the university's efforts to protect our community. Tests are fast and free.
- We encourage the use of the [Protect Texas App](#) each day prior to coming to campus.
- If you develop COVID-19 symptoms or feel sick, stay home and contact the [University Health Services](#)' Nurse Advice Line at 512-475-6877. If you need to be absent from class, contact [Student Emergency Services](#) and they will notify your professors. In addition, to help understand what to do if you have been had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, see this [University Health Services link](#).
- [Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line](#) (BCCAL) remains available as the primary tool to address questions or concerns from the university community about COVID-19.
- Students who test positive should contact [BCCAL](#) or self-report (if tested off campus) to [University Health Services](#).
- Visit [Protect Texas Together](#) for more information.

CARRYING OF HANDGUNS ON CAMPUS

Texas' Open Carry law expressly prohibits a licensed to carry (LTC) holder from carrying a handgun openly on the campus of an institution of higher education such as UT Austin. Students in this class should be aware of the following university policies:

- Students in this class who hold a license to carry are asked to [review the university policy regarding campus carry](#).
- Individuals who hold a license to carry are eligible to carry a concealed handgun on campus, including in most outdoor areas, buildings and spaces that are accessible to the public, and in classrooms.
- It is the responsibility of concealed-carry license holders to carry their handguns on or about their person at all times while on campus. Open carry is NOT permitted, meaning that a license holder may not carry a partially or wholly visible handgun on campus premises or on any university driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area.
- Per my right, I prohibit carrying of handguns in my personal office. Note that this information will also be conveyed to all students verbally during the first week of class.

This written notice is intended to reinforce the verbal notification, and is not a “legally effective” means of notification in its own right.

TITLE IX DISCLOSURE

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, to report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be report it. If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>, contact the Title IX Office via email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419. Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct, including the types of sexual misconduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX-related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email advocate@austin.utexas.edu For more information about reporting options and resources, visit the [Title IX Office](#) or email titleix@austin.utexas.edu.

CAMPUS SAFETY

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the [Office of Campus Safety and Security](#), 512-471-5767,

- Students should sign up for Campus Emergency Text Alerts at the page linked above.
- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- For more information, please visit [emergency preparedness](#).