

The iSchool at the University of Missouri  
School of Information Science & Learning Technologies  
**SYLLABUS**

**ISLT 7302 ORGANIZATION OF INFORMATION**  
**Spring Semester 2014**

**Instructors**

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**Course**

**Course:** *Organization of Information*  
Sections: 3 (St. Louis (STL)); 4 (Springfield (SGF))  
Blackboard: login at <https://courses.missouri.edu/>

ST LOUIS MEETING PLACE:  
West County Computer Center  
12837 Flushing Meadows Road  
St. Louis, MO 63131

SPRINGFIELD MEETING PLACE:  
Online, synchronous meeting: Bb Collaborate

SPRINGFIELD CLASS MEETINGS (6:00-7:00pm):  
Wednesdays, 1/29, 2/19, 3/19, 4/30

STL IN-PERSON CLASS MEETINGS (6:00-8:30PM):  
Tuesdays, 1/28, 2/18, 3/18, 4/29

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

In a broad sense, this course will familiarize students with the concept of organization of recorded information and the role it plays in human activities. The course addresses organization of information in the context of historical developments in Western civilization. Students will learn about several ways to encode records (e.g., MARC, HTML and XML) and about the systems designed for searching and retrieving records. The course will also provide an introduction to the characteristics of metadata and metadata schemas.

**Course Objectives**

- Explain the conceptual and theoretical frameworks for organizing and retrieving information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of information organization systems and their objectives;
- Understand the nature, attributes, structures, and varieties of information objects and the various tools used to create descriptions and representations;
- Develop an appreciation for the problematic nature of determining content attributes of information objects, including subject, form, genre, audience, etc.;
- Understand structures, formats and standards;
- Understand the implications of technological changes for organizing information.

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## Course Logistics

This is a web-assisted course, accessible through the Blackboard course management website; it also includes real-time meeting (RTM) meetings held either face-to-face or via Blackboard Collaborate. The weekly course cycle starts on Monday at 10 a.m. and ends on Saturday at 10 p.m. All students are expected to participate in all course activities in the same weekly cycle.

## Required Readings/Materials

### Readings

Textbook: Taylor, A., & Joudrey, D. N. (2009). *The organization of information* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Westport, Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited.

- Weekly PowerPoint presentations with **embedded audio** available on Blackboard under Course. **These presentations resume some of what I find most interesting or think is most difficult about the textbook readings for the week; they also offer updates to things that have changed since the time of the textbook's publication.**

Other readings: Selected articles, chapters, and reports available through Ellis Library e-journal subscriptions, as e-Reserves, or freely available on the web will be required throughout the semester.

### Lectures

Video lectures will be available during weeks when class does not meet and will be posted to the Blackboard site at the beginning of the week.

## STUDENT EVALUATION

### Short Paper (Assignment #1)

Points: 75

Due: Saturday, February 8, 2014 at midnight.

Description: A short paper (1000 words (+/- 10%), double spaced) addressing organization of information concepts in different contemporary contexts. **Late submissions are docked 10% per day.**

### Online Assessment #1

Points: 50

Available: Feb. 20 (10 a.m.) to Feb. 23 (10 p.m.), 2014.

Description: This open-book assessment will be conducted online on Blackboard. It will consist of quiz-type questions (multiple choice, true/false) and several short answer questions covering chapters 1-4 from Taylor & Joudrey, assigned readings from the first four weeks, and posted lectures. Students will have 60 minutes to complete it and must do so in one session.

### Online Assessment #2

Points: 75

Available: Mar. 20 (10 a.m.) to Mar. 23 (10 p.m.), 2014.

Description: This assessment will be conducted online on Blackboard. It will consist of quiz-type questions (multiple choice, true/false) and several short answer questions covering chapters 5-8 from Taylor & Joudrey, assigned readings from the first four weeks, and posted lectures. Students will have 90 minutes to complete it.

## ***Student Evaluation, continued***

### **Online Assessment #3**

Points: 50

Available: Apr. 17 (10 a.m.) to Apr. 20 (10 p.m.), 2014.

Description: This final assessment will be conducted online on Blackboard. It will consist of quiz-type questions (multiple choice, true/false) and several short answer questions covering chapters 9-11 from Taylor & Joudrey, assigned readings and posted lectures from Weeks 10-12. Students will have 60 minutes to complete it.

### **Thesaurus Building Exercise (Assignment #2)**

Points: 50

Due: Saturday, Apr. 26 at midnight.

Description: Students will create a short thesaurus of terms for a specific field in which they have some knowledge. The thesaurus will contain standard mechanisms such as Use, Use for, Broader Terms, and Narrower Terms. **Late submissions are docked 10% per day.**

### **Final Presentation (oral and PowerPoint presentation) (Assignment #3)**

Points: 75

Due: Oral presentation -- during Week 14 RTM (STL: Apr. 29; SGF: Apr. 30, 2014) PowerPoint presentation is due at midnight the day preceding the class meeting.

Description: Students will present a current issue related to organization of information that will be the topic of the paper they submit as a final project (formal abstract due March 6; formatted according to the Missouri Library Association conference call for papers: <http://molib.org/conference/index.html>). The issue explored can be identified by the student and approved ahead of time by the instructor or selected from a list that will be provided. This grade is based on the student's 5-8 minute long oral presentation and PowerPoint presentation (8-10 slides).

### **Final Paper (scholarly paper) (Assignment #4)**

Points: 75

Due: Thursday, May 8, 2014 at midnight.

Description: A paper of medium length (1500-2000 words, double spaced, APA 6<sup>th</sup> formatting) addressing the present and/or future of an aspect of organization of information. Papers will contain all of the elements expected of a scholarly paper created by an information professional (informative title and abstract; keywords; APA formatting; expected sections: introduction, review of the literature, discussion, conclusion). **Late submissions are docked 10% per day.**

### **Participation**

Points: 100

Description: Students will get 10 points for participation in three of the real time meetings (total 30 points). Also, during seven "online participation" designated weeks (see attached schedule), students are required to make at least two substantive postings to the weekly discussion board (total 70 points) (see instructions about expectations for posts). **Late submissions will earn a score of zero.**

The first weekly Discussion Board post will be submitted **no later than noon each Thursday**. The second weekly post **no later than noon on Saturday**. Posting in advance of these deadlines is encouraged.

## **Class Wiki Entries**

Points: 150

Each week, students will be required to create a short glossary-like entry for one of the terms they encountered in the readings that week. Terms are on a first come, first served basis and will be selected by students. Students may not work ahead and should only post for the present week; the week starts on Monday at 10 a.m. Terms must be posted by the end of the week, Saturday at 10:00 p.m. **Late postings will earn a score of zero.**

## **Grade Calculation**

The final letter grade will be assigned based on the following scale:

93-100% of points = A

80-92% of points = B

70-79% of points = C

less than 69 % of points = F

This course will not be using the +/- grading option. For general information about grading, see the MU Graduate College's *Grading & Credit Policies* web page:

<http://gradschool.missouri.edu/policies/progress/grading/>

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Student Preparation**

As with other graduate-level classes, students are expected to spend on average at least 12-15 hours per week on this class. Students with little experience in organization of information may find they need to spend additional time on preparation to feel comfortable with the topic. Therefore, this class represents a substantial time commitment, much of which is in the form of readings and assignments. Students are advised to be aware of this necessary time commitment and to schedule their semesters accordingly.

The instructor will provide assistance upon the student's inquiry. However, the student is ultimately responsible for his/her own effort to complete the assignments and learn the material.

### **Computing Requirements**

The University of Missouri's Division of Information Technology suggests and recommends minimum software (<http://doit.missouri.edu/software/>) and hardware (<http://doit.missouri.edu/hardware/>) requirements. This largely online class has further technology requirements (see below).

*Microsoft Office.* N.B. that Office is a minimum requirement at this university; you will need it for listening to the audio portions of the PPTs and for creating word processed documents in this class. If you need to purchase software, it is available at a discount through TigerTech at the MU bookstore (<http://www.mubookstore.com/t-tigertech.aspx?skinid=3>) and through DOIT (<http://doit.missouri.edu/software/sales/>).

*Headphones/speakers and an audio card.* Necessary for listening to the PPTs.

*Blackboard software.* Further (no-cost) software is required for the effective use of Blackboard: <https://courses.missouri.edu/students/blackboard/software.php>

## ***Course Policies, continued***

*Regular MU email and Blackboard access.* You will be expected to consult both on a regular basis while this course is in session. They are our only way of contacting you, and the only way other students can contact you as well.

Please ensure you have the necessary software and hardware to succeed in this largely online course.

## **Style Guide: APA 6th**

As students of Library and Information Science, students of Organization of Information must respect the intellectual property of others by citing resources that inform their work using APA 6th. This includes providing citations in parentheses in text on papers and in PPT presentations. Standing on the shoulders of giants does not make you a bad student; in fact, it makes you a better one when done correctly. Since all assignments will adhere to APA style guidelines, papers must be typed in a legible font, double spaced, and written using a gender-inclusive (i.e., his/her, he/she) language. A cover page with the name of the student, assignment number, and the name of the course is required for all assignments.

## **Instructor Availability**

While I, Heather, will always strive to respond to your messages (in Blackboard, via email, by Twitter DM, on Skype, or via telephone) as soon as possible, I reserve the right to go off the grid between 10 p.m. and 10 a.m. You can certainly expect a response within 24 hours unless I am traveling out of the country. Please understand, however, that the response will not likely come between 10 p.m. and 10 a.m.

Student feedback from the class is welcome at any time in the semester, and students are actively encouraged to contact the instructors.

## **Academic Dishonesty**

Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor.

## **For Students with Disabilities**

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated during F2F meetings, please let your instructor know as soon as possible. If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Office of Disability Services (<http://disabilityservices.missouri.edu>), S5 Memorial Union, 882-4696, and then notify your instructor of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for students with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

## ***Course Policies, continued***

### **Executive Order 38, Academic Inquiry, Course Discussion, and Privacy**

University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in Section 200.015 of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may not make audio or video recordings of course activity, except students permitted to record as an accommodation under Section 240.040 of the Collected Rules. All other students who record and/or distribute audio or video recordings of class activity are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of Section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE WEBSITE ON BLACKBOARD**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Information from the instructor of general importance to all the students in the course (news, reminders, changes, etc.).

**ADMIN DOCS:** The Syllabus is the "all in one" document with course description and objectives, required readings, assignment descriptions, grading procedures, and a tentative course schedule. NOTE: The Syllabus document is posted at the beginning of the semester and its contents will not be updated. Any modifications to the class will be posted in the ANNOUNCEMENTS. Passwords and other policy-type documents will also be posted in this area.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Contact information for your instructors.

**COURSE MATERIALS:** Readings, PPTs, video lectures, and other materials relevant to the successful mastering of the course content, organized by week.

**DISCUSSION BOARD:** Student postings in "Weekly Discussion" forum will count towards course participation during designated weeks. Those weeks, topics will be assigned for discussion and students will post two substantive messages. Questions about course logistics should be posted in the "General Discussion" forum and will not count towards class participation. Student announcements should also be posted in the General Discussion forum, and students should plan to subscribe to this forum in order to receive updates throughout the semester.

**CLASS WIKI:** Weekly wikis for the creation of "glossary" entries for new-to-you terms discovered in the week's readings.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Links to the online assessments and course assignments that will be posted. This section of the website will be also used to submit your assignments as Word documents.

**COMMUNICATION:** Area where students can communicate with other students and the instructor. Use "Send email" for sending email to your instructor. Please provide your first and last name in the body of the email.

**MY GRADES:** A place where you can view your grades after they are posted.

## OVERVIEW OF COURSE TOPICS BY WEEK

1. Introduction to the organization of information
2. Organization and retrieval
3. Historical approaches to the organization of information
4. Describing information: Metadata
5. Standards for organizing information in digital environments
6. Systems for storing and organizing information
7. Describing and description
8. Access and access points
9. Cataloging utilities
10. *Aboutness* and subject access
11. Vocabulary control
12. Categorization
13. Future considerations for the organization of information
14. Final project presentations
15. Final paper preparations

