

INF 380E

Fall 2024



Course Information

Instructional Mode: Face-to-face

Meeting Times: Mon 03:00 PM - 06:00 PM

Meeting Location: UTC 4.134

Unique Number: 27730

Instructor

Izzy Schloss

Email: ischloss@utexas.edu

Huimin Xu

Email: huiminxu@utexas.edu

Ayesha B

Email: ayesha.bhimdi@utexas.edu

R David Lankes

Email: rdlankes@utexas.edu

Office Hours and Location

Office Location: Flawn Academic Center (FAC) Suite 18

Office Hours: 10-11 or by appointment

Communication: The course Canvas site can be found at utexas.instructure.com. (you will need to replace this link with the actual link) Please email me through Canvas. You are responsible for ensuring that the primary email address you have recorded with the university is the one you will check for course

communications because that is the email address that Canvas uses. Please verify your current primary email address at https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/utd/all_my_addresses/.

Asking for Help: [Share with students how best to access or ask questions of the instructor (and teaching assistants) outside of class time, and/or how will office hours be conducted.]

Carrying of Handguns in my Personal Office

“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.” Review the [university policy regarding campus carry](#) for more information.

Catalog Description

Multidisciplinary and historical examination of concepts of information. Contrasts key literature from information studies with perspectives from other fields.

Overview of the Class

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.

[Syllabus must include all major course requirements and assignments, along with the dates of exams and assignments that count for 20% or more of the class grade. Also, recall that [per the General Information Catalog](#) no exam counting for more than 30% of the final course grade may be given during the last week of class, or during no-class days/reading days preceding the final exam period.]

Week	Date	Topic
1	26-Aug	Syllabus and Course Introduction to Information
2	9-Sep	Common Carriers/ Knowledge Infrastructure
3	16-Sep	Encryption/The Monetized Self
4	23-Sep	Massive Scale Computing
5	30-Sep	The Internet and World. Wide. Web
		Dataism and Data science

6	7-Oct	
7	14-Oct	Propaganda and Misinformation
8	21-Oct	Media Consolidation and Intellectual Property
9	28-Oct	Memory Organizations and Community Knowledge
10	4-Nov	Trust and Credibility
11	11-Nov	Knowledge Infrastructure: People and Diversity
12	18-Nov	Knowledge Infrastructure: Technology
		THANKSGIVING BREAK
13	2-Dec	Knowledge Infrastructure: Sources
14	9-Dec	Knowledge Infrastructure: Policy

Some classes will be online courses via Canvas and Zoom. More details will be provided.

Participation

Students are expected to attend each class, show up on time and ready to actively engage with the in-class discussions and activities, having thoroughly read or viewed the assigned materials, and thought not only about each reading, but how the readings relate to each other, topics we have previously discussed in class, and how they relate to current events. Students have two “free” missed classes; I understand that stuff happens and you might need to miss a class. If you need to miss more than two classes, please talk to me about it first, since missing more than two classes might result in a grade less than a B. Avoid scheduling anything during class time (doctor appointments, interviews, etc.).

It is also important that students work hard to demonstrate respect for the opinions of others, both by listening first to understand, and by carefully and thoughtfully explaining your own ideas.

Technology Use During Class

Many of the class session will have in-class group activities. These will be things like developing concept maps, advertisements, and others. You are welcome to use any tools in these projects, but at a minimum you have to be familiar with Google Slides. When there is a work product to be reported back to class, you will use Google Slides for the thing that is presented (that can be cut and pasted from another tool).

Please be respectful with your use of technology during class. Having a computer is useful, and helpful in class, but please be diligent about avoiding distraction. If you need to take a phone call or send a text, please wait until break if possible.

Pre-Requisites for the Course

Prerequisite: Graduate standing.

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the role of information studies, broadly construed, and its role in particular environments and contexts
- Explore how disciplines such as our own and others have looked at information as a primary and foundational concept.
- Discuss our field's identity, whether called information studies, library and information studies, library and information science, information science, or any other number of names
- The course provides a foundation for understanding the theories, assumptions and perspectives on the nature of information as it appears in information studies and a variety of cognate fields. Upon successful completion of this course, students will have accomplished or be able to:
- The course provides a foundation for understanding the theories, assumptions and perspectives on the nature of information as it appears in information studies and a variety of cognate fields. Upon successful completion of this course, students will have accomplished or be able to:
- Discuss the primary ways in which groups, organizations, and institutions employ information; delineating relationships and distinctions among forms of information work, professions, and institutions.
- Draw upon a vocabulary and expertise for thinking critically about the challenges inherent in defining, organizing and accessing information.
- Engage in the reflective, critical inquiry essential to graduate level oral and written work.

Grading Policy

[Description of your policies around late work, e.g., late work is not accepted, or late work is accepted subject to an x-point grade reduction for every y hours late, etc. And a description of your policies and procedures around makeup assignments for missed work.]

[Include the grade breakdown for your class.]

Grade breakdown for class

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%

[It is strongly recommended that you outline any individual expectations for assignment completion- including parameters around group work, authorized resources, citation requirements, etc. in the assignment directions. Clear and detailed expectations not only reduce the likelihood of a possible violation, but they also aid the Student Conduct team in holding students accountable that fail to adhere to the assignment directions.]

Overview of all Major Course Requirements and Assignments

Content Warning

“Our classroom provides an open space for the critical and orderly exchange of ideas through discussion. Some readings and other content in this course will include topics and comments 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.”

Grading

Assignment	Date Due	% of Grade
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Discussion Questions & Reflection	Weekly	36
Critical reflections (2 x 10 points)	Week 4, 6 (Sept 23, Oct 7)	20
Outline and resource list	Week 8 (Oct 21)	10
First Draft	Week 11 (Nov 11)	9
Peer Review	Week 12 (Nov 18)	5
Final Draft	Week 14 (Dec 9)	20

Assignments

All assignments are handed in via the Canvas course site.

Late assignments will lose 2 points for each day not turned in.

Critical Reflections

Students will write two critical reflections this semester. Your critical reflection should be about 500 words double spaced; about two pages but no more than three. You can choose at least one of the topics we have covered during that section and use any of the discussions or materials from the class during that topic (properly cited, of course), and reflect on how these topics relate to your previous experience or your future plans. You can definitely include additional resources if you would like, but I do not expect you to do additional research if you aren't inclined to. The idea is for you to take some time to reflect on what we discussed and find connections with your personal life and professional plans.

The two critical reflections can build on one another. In fact, you can use these as early smaller drafts for the final essay.

Discussion Questions and Reflections

Students are expected to bring one thoughtful idea or question related to the reading assignments for the week. They are also asked to write a brief reflection on what they learned in class session and what questions remain. These questions are very helpful, as I can easily see trends across your entries, and clarify areas of confusion. These reflections should be two to three paragraphs.

Essay

The final assignment for this semester is a 5-9 page essay reviewing the material from the semester and connecting it to your own personal life or career goals. Select an issue discussed in class (including the readings), define it, give examples, give a sense of how the issue impacts society, and then what will you do about it? This last part, your impact, is crucial. This may be to learn more about it. It may be adopting an explicit set of principles. It may be simply a personal mission that will drive your work. But to be clear, this essay must explicitly state your anticipated impact in the field.

The majority of this essay will be your opinion (feel free to use first person voice, imagine you are having a conversation with me), but if you use or refer to the ideas of other authors, you must use APA formatted citations to support those ideas. You should refer to at least five publications that can include readings from class.

The essay includes four steps:

1. **Step 1 - Outline and resource list:** Make a list of the sources you might use for your essay (minimum 10 resources from outside of class readings) in APA format. This can be used directly as your bibliography in your essay (copy and paste). Write a two-page outline that organizes the ideas you plan to explore in your essay. You can submit these both in one word document.
2. **Step 2 - Draft:** Write a rough draft of your essay. This should be about five pages long. I recommend you do the best you can so that your peer can give you excellent feedback and help you earn that A!
3. **Step 3 - Peer Review:** Using the Canvas tools, you will review your peer's essay.
4. **Step 4 - Final Version:** Review the feedback from your peer and revise your essay to submit as a final version! 5-9 pages, APA format, 12-point font, double spaced. Cover page and bibliography do not count toward page numbers.

The AI Elephant in the Room

Feel free to use generative AI in your assignments – just let me know what you wrote, and what the machine wrote. Generative AI (as we'll talk about in class) has exploded, and no one is sure about how it will shape fields, jobs, and disciplines. In fact, it will be you, more than most, that will determine this. It is my belief that AI will be an assistive technology to the librarian and information scientist. Might as well play with it now.

However, look again at the assignments. This is about how YOU connect ideas from the field to your future activities. ChatGPT is not going to know your experience or share your insight. When we're grading assignments, we have only three primary criteria. Did you communicate in written form effectively? Did you demonstrate personal reflection? Did you cite external resources properly? No word counts, or memorization. You'll do plenty of all of that in your graduate career. In this class, it is about finding your footing for that later work.

Required Course Materials

All readings are online or will be provided.

Recommended Course Materials

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 unless you have my explicit, written permission.

Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am 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 in the course.

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.

Resources

Style Manuals

Students will need to cite all sources for their essays in APA format. Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) offers a great overview on how to do this <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl> Style manuals are located under Research and Citation. The preference is to use APA version 7.

Plagiarism

Using someone else's work in your own writing without giving proper credit is considered plagiarism, a serious form of academic dishonesty that can result in severe penalties. Copying someone else's work, buying a paper and submitting it as your own, copying and pasting text (even with changes), or borrowing images from an online source, are some examples of plagiarism. Even if you plagiarize accidentally, you can be held responsible and penalized.

Learning to cite sources appropriately is an important part of becoming a professional. When you are unsure about citation, you are encouraged to ask your instructor what is appropriate in the context of your assignment. Consultants at The [University Writing Center](#) can also help you determine whether you are citing sources correctly—and they have helpful guides online for using [direct quotations](#) and [paraphrasing](#). Reviewing those skills will help you feel confident that you are handling sources professionally in your writing.

Required Readings

This is a draft list of readings. The final reading list is found in Canvas. There is also a chance that readings will be changed during the semester to bring in current events and issues. I will provide you with links or access the full text of readings in the class.

Week 2

Buckland, Michael K. (1991a). Information as thing. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 42(5), 351-360. Available at <http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/scholarly-journals/information-as-thing/docview/216897238/se-2?accountid=7118>

Buckland, Michael. K. (1997). What is a "document"? *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 48(9), 804-809. Also available in Trudi Bellardo Hahn & Michael Buckland

(Eds., 1998), *Historical studies in information science* (pp. 215-220). Medford, NJ: Information Today. Also available at <http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/scholarly-journals/what-is-document/docview/216902005/se-2?accountid=7118>

"The World's Most Valuable Resource Is No Longer Oil, but Data." *The Economist*. May 6, 2017. <https://www.economist.com/leaders/2017/05/06/the-worlds-most-valuable-resource-is-no-longer-oil-but-data>.

Zins, C. (2007). "Conceptual Approaches for Defining Data, Information, and Knowledge" *Journal of the American society for information science and technology*, 58(4):479–493 <http://www.success.co.il/files/jasist-definitions-dik.pdf>

Week 3

Fowler, Geoffrey A. "You Watch TV. Your TV Watches Back." *The Washington Post*. September 18, 2019. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2019/09/18/you-watch-tv-your-tv-watches-back>.

From Oppression to Liberation: Reclaiming the Right to Privacy
<https://www.privacyinternational.org/sites/default/files/2018-11/From%20oppression%20to%20liberation-reclaiming%20the%20right%20to%20privacy.pdf>

Week 4

Bush, Vannevar. (1948, July). As we may think. *Atlantic Monthly*, 176(1), 101-108. Available at <http://www.theatlantic.com/unbound/flashbks/computer/bushf.htm>

"Claude Shannon - Information Theory and More." *I Programmer*. Last modified April 27, 2017. <https://www.i-programmer.info/history/people/351-claude.html>.

Sentance, Nathan. (2018, January 22). Your neutral is not our neutral. *Archival Decolonist: Museums are not f**cking neutral*. Available at <https://archivaldecolonist.com/2018/01/18/your-neutral-is-not-our-neutral>

Pearce, Fred. "Energy Hogs: Can World's Huge Data Centers Be Made More Efficient?" *Yale School of the Environment*. April 3, 2018. <https://e360.yale.edu/features/energy-hogs-can-huge-data-centers-be-made-more-efficient>.

Week 5

Johnson, Conrad and Brian Donnelly. "A Brief History of the World Wide Web and the Internet." Prepared for the Columbia Legal Theory Workshop, New York, NY, October 24, 2003. <http://www2.law.columbia.edu/donnelly/lda/ih/techprof.html>

Week 6

Brooks, David. "The Philosophy of Data." *The New York Times*. February 4, 2013. <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/05/opinion/brooks-the-philosophy-of-data.html>.

"What Census Calls Us." *Pew Research Center*. February 6, 2020. <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/interactives/multiracial-timeline>.

Kitchin, R. (2017). Thinking critically about and researching algorithms
<https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/doi/full/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1154087>

Kuang, C. (2017). Can AI be taught to explain itself?
<https://advance-lexis-com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/document/?pdmfid=1516831&crd=29f62cb6-3662-4825-aa77-57a179e4bcb7&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fnews%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A5R1Y-KJ61-DXY4-X01W-00000-00&pdcontentcomponentid=6742&pdteaserkey=sr0&pditab=allpods&ecomp=wzvnk&earg=sr0&prid=f019b5ab-0edf-415f-8250-421ce738f4df>

Week 7

Lazer, D.M.J., Baum, M.A., Benkler, Y., Berinsky, A.J., Greenhill, K., Menczer, F., Metzger, M.J., Nyhan, B., Pennycook, G., Rothschild, D., Schudson, M., Sloman, S.A., Sunstein, C.R., Thorson, E.A., Watts, D.J., & Zittrain, J.L. (2018). The science of fake news. *Science*. Retrieved from: <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/359/6380/1094/tab-pdf>

Week 8

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. "The Danger of a Single Story." July 2009. TEDGlobal, 18:34. http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en.

Matsa, Katerina Eva. "Buying Spree Brings More Local TV Stations to Fewer Big Companies." Pew Research Center. May 11, 2017. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/05/11/buying-spree-brings-more-local-tv-stations-to-fewer-big-companies>.

Week 9

Somers, James. "Torching the Modern-Day Library of Alexandria." *The Atlantic*. April 20, 2017. <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2017/04/the-tragedy-of-google-books/523320>.

Glaser, April. "Long Before Snowden, Librarians Were Anti-Surveillance Heroes." *Slate*. June 3, 2015. <https://slate.com/technology/2015/06/usa-freedom-act-before-snowden-librarians-were-the-anti-surveillance-heroes.html>.

Patin, B, Sebastian, M, Yeon, J, Bertolini, D, Grimm, A. Interrupting epistemicide: A practical framework for naming, identifying, and ending epistemic injustice in the information professions. *J Assoc Inf Sci Technol*. 2021; 1– 13. <https://asistdl-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/doi/full/10.1002/asi.24479>

Week 10

Horrigan, John B. "The Elements of the Information-Engagement Typology." Pew Research Center. September 11, 2017. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2017/09/11/the-elements-of-the-information-engagement-typology>.

Kramer, Roderick M. "Rethinking Trust." *Harvard Business Review*. June 2009. <https://hbr.org/2009/06/rethinking-trust>.

Week 11

Cooke, N.A., Sweeney, M. and Noble, S.U. (2016). Social Justice as Topic and Tool: An Attempt to Transform a LIS Curriculum and Culture. *Library Quarterly*.
<https://www-journals-uchicago-edu.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/doi/full/10.1086/684147>

Week 12

Windley, Phillip. "How Blockchain Makes Self-Sovereign Identities Possible." *Computerworld*. January 10, 2018. <https://www.computerworld.com/article/3244128/how-blockchain-makes-self-sovereign-identities-possible.html>.

IBM. "Everyday Ethics for Artificial Intelligence." Accessed July 31, 2020. <https://www.ibm.com/watson/assets/duo/pdf/everydayethics.pdf>.

Week 13

Week 14

"Internet/Broadband Fact Sheet." Pew Research Center. June 12, 2019. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/internet-broadband>.

Samuelson, Pamela. "The Copyright Principles Project: Directions for Reform." *Berkeley Technology Law Journal* 25, (2010): 1176. . <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/php-programs/faculty/facultyPubsPDF.php?facID=346&pubID=221>

Final Exam Date and Time

This course does not have a final exam.

Essay

The final assignment for this semester is a 5-9 page essay reviewing the material from the semester and connecting it to your own personal life or career goals. Select an issue discussed in class (including the readings), define it, give examples, give a sense of how the issue impacts society, and then what will you do about it? This last part, your impact, is crucial. This may be to learn more about it. It may be adopting an explicit set of principles. It may be simply a personal mission that will drive your work. But to be clear, this essay must explicitly state your anticipated impact in the field.

The majority of this essay will be your opinion (feel free to use first person voice, imagine you are having a conversation with me), but if you use or refer to the ideas of other authors, you must use APA formatted citations to support those ideas. You should refer to at least five publications that can include readings from class.

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1. **Step 1 - Outline and resource list:** Make a list of the sources you might use for your essay (minimum 10 resources from outside of class readings)

2. **Step 2 - Draft:** Write a rough draft of your essay. This should be about five pages long. I recommend you do the best you can so that your peer can give you excellent feedback and help you earn that A!
3. **Step 3 - Peer Review:** Using the Canvas tools, you will review your peer's essay.
4. **Step 4 - Final Version:** Review the feedback from your peer and revise your essay to submit as a final version! 5-9 pages, APA format, 12-point font, double spaced. Cover page and bibliography do not count toward page numbers.

Class Canvas Site

<https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/1393393>

Notice of Academic Accommodations from Disability and Access (D&A)

Accessible/Compliant Statement:

If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://community.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations.

Accessible, Inclusive, and Compliant Statement:

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 Disability and Access (D&A). Please refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://community.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A , 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.

Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC)

Students who are struggling for any reason and who believe that it might impact their performance in the course are urged to reach out to Bryce Moffett if they feel comfortable. This will allow her to provide any resources or accommodations that she can. If immediate mental health assistance is needed, call the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) at 512-471-3515 or you may also contact Bryce Moffett, LCSW (iSchool CARE counselor) at 512-232-4449. Bryce's office is located in FAC18S and she holds drop in Office Hours on Wednesday from 2-3pm. For urgent mental health concerns, please contact the CMHC 24/7 Crisis Line at 512-471-2255.

Important Safety Information

Carrying of Handguns on Campus

Students in this class should be aware of the following university policies related to Texas' Open Carry Law:

- 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.

University Policies and Resources for Students Canvas Page

This Canvas [page](#) is a supplement to all UT syllabi and contains University policies and resources that you can refer to as you engage with and navigate your courses and the university.