

The Information Experience

OVERVIEW

Within the quartet of courses that are required for the Library and Information Science (LIS) concentration, INF1323: The Information Experience focuses upon information's human dimension. Newcomers to LIS will develop sharpened vision to discern "the red thread of information in the social texture of people's lives" (Bates, 1999). To that end, INF1323 introduces *information behaviour*, meaning, "the many ways in which human beings interact with information, in particular, the ways in which people seek and utilize information" (Bates, 2010). For almost a century, information behaviour has been a topic in the academic discipline of LIS and forms a rich research tradition. Practically speaking, an understanding of information behaviour helps information professionals to design information resources, systems, and services that are well-calibrated to the people who use them.

INF1323 is organized around three elements: 1) An introduction to foundational concepts associated with information and information behaviour; 2) An original information behaviour research project using the Information Horizon Interview technique; and 3) Holistic, practice-oriented case studies of information behaviour within contexts of special interest to LIS. The Fall 2019 offering of INF1323 also includes the sub-theme: *Falling in Love with...* that is an opportunity to (re)discover and sharpen one's passion for our discipline and profession via storytelling. In the INF1323 classroom, a culture of thoughtfulness and creativity will be channeled through the restrained use of personal technologies and mindfulness practice. A spirit of collaboration will bolster relationships with the instructor, Teaching Assistants, and peers, thereby establishing the rudiments of a collegial, professional network.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

By participating in the course, students will be able to:

- Enact the unique perspective of Library and Information Science and discern the "information dimension" or "red thread of information in the social texture of people's lives" (Bates, 1999).
- Understand the impact of metatheory in shaping information, information behaviour, and information institutions.
- Appreciate seminal models of information behaviour and recognize their application to today's information environment.
- Speak cogently about concepts related to the human experience of information: information behaviour, information practice, information seeking, information searching, information activity, browsing, information ground, information encountering, and information use, among others.
- Holistically analyze information-rich settings to discern information behaviours, resources, and systems, recognizing their integration, dynamism, and social construction.
- Appreciate the informational dynamics within contexts of special interest to LIS (see the Schedule, Sessions 7-10), and have an inkling of how to contribute productively in such domains.
- Envision a personal, concatenated research career, that is, a path of professional, lifelong learning.
- Design and implement an original research project using the Information Horizon Interview technique and report original findings persuasively.
- Collaborate successfully with peers for discovery, the dissemination of research, and the nurturing of personal and professional ambitions.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (PLOS)

Through a sweeping introduction to central concepts of information behaviour (on theoretical, methodological, and practical levels) students will comprehend “fundamental concepts, theories, and practices of the information disciplines, and will be able to respond to changing information practices and needs of society” (PLO1). Participants in the course will conduct an original information behaviour research project, thereby “develop[ing] the ability to contribute through research and publication” to the body of knowledge underlying the information sciences (PLO3). In three holistic case studies of information-rich settings of relevance to libraries, students will see how research and theory can influence library resources, systems, and services in order to have a positive impact on society (PLO4). The idea of “concatenated research,” that is, the sequential linking of small-scale research projects, will be taught and embraced as a blueprint for lifelong learning (PLO6).

STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL LAND

I acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Learning in the course will be achieved through lectures by the instructor, assigned readings, in-class activities, and conversation with peers. Learning will also happen through assignments, including an original research project and creative deliverable (a story).

COURSE PROTOCOLS

Class begins at 6:30 (Monday night) and 9:10 (Tuesday morning) and opens with a short, guided meditation. Please arrive ten minutes early to get settled and gather handouts. Before each lecture by the instructor, PowerPoint handouts (with selected slides) will be provided for note-taking and a complete PowerPoint lecture slide deck will be posted to the course website the next day. Assigned readings are best done in advance of class and will be the foundation for discussion and activities. Participation (attendance) is considered a significant element of the course and will be counted (see Assignments/Class Participation).

A NOTE ON TECHNOLOGY

Research (Fried, 2008) has established that student learning declines because of the in-class use of laptops and other computing and communication devices. Not only are understanding and retention inhibited for the user of these tools, but positive outcomes are diminished for bystanders, too. Therefore, to enable the best learning experience for all, laptops should only be used if they are critical for your success in the course. Phones should be placed on silent and put away during class time. Anyone engaging in disruptive use of technologies will be asked, in the most courteous manner possible, to stop. A midway break will be provided to manage personal computing and telecommunications during the morning session.

Fried, C. B. (2008). In-class laptop use and its effect on student learning. *Computers & Education*, 50(3), 906-914.

THE PRACTICE OF MINDFULNESS

In the interest of taking our Faculty commitment to student mental health seriously, each INF1323 class will begin with the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness is, “a mental state achieved by focusing one’s awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one’s feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations.” Mindfulness has been associated with increased well-being and stress reduction, and it surely contributes to a positive learning environment. In INF1323, mindfulness will be practiced at the start of class with a 2-3 minute audio meditation that focuses attention on the breath, thoughts, and/or positive feelings. The instructor welcomes participants in the course to recommend their favourite audio meditations or to lead a live mindfulness session.

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR HEALTH CONSIDERATION

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please approach the instructor and/or the [Accessibility Services Office](#) as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND PLAGIARISM

It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the following documents: [The Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) and the [Code of Student Conduct](#). Please consult the [Inforum schedule](#) for helpful workshops on how to avoid plagiarism; lack of awareness of plagiarism does not excuse the student committing the offence.

COURSE SCHEDULE		
SESSION	TOPICS AND HAPPENINGS	ASSIGNED READINGS
#1. Sept. 9/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Welcome to Library and Information Science ▶ The Metadiscipline of LIS ▶ Course Administration 	Hartel (2012) Bates (2007) Shera (1972) (audio) Lankes (2018) (personal website, <i>The Atlas of New Librarianship</i>)
#2. Sept. 16/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Red Thread of Information ▶ Research Project Workshop: Project launch and panel of past students discuss the Information Horizon Interview 	Bates (1999) Case & Given (2016), Ch. 1 & 2 (Quercus) Sonnenwald (2005)
#3 Sept. 23/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Metatheories, Information, and Information Behaviour ▶ Research Project Workshop: Cluster formation 	Bates (2005) (Quercus) Tuominen, Talja, & Savolainen (2003) or Todd (1999) or Huvila (2009)
#4 Sept. 30/Oct. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Models of Information Behaviour ▶ Research Project Workshop: Topic/population selection and research ethics 	Bates (1989) Kuhlthau (1988) Hektor (2001) pp. 80-95 Case & Given (2016) Ch. 7
#5 Oct. 7/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Foundational Information Behaviour Concepts ▶ Research Project Workshop: The Information Horizon Interview 	Fisher (2005) Erdelez (1998) Chatman (1996) Sonnenwald, Wildemuth, & Harmon (2001) Case & Given (2016) Ch. 9 (optional) (Quercus)
#6 Oct. 14*/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Information Practice (Social Approaches) ▶ Falling in Love with LIS/Storytelling Workshop <p>* The University will be closed for Thanksgiving, hence class will not meet on Monday. If possible, students of the Monday session should attend class on Tuesday morning. Otherwise, instructions will be provided for a virtual class experience.</p>	Bates (1986) Lee & Trace (2009) Indigenous Studies Scholars or Environmental Engineering Scholars or Asian Studies Scholars by Ithaka S+R

<p>#7 Oct. 21/22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Case Study 1: The Sense-making Theory and Reference Service ▶ Exploratory Research ▶ Research Project Workshop: Your concatenated career 	<p>Dervin & Dewdney (1986) Bopp & Smith (2011) RUSA Guidelines...</p>
<p>#8 Oct. 28/29</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Case Study 2: The Undergraduate Library Experience ▶ Information Ethnography ▶ Research Project Workshop: Data analysis 	<p>Foster & Gibbons (2007) Khoo, Rozaklis, & Hall (2012)</p>
<p>READING WEEK (NOVEMBER 4TH THROUGH 8TH)</p>		
<p>#9 Nov. 11/12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Case Study 3: Pleasure Reading, Readers, and Reader's Advisory ▶ INF1323 Storytelling Festival 	<p>Chelton (2009) (Quercus) Ross (1999) Saricks (2005) (Quercus) Dali (2015)</p>
<p>#10 Nov. 18/19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Case Study 4: The Body ▶ Research Project Workshop: Writing-up your findings (the <i>Template</i>), tips for presenting, and presentation planning time with your cluster 	<p>Olsson & Lloyd (2007) Lloyd (2007) or Hedemark & Linberg (2018) or Gorichanaz (2015)</p>
<p>#11 Nov. 25/26</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Student Cluster Presentations 	<p>No assigned readings <i>Research Project due</i></p>
<p>#12 Dec. 2/3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Course Conclusion and Celebration! ▶ Student Cluster Presentations 	<p>No assigned readings <i>Presentation due</i></p>

ASSIGNMENTS			
DESCRIPTION	VALUE	EVALUATION	DUE
1. <i>Participation</i> . Attend class and complete four “Ticket-Out-The-Door” (TOTD) worksheets.	20 % (5pts x 4)	Letter Grade (Pass/Fail)	Unannounced throughout the semester
2. <i>An Information Behaviour Study Using the Information Horizon Interview (A + B)</i>			
A. <i>Research project</i> . Develop a research question about information behaviour that is relevant to a topic/population within the GTA; conduct Information Horizon Interviews with three informants; analyze visual and textual data; assemble findings (template provided).	40%	Letter Grade	Session #11
B. <i>Summary presentation</i> . In collaboration with your cluster, present synthesized highlights from the Research Projects.	20%	Letter Grade	Sessions #11 & #12
3. <i>Falling in Love with...</i> Discover or rediscover your passion for your field; turn it into a 3-minute story; <u>tell</u> your story at the INF1323 <i>Storytelling Festival</i> ; submit a reflective statement.	20%	Letter Grade (Pass/Fail)	Session #9
100%			

GRADING POLICY

Please consult the iSchool’s: [Grade Interpretation Guidelines](#), [The University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy](#), and [The Guidelines on the Use of INC, SDF, & WDR](#). These documents will form the basis for grading in the course. If you have extenuating circumstances preventing you from submitting your assignment on time, please talk to the course instructor before the due date. Extensions for assignments are at the discretion of the course instructor and typically limited to medical situations and emergencies in the immediate family.

1. Participation (Ticket-Out-the Door/TOTD)

INF1323 is designed to be highly experiential and class participation contributes significantly to your final grade. The bulk of the learning experience will be lost if you miss class. Therefore, you must attend class to achieve a high (A) grade. In addition to showing up, other positive expressions of class participation include: timely arrival, paying attention to the lecture, applying oneself to class activities, contributing to group projects, adherence to the laptop and device-free policy, and contributing appropriate questions/comments. Since it is impossible for the instructor to measure these behaviours individually when class is underway, an alternative measure will be used, the “ticket-out-the-door” (TOTD). At four unannounced instances throughout the semester a worksheet will be distributed that registers your understanding of the topic(s) covered that day. You will complete the worksheet and pass it in upon departure from class; these “tickets” will be saved and register your participation. If you miss a session and a worksheet, a doctor’s note or evidence of serious personal circumstances is required. Please email our Teaching Assistant, Yuxi (Lily) Ren (yily.ren@mail.utoronto.ca) concerning missed tickets.

2. Research Project: An Information Behaviour Study Using the Information Horizon Interview

See the table above and the assignment handout.

3. Falling in Love with...

See the table above and the assignment handout.