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## LIS 2452: Indexing and Abstracting

### Summer 2008 - May 12-Aug 2

**Onsite: Tuesday 2:00 - 5:15pm, Room 522**  
**Online: as noted in the online CourseWeb site for this section**

**Instructor:** Judith Jablonski  
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**Office Phone:** 412-624-9459  
**Office:** Rm 609 - IS Building  
**Office Hours:** Monday 3:00-4:30pm  
and by appointment  
(phone meetings OK by appt)

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION (from SIS course descriptions):** Theory and practice of evaluating documents, generating appropriate descriptors, matching content with descriptors, and writing clear and concise prose. A variety of manual and automated systems are applied to journals, monographic works, and large files.

**About the Course:** Indexing and Abstracting is a Master's level course that focuses on the intellectual and "technical" skills of indexing and abstracting. The emphases of the course are a) the role of the abstractor and indexer in terms of his/her professional identity and the actual work activities and skills performed, and b) the intellectual and technology environment in which indexing and abstracting takes place.

We will be learning four major skills:

- Reading and understanding research documents
- Writing concise, informative, accurate, and well-written abstracts (with special attention to structured abstracts)
- Identifying key concepts in articles
- Performing subject/concept analysis and indexing of research articles in periodical/database environments

### Course Plan and Expectations

The course consists of 12 weekly presentations accompanied by PowerPoint, CourseCas/Panatopto, and audio (MP3) presentations, readings, discussion board discussions as needed, in-class labs and exercises, and assignments. The course will be administered via CourseWeb/BlackBoard, the classroom electronic delivery system used by the University of Pittsburgh.

You are expected to complete readings, participate in discussions, and to complete exercises and assignments. You are also responsible for using the resources of the department and the university to learn how to use the University catalog and other public retrieval systems, the University libraries, electronic mail, and CourseWeb/BlackBoard

**NOTE:** This course is an advanced information organization course. LIS 2001 is prerequisite. Although we will be discussing the theory behind indexing and abstracting, LIS 2452 is essentially a skills acquisition course.

## Course Objectives

You will understand:

- the difference between reading for information (or entertainment) and reading critically and analytically for the purpose of indexing or abstracting a resource;
- the critical/objective mindset required for indexing and abstracting;
- how research literature articles are presented and arranged
- how thesauri are utilized in assigned indexing
- the basic theoretical concepts and literature that ground indexing and abstracting.

You will be able to

- effectively read and summarize an information resource (research article format);
- write an indicative, informative, and structured abstract;
- identify the "key concepts" for a research article;
- use a thesaurus/controlled vocabulary in assigning index terms; and
- index a scholarly article.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

**Reading and Understanding Research.** 2nd edition. Lawrence F. Locke, Stephen J. Silverman, and Waneed Wyrick Spirduso. Sage Publications. Copyright 2004. ISBN: 0761927689

**ASIS&T Thesaurus of Information Science, Technology, And Librarianship.** 3rd edition. (Asist Monograph Series) by Alice Redmond-Neal and Marjorie M. K. Hlava. Information Today. Copyright 2005. ISBN: 1573872431

**Introduction to Indexing and Abstracting.** 3rd edition. By Donald B. Cleveland & Ana D. Cleveland. Libraries Unlimited. Copyright 2000. ISBN: 1563086417 (only hardcover is available)

## ASSIGNMENTS

1. Article Research Report (15%). . . . . Due Friday June 6<sup>th</sup> by midnite
2. Abstracts (15%). . . . . Due Friday June 27<sup>th</sup> by midnite
3. Key Concepts (15%). . . . . Due Sunday, July 6<sup>th</sup> by midnite
4. Journal/Database Indexing (20%) . . . . . Due Friday Aug 1<sup>st</sup> by midnite

## Grading Scheme

Assignments (see individual percentages above). . . . . 65%  
Class Participation (includes attendance; exercises/labs; discussion). . . . . 35%

## COURSE POLICIES

**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 where I will answer it. Please use "netiquette" (described below). Queries re: lectures and assignments should be posted in those boards. Private messages to may be sent to me at [judithj@sis.pitt.edu](mailto:judithj@sis.pitt.edu).

**NETIQUETTE:** It is important to write email messages or discussion board postings to your colleagues as if you were speaking to them face-to-face in class. Please exercise online courtesy and professional respect to others in the class at all times. Be sure to include your name at the bottom of all your email and discussion board postings.

**University of Pittsburgh Student Policies (Students with Special Needs: Physical or Learning Impairments):** If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you should contact both me ASAP and Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890 or (412) 383-7355 (TTY) or <http://www.dr.s.pitt.edu/> as early as possible in the term.

[from the Disability Resources and Services website] "Students seeking services from Disability Resources and Services on the basis of a disability are required to submit documentation to verify eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Protection under these civil rights statutes is based upon documentation of a current disability that substantially limits a major life function.

When the documentation is received at DRS and reviewed, a staff member works with the individual to determine reasonable and appropriate accommodations. DRS creates a Notification of Disability Memo to inform instructors of the recommended accommodations. It is the student's responsibility to deliver a Notification Memo to each instructor and to discuss the implications of these accommodations on the fulfillment of course requirements. Criteria for the source, scope and content of the documentation differs by disability."

**A letter from Disability Resources and Services should be submitted to the me at the start of the term.**

**Academic Integrity:** <http://www.pitt.edu/~provost/ai1.html> and <http://www.sis.pitt.edu/academics/integrity.html>

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism will not be tolerated. 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>. 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. The University's policy on plagiarism can be reviewed at <http://www.pitt.edu/HOME/PP/policies/02/02-03-02.html>.

**Assignments and Exercises:** Assignments are due by midnight on the due date. You are encouraged to ask for assistance with assignments. (NOTE: don't wait until the day or hour before an assignment is due!!)



### NAMES

On Assignments: Put the Assignment name and your name in the assignment itself. Assignments without names will have 2 pts taken off automatically.

On Electronic Files: Incorrectly labeled files do not transfer successfully (due to an identified bug in CourseWeb). Assignments should be labeled as denoted in Course Schedule (below). Files that turn up blank or late due to file name error will automatically have 2 points deducted from the grade. (See "Late Policy" below)



### LATE POLICY

Assignments are due by midnite 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 = A; two days late = A-, etc.) If late work appears to be unavoidable, you should communicate with the 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.

**Discussion Boards:** Class discussion forums have been set up so we may converse on topics related to the content of the course. Please do not put gripes or flames on the discussion board. You should always be respectful of others' ideas, but also feel free to share different perspectives or opinions.

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The final assessment of the your performance in this class will be based upon the following:

1. Class attendance is required.
2. The successful and timely completion of all assignments
4. Class participation (includes the following)
  - ▶ substantive participation in weekly lab exercises/discussions
  - ▶ The accurate and timely completion of exercises/labs







WEEK	TOPIC	READINGS
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b></p> <p><b>June 10</b></p>	<p><b>WRITING THE ABSTRACT</b></p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I will go over the steps (and thinking) of actually writing an abstract.</li> <li>2. I will focus on how to write clear, concise sentences.</li> </ol> <p><u>Before class you should have:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listened to that presentation (take notes; write down any questions you have for Tuesday nite class)</li> <li>2. Done the weekly reading(s).</li> <li>3. Prepare for the in-class exercise (following the instructions posted).</li> </ol> <p><b>IN-CLASS:</b> exercise on writing abstracts.</p>	<p>Cleveland, Ch 8 (121-31)</p> <p>Lancaster Ch 8</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>6</b></p> <p><b>June 17</b></p>	<p><b>WRITING THE ABSTRACT</b> - continued</p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will continue practice writing abstracts.</li> <li>2. We will continue practicing how to write clear, concise sentences.</li> </ol> <p><u>Before class you should have:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reviewed the presentation for Week 5, if necessary (take notes; write down any questions you have for Tuesday nite class)</li> <li>2. Done the weekly reading.</li> <li>3. Prepare for the in-class exercise (following instructions posted).</li> </ol> <p><b>IN-CLASS:</b> more practice in writing abstracts.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">---</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7</b></p> <p><b>June 24</b></p>	<p><b>IDENTIFYING KEY CONCEPTS</b></p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will move from the more broad approach of abstracts to understanding what key concepts are (and how they relates to the abstract of and subsequent indexing for an information resource document).</li> <li>2. We will learn how to identify key concepts in articles.</li> </ol> <p><u>Before class you should have:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listened to the presentation (take notes; write down any questions you have for class)</li> <li>2. Done the weekly reading(s).</li> <li>3. Read the articles in preparation for the class/lab. (Info posted in Week 7).</li> </ol> <p><b>IN-CLASS:</b> practice identifying key concepts</p> <p><b>INTRO TO ASSIGNMENT 3 : Key Concepts</b> - Due Sunday July 6<sup>th</sup> by midnite</p> <p><b>DUE this week: ASSIGNMENT 2 : Abstracts - Due Friday June 27<sup>th</sup> by midnite</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TBA</p>

WEEK	TOPIC	READINGS
<p><b>8</b></p> <p>July 1</p>	<p><b>IDENTIFYING KEY CONCEPTS</b> - continued</p> <p>We will continue working on learning how to identify key concepts in a selection of articles. Info for this will be posted in Week 8.</p> <p><b>IN-CLASS:</b> practice identifying key concepts</p>	<p>---</p>
<p><b>9</b></p> <p>July 8</p>	<p><b>Database Indexing - Introduction</b></p> <p><u>Objectives:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I will go review the purpose and procedures for database indexings.</li> <li>We will go through the steps of indexing a journal article using the ASIST Thesaurus.</li> </ol> <p><u>Before class you should have:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listened to the presentation (take notes; write down any questions you have for class)</li> <li>Done the weekly reading(s).</li> <li>Prepare for the in-class exercise (following instructions posted).</li> </ol> <p><b>IN-CLASS:</b> practice using the ASIST thesaurus</p> <p><b>INTRO TO ASSIGNMENT 4 : Journal/Database Indexing</b> - Due Friday Aug 1<sup>st</sup> by midnite.</p> <p><b>DUE this week: ASSIGNMENT 3 : Key Concepts - Due Sunday, July 6<sup>th</sup> by midnite.</b></p>	<p>Cleveland Ch 5 – skim read pp. 48-55) AND</p> <p>READ WELL: Cleveland Ch 6</p>
<p><b>10</b></p> <p>July 15</p>	<p><b>Database Indexing - Journal Set 1</b></p> <p><u>Objective:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will begin indexing journal articles using 3 assigned thesauri.</li> <li>We will provide feedback on your indexing for each other.</li> </ol> <p><b>IN-CLASS:</b> practice indexing journal articles using assigned thesauri</p>	<p>Skim read: Cleveland Ch 4</p>
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>July 22</p>	<p><b>Database Indexing - Journal Set 2</b></p> <p><b>IN-CLASS:</b> practice indexing journal articles using assigned thesauri</p>	<p>---</p>
<p><b>12</b></p> <p>July 29</p>	<p><b>Database Indexing - Journal Set 3</b></p> <p><b>IN-CLASS:</b> practice indexing journal articles using assigned thesauri</p> <p><b>DUE this week: ASSIGNMENT 4 : Journal/Database Indexing</b> - Due Friday, Aug 1<sup>st</sup> by midnite</p>	<p>---</p>

Readings list and lists of articles to be indexed and abstract will be provided separately.