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University of Pittsburgh
School of Information Science

LIS2001
Organizing Information
SYLLABUS
Lawton

Spring 2008

Class meets Thursdays from 6:00-8:50 pm in Room IS 403.

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"Tell me and I will forget.
Show me and I will remember.
Involve me and I will understand" – Confucius.

Instructor: Pat Lawton

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  Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30-2:30 and by appointment

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COURSE OVERVIEW

LIS2001 emphasizes concepts of and methods for organizing information resources. The course introduces and extends basic principles of information organization and representation via reading, analysis, discussion, and practice in applying traditional and emerging tools and methods of organizing information and/or knowledge for a variety of resources and client groups, and within a variety of domains.

The course structure and readings are designed in response to the needs of recent graduates facing new and unique challenges in the organization and representation of information and knowledge. In other words, our graduates are not necessarily in positions where traditional methods and tools for organizing and representing information (tools like the DDC and MARC) are appropriate, adequate, or useful for a particular set of resources, for particular users, within a particular environment. The nature of the resources, the domain, and users all must be taken into account. Cookie-cutter approaches to the organization of information are near-extinct. Our thinking will focus on understanding and evaluating the principles and practices of our LIS roots and examining their place within the new information/knowledge management/organization culture.

Course Goals
The goal of this course is to introduce you to the theory, principles, standards, and tools behind the organization of information, with special emphasis on understanding the function of catalogs, indexes, bibliographic networks, and other such organizing devices.

We will explore questions and practices surrounding the organization and representation of information within ever-changing environments, and will have the opportunity to conceptualize and execute solutions to specific information organization problems using traditional and emerging tools and resources as appropriate.

In particular, we will focus on this triumvirate: problems, solutions, and technologies. In other words, we will examine the organization of information as practiced in LIS and beyond as a set of problems to be solved, their solutions or potential solutions, and the use of technologies to solve them. For example, the problem of many names for the same entity or being was resolved [or was it?] by authority control. Now what is being done? Is authority control still practiced or have technologies rendered the LIS solution of authority control no longer necessary? Or have technologies facilitated the implementation of authority control?

Course Objectives
After completing LIS2001, students will be able to:

- Describe major historical precedents, theories and principles in the organization of information as practiced in LIS.
- Use (at the novice level) traditional and emerging tools including: a variety of metadata standards, controlled vocabularies, and classification systems.
- Assess, create, and evaluate systems for managing content.
- Critically evaluate current systems and practices in the organization of information in LIS and describe alternatives to current practices.
- Extrapolate, adapt, and apply knowledge of existing systems to emerging technologies and trends in the organization of information.
- Define and correctly use the terminology of the organization of information.

REQUIRED TEXTS
- Taylor, Arlene G. (2004) The Organization of Information. 2nd edition. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited. ISBN: 1-56308-969-6 (pbk). (Required).
- Weinberger, David. (2007). Everything Is Miscellaneous: The Power of the New Digital Disorder . New York: Henry Holt and Co. ISBN-13: 978-0-8050-8043-8 ISBN-10: 0-8050-8043-0 (Required)
  Note: Copies are available via Amazon for $16.50.

All other required and supplementary readings will be found listed on the class schedule and will be available either online or will be posted in Course Documents. Locations are indicated on the class schedule.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who require special testing accommodations or other classroom modifications should notify the instructor and the office of Disability Resources & Services (DRS) no later than the 3rd week of the term. Students may be asked to provide documentation of their disability to determine the appropriateness of the request. DRS is located in 216 William Pitt Union and can be contacted at 412-648-7890 (voice), 412-624-3346 (fax), and (412) 383-7355 (TTY).

CLASS POLICIES

In class

Class Begins and Ends on Time: You, too, are expected to be on time and to stay for the duration of class. If you arrive late or leave early, it will be noted and will adversely affect your participation grade.

Participation in Class Discussion and Exercises: Please come to class prepared to contribute to the learning process.

Respect for others in the classroom, in particular ... This means **listening respectfully** when others are talking. Talking in class when others are talking will absolutely not be tolerated. Offenders may be asked to leave the classroom and will receive no credit for that day's attendance.

Don't Forget to Include Names on Assignments and All Correspondence!

On Assignments: Put the Assignment name and your name in the assignment itself. Assignments without names will have 2 pts taken off automatically. (If it is a group assignment, then be sure to list all of the group member names.)

On Electronic Files: Incorrectly labeled files do not transfer successfully nor do they show good info org skills! Begin now to appropriately and usefully label subject lines.

Assignments and Questions

Correspondence with the Instructor: If you have a question, most likely someone else in the course has the same question. Post your question to the "General Questions" discussion forum.

Late Assignments Policy:

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day noted. Assignments turned in late will be graded down one grade per day of delay. (I.e., if the assignment was graded as an A, one day late = B; two days late = C, etc.)

However, life does happen and if late work appears to be unavoidable, you should communicate with me about the circumstances *as soon as possible*, not at the last moment. If a late assignment is accepted, it is understood that the grade usually will be lowered. The timely submission of group assignments is the responsibility of the entire group.

Plagiarism: Please familiarize yourself with the School of Information Science's Guidelines on **Academic Integrity**, found at: http://www2.sis.pitt.edu/academics/integrity.html.

It is the student's responsibility to carefully document his or her work using the appropriate style of citation. Be aware that plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade in this course.

The result of plagiarism on any assignment will be an F for that assignment. If the plagiarism is found to be a repeat offense, the grade for the course will be an F. All assignments submitted must be one's own work, created specifically for this class. No double-duty for assignments. Assignments turned in here that are found to be used in other courses will receive a grade of F.

For an explanation of what constitutes plagiarism, see "Avoiding Plagiarism," by David J. Birnbaum and Helena Goscilo: http://clover.slavic.pitt.edu/~tales/02-1/plagiarism.html.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

Your grade for the course will be based on four assignments, a topics project, and class participation. Class participation includes attendance and timeliness, in-class exercises, and regular participation in readings discussions on Courseweb.

Participation   30%
Topics (Briefing Report) Assignment   20%
Four Practice Assignments: 50%

- End User (10%)   Jan. 24
- Metadata (15%)   ~~Feb. 14~~ Feb.21
- Authority Control (10%)   March 6
- Subject (15%)   Apr. 10

Please carefully proofread your assignments for accuracy in **spelling and grammatical construction**—such errors do play a part in your grade.

The grade for **Class participation** assumes no more than three missed classes*, and is evaluated on the following:

- Successfully completing in-class exercises
- Contributing to class discussions
- Asking/answering questions
- Respecting the opinions of colleagues (talking when others are talking will not be tolerated)

- Respecting the 'conversational dynamic' (i.e., student does not dominate discussions; student does not ignore other students)

Reading Weinberger: Student-Led Discussions
One of the key activities is active participation in the Student Led Discussions. Each week we will read a chapter from Weinberger and discuss the chapter via discussion boards (DBs). Many weeks, there will be additional readings and you may be responsible for those as well. This will be indicated on the schedule. Each week two individuals will be designated discussion leaders and will be responsible for posting questions, facilitating discussion and summarizing the group's discussion for that week.

Please keep your summaries of the week's discussions to 500 words or less.

The composition of discussion groups may change over the course of the semester. In other words, your discussion group members may not remain the same, and new groups may be formed at various points, thereby allowing you to become familiar with other points of view and to perhaps avoid the unhappy circumstance of having a not particularly cohesive group.

Timeline
Group leaders must post discussion questions by the beginning of class on the week they are assigned, and participants must post all comments and discussion by 9am the following Tues. Group leaders then summarize the discussion and post the summary to the general DB by noon the day of class.

For example: if you are a Discussion Leader for week 2, you must post your discussion questions on Jan. 17; participants must enter their posts by 9am Tues. Jan. 22; and Discussion Leaders need to post the discussion summary by noon Thurs. Jan. 24.

Guidelines for Group Leaders:
- Post two to four questions for discussion by the beginning of class on the week you are discussion leader.
- Questions should relate directly to the chapter and may relate material from other readings for the week and/or class discussions. Questions should require a thoughtful response. Don't ask questions that simply ask what the chapter said. Think of questions that will invoke attitudes, opinions, or applications. And have fun with it. This is your opportunity to have your questions answered, to hear what others think about the issues you find interesting.
- Disregard posts made after noon Tuesday.
- Your summaries should not exceed 500 words.

Guidelines for Discussion Participants
Most weeks during the semester, you will be required to actively participate in the DBs. Your job is to actively and mindfully participate. This activity accounts for a significant

portion of your total course grade and the evaluation will be based on *quality*, not quantity. I will not simply count how many times you posted. I will be reading and noting when intelligent, thoughtful remarks are made. "Me too" posts are discouraged. Don't just say, "I agree with Phil." Say what it is in particular you agree with and why; back up your statements. Stay focused on the question under discussion. It is OK to refer to personal/job experience, but keep that to a minimum unless it really adds to the conversation.

You may opt out of discussion for three weeks during the semester; more than three misses will reduce your grade as will posts of inferior quality. In other words, you must participate in the Weinberger discussions for a minimum of eight weeks during the term.

Evaluation
Weekly participation (as participant and for your week as discussion leader) will be evaluated as follows:
- Pretty darn good to excellent (10 points), or
- Mediocre, did not say much new, lack of effort shows (5 points) or
- Did not contribute or failed to make contributions or summaries on schedule (0 points).

As discussion leader, you will also be evaluated on your ability to lead discussion and to effectively summarize the week's discussion.

LIS2001 Schedule
Spring 2008
Lawton

DATE	TOPIC(s)	READINGS FOR THIS DAY	DUE ON THIS DATE
1 **Jan. 10**	**Intro and Big Picture** Intro to the course and each other. The organizing/retrieval model. What is information? What does it mean to *organize* it?		Your presence
2 **Jan. 17**	**History and Use of Tools in LIS** **Big Picture of**	• Skim Taylor, Chapters 1-3 • Read Buckland's classic 1997 article, "What Is a Document?" http://www.ischool.berkeley.edu/~buckland/whatdoc.html	**DUE:** Your introduction posted to Courseweb

	Bibliographic Control in LIS, Principles and Concepts	• Read Kroski's The Hive Mind: Folksonomies and User-Based Tagging http://infotangle.blogsome.com/2005/12/07/the-hive-mind-folksonomies-and-user-based-tagging/ • **BEGIN** End User Assignment – DUE Jan. 24	**BRING** 5 information objects to class **BRING** *your* definition of *"information"* **Think** about *"What is a document?"*
3 **Jan. 24**	**Bibliographic Control Principles and Concepts** **Catalogs**	• Read Weinberger, Prologue • Taylor, Ch. 1 • Eversberg, Bernard. (2007). *On the Theory of Library Catalogs and Search Engines.* http://www.allegro-c.de/formate/tlcse.htm • Wikipedia on inverted indexes (be sure to study the illustrations): http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inverted_index • Chan, Chapter 1 (Course Docs)	**End User Assignment.** **Bring to class.**
4 **Jan. 31**	**The User** **Intro to Metadata** **What is Cataloging?**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.1 • Taylor, Ch.6; skim Ch.7 • Skim this document, and be prepared to discuss it in class: http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/news/lcwg-ontherecord-jan08-final.pdf • Get a sense of MARC, the library community's metadata staple, developed in the 1960s. Furrie, Betty. *Understanding MARC Bibliographic* .http://www.loc.gov/marc/umb/ (you m ay find it useful to look at sample MARC records in Parts XI-XII first http://www.loc.gov/marc/umb/um11to12.html) • MARC Must Die, by Roy Tennant.	
5 **Feb. 7**	**Dublin Core** **Guest: Mike Bolam**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.2 • Taylor, p. 159-171. • Read this discussion about Cataloging v. Metadata, here: http://kcoyle.blogspot.com/2006/11/cataloging-v-metadata.html • Taylor, Chris. Introduction to Metadata. http://www.library.uq.edu.au/iad/ctmeta4.html • Weibel, Stuart L. Border Crossings: Reflections on a Decade of Metadata Consensus Building. " D-Lib Magazine. July/Aug 2005. 11 Feb 2008 http://www.dlib.org/dlib/july05/weibel/07weibel.html	**Overview of Final Project to Bob Riter**

6 **Feb. 14**	**Access and Authority Control**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.3 • Taylor, Ch.8 • The Purpose of Authority Control: http://bibwild.wordpress.com/2007/08/08/the-purpose-of-authority-control/ • Strawn, Accessing and distributing authority files. http://research.calacademy.org/research/informatics/taf/proceedings/Strawn.html	
7 **Feb. 21**	**More on Authority Control; Intro to Subject Analysis and Controlled Vocabularies**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.4 • Read: *Understanding MARC Authority Records*, part 7, here: http://www.loc.gov/marc/uma/pt1-7.html • Waugh, Andrew. 1998. Representing People's Names in Dublin Core http://dublincore.org/documents/1998/02/03/name-representation/ • Read Taylor Ch. 9 • Read Taylor's "Subject Analysis Application" Course Docs) • Read Sauperl on Subject Analysis (Course Docs) • Tomatoes Are Not the Only Fruit (Course Docs) • Aitchison and Clarke on History of Thesauri (Course Docs)	~~Metadata Assignment~~ **DUE March 6**
8 **Feb. 28**	**LCSH And FAST**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.5 • Taylor Ch. 10 • Read: The Introduction to LCSH (Course Docs) • Read: Dykstra, Mary. LC Subject Headings Disguised as a Thesaurus *Library Journal* 113(4) pp. 42-6 (1988). • Mann, Thomas. Why LCSH are More Important Than Ever (Course Docs) • Play with the LCSH Browser • Have a look at this student-created intro to FAST (the project that pulls apart LCSH) http://www.slais.ubc.ca/courses/libr517/03-04-wt2/projects/FAST_1/index1.htm	
9 **Mar.6**	**Assigning Terms from Subject Headings Lists and Thesauri**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.6 • ~~View Detlefsen lecture [at least the ppt] on MeSH (Course Docs)~~ • Examine various online thesauri such as TGM, AAT, and ERIC. • Shatford-Layne, Sara. (1986). Analyzing the	**Authority Control Assignment** **Can turn in as**

		Subject of a Picture: A Theoretical Approach. *Cataloging and Classification Quarterly*, vol. 6(3). (Course Docs) • Read: Rowley (1994) Controlled vocab vs. Natural Language Debate (Course Docs)	**late as March 20**
March 13		**SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS THIS WEEK**	
10 **Mar. 20**	**Intro to Classification:** **Traditional and Faceted**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.7 • Taylor, Chapter 11. • Foucault (Course Docs) • Rowley, 1992. The Theory of Bibliographic Classification (Course Docs) • Library of Congress Outline: http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/ • Wilson, Travis. (2006). *Strict Faceted Classification* download the pdf at http://facetmap.com/pub/	
11 **Mar.27**	**Social Perspectives on Controlled Vocubularies and Classification**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.8 **At the very least *skim* each of these articles, reflect on Foucault's "Chinese Classification" (week 10) and come to class prepared to talk about social perspectives on vocabulary control and classification.** • Berman, Sanford. Jackdaws Strut in Peacock's Feathers (Course Docs) • Charaf, Inaam. (2004). Conceptualisation and Organization of Knowledge Between the 10th and 14th Centuries in Arabic Culture. Knowlege Organization, 31 (4): 213-221. (Course Docs) • Kwasnik, Barbara H. and Rubin, Victoria L. Stretching Conceptual Structures in Classifications Across Languages and Cultures. *Cataloging and Classification Quarterly*, 37:1/2 (2003), pg. 33-47. (Course Docs) • Olson, H.A. (2000) Difference, Culture and Change: The Untapped Potential of LCSH. The LCSH Century: One Hundred Years with the Library of Congress Subject Headings System, Stone, Alva T., ed. New York: Haworth Information Press, 2000: pp. 53-71. (Course Documents) • Olson H.A. "Sameness and Diference: A Cultural Foundation of Classification." (Course Docs) Final presentations	
12	**LCC**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.9 • Review: Library of Congress Outline: http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/ • Read Taylor on LCC, Chapter 16 of her	

Apr. 3		*Introduction to Cataloging and Classification* (Course Docs) Final Presentations	
13 **Apr.10**	**More on LCC Intro to DDC**	• Read Weinberger, Ch.10 and Coda • Read Chan on DDC, from her *Cataloging and Classification: An Introduction* (Course Docs) • Scan the *Introduction to the DDC*. http://connexion.oclc.org/html/corc/help/en/DDC_Edition22_Introduction.html • Let's Do Dewey A simple introduction to Dewey numbers, and especially Cutter numbers. http://www.mtsu.edu/%7Evvesper/dewey2.htm • Scan DDC summaries • *Optionally,* View the Taylor lecture – Available in Course Documents "Week 13: Taylor on DDC" Final Presentations	**Subject Assignment**
14 **Apr.17**	**More on DDC**	• Broughton, Vanda. "Faceted Classification." Chapter 20 from her *Essential Classification*. New York: Neal Schuman, 2004. (Course Docs) Get a sense of faceted classification and S.R. Ranganathan by reviewing these sites: • http://www.slais.ubc.ca/courses/libr517/03-04-wt2/projects/ranganathan/class.htm • http://www.boxesandarrows.com/view/ranganathan_for_ias • http://scout.wisc.edu/Projects/PastProjects/toolkit/enduser/archive/1998/euc-9803.html Final Presentations	
15 **Apr.24**	**More on DDC Wrap Up**	Readings TBA Final Presentations	