

 **UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**
SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND
INFORMATION STUDIES
LIS 598: Information Policy
Course Syllabus
Winter 2017

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Calendar Description:

An examination of the government policies in Canada that shape the production, transmission, dissemination, storage, access, use and destruction of information. The course also investigates major and current trends in information policy and the impact of such policies on libraries and other information intensive workplaces.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, a student should be able to:

1. Evince an awareness of the government policies that shape the information lifecycle
2. Understand and analyze the theories, trends and influences on information policy
3. Advocate on behalf of librarians, libraries, professional organizations, patrons and the public on information policy issues
4. Contribute to local, regional and national discussions on information policy

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- Drawing on class readings, discussions and assignments students will be able to analyze how both publicly and privately ordered information policies affect information workplaces and be able to develop strategies for advocating and engaging in policy discussions.
- Through readings, discussions and the writing of an essay, students will evaluate various trends and influences in information policy and be able to critically assess how these trends and influences shape policy creation and implementation.

Content:

History and scope of information policy; trends and issues in information policy; access to information; privacy; surveillance; copyright; innovation; open government; open data; open access; telecommunications policy; broadcast policy.

Methods:

Lectures, guest lectures, readings, online discussions.

Course Relationships:

Pre-requisite: LIS 501

Required Texts: None

Assignments and Weighting:

Class Discussion and Participation

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|--|-------|
| Discussion for Course Modules (4 x 5%) | – 20% |
| Overall Participation | – 5% |

Information policy and information workplaces paper – 20%

Final Paper and Constituent Elements

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|--|-------|
| Paper Outline and Annotated Bibliography | – 10% |
| Executive Summary | – 5% |
| Final Paper | – 40% |

School of Library and Information Studies Grading Statement:

Grades reflect professional judgements of student achievement made by instructors. These judgements are based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in class. The instructor should mark in terms of raw scores, rank the assignments in order of merit, and with due attention to the verbal descriptions of the various grades, assign an appropriate final letter grade.

Academic Integrity:

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at <http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/>) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

Students should also be mindful of the SLIS Copyright Policy

(http://www.slis.ualberta.ca/Resources/~media/slis/Documents/Resources/SLISPoliciesandDocuments/SLIS_Copyright_Policy.pdf).

Inclusive Language and Equity:

The Faculty of Education is committed to providing an environment of respect for all people within the university community and to educating faculty, staff, and students in developing teaching and learning contexts that are welcoming to all. The Faculty recommends that students and staff use inclusive language to create a classroom atmosphere in which students'

experiences and views are treated with equal respect and value in relation to their gender, racial background, sexual orientation and ethnic background. Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Specialized Support and Disability Services.

Recording of Lectures:

Recording of lectures is permitted only with the prior written consent of the professor or if recording is part of an approved accommodation plan.

Policy about course outlines can be found in [Section 23.4\(2\)](#) of the University Calendar.

Assignments:

General Assignment Guidelines:

In addition to fulfilling the assignment requirements, other key considerations in the evaluation of assignments include:

- In a graduate course you are expected to think and do beyond the minimum – you should aim for an exemplary assignment and not simply a satisfactory one
- Well-articulated submissions contain strong arguments and are well supported by literature/references and/or examples
- For written assignments you will want to ensure a high quality submission by including an introduction and conclusion, and good organization making use of headings and sub-headings
- All material taken from published work must be attributed including websites. You should acknowledge the use of another writer's ideas or arguments, even if you have not used the same words in expressing them. All direct quotations must include page numbers (if available)
- Items in a bibliography or reference list may be cited according to any standard format; however, regardless of format consistency is required and you must ensure that the citation/reference contains the minimum elements necessary for another to locate the work
- The Writing Quality component of written assignments evaluates adherence to rules of grammar, syntax and spelling along with adherence to formatting and length guidelines and proper citation practices
- All assignments must be well formatted, presentable and well-articulated
- The submission **should not include name of the student (please include only the Student Number to identify the assignment)** and all pages must be numbered
- Format Specification - Margin: 1" all sides, Font Type: Times New Roman, Font Size: 11/12pt, Line spacing: 1.5 line spacing (with the exception of the Executive Summary component of the Final Paper)
- Students are required to follow submission guidelines to avoid penalties on their submissions
- Assignments must be submitted via the Assignment Submission area in eClass. Note all assignments are due by 23:55 MST on the date on which they are due.
- Penalty for late assignments is 5% per day including weekends. Assignments more than 7 days late will not be accepted, and the eClass submission section will no longer accept submissions one week after the due date

Note: If you have any question about the assignment, please feel free to discuss with the instructor.

Information Policy and Information Workplaces Paper – 20% – Due Feb. 6

Students are required to write a paper examining how an information policy (e.g. Access to Information, copyright, etc...) shapes information workplaces including but not limited to libraries. Students must examine how the information policy affects the information lifecycle and information flows in the workplace as well as how the policy affects librarians/information workers.

In addition to examining how an information policy shapes information practices in information workplaces, the paper should also address the role of library and information workers in contributing to the policy development process. In this regard, discussion may focus on a historical/previous contribution by librarians and information workers to policy development, or on the need for future advocacy and engagement with policy development. If librarians/information workers have been absent from involvement in the policy development process, you may also choose to explain why this is the case.

Assignment evaluation is as follows:

- Analysis of the effects of a policy on workplace information flow/lifecycle – 6 marks
- Analysis of the effects of a policy on information workers/librarians – 6 marks
- Analysis of the contributions of information workers to policy development – 6 marks
- Writing Quality – 2 marks

Papers should be roughly 5 pages (1.5 line spacing).

Term paper – 3 parts, 55% total – Part 1 Due Feb. 26, Parts 2 and 3 Due Apr. 12

The term paper, composed of three parts, is designed for students to demonstrate their grasp of a topic in information policy. The term paper is meant to provide the students an opportunity to develop a research paper that they may pursue for publication. The assignment, specifically the Executive Summary, also requires students to summarize a policy problem and make recommendations to a non-expert and non-academic audience. Students are not limited to examining the information policies or trends on information policy discussed in the course, but if they chose to investigate a subject not covered in the course they must discuss this with the professor. All students are strongly encouraged to discuss their paper with the instructor over the course of the semester.

Paper Outline and Annotated Bibliography – 10% – Due Feb. 26

An outline of the paper which includes a rough outline of paper sections and a paragraph describing the scope and focus of the paper along with an annotated bibliography containing at least **12 relevant sources (minimum)** is due Feb. 26. Students are not required to have a thesis statement or main argument for the paper at this point, but a specific policy issue/problem should be identified.

For the 12 annotated sources (minimum) students should provide a **four to five sentence annotation** briefly outlining the scope of the source and its relevance. Sources can include grey literature/policy materials, but **at least 8 of 12 sources should be scholarly (peer reviewed) sources.**

Assignment Evaluation is as follows:

Outline – 5 marks

Annotation of sources – 5 marks

Students are strongly encouraged to discuss the topic and scope of the paper with the instructor in advance. The outline and preliminary bibliography, along with instructor feedback will serve as a key part of preparation for the final paper.

Executive Summary – 5% – Due Apr. 12

In addition to the Final Paper, students must submit a one page Executive Summary that summarizes the issue, identifies policy recommendations, evaluates the risks and practicality of various policy recommendations and recommends a specific course of action. In addition the Executive Summary should be written in a manner that it could be easily understood by someone with no background in the subject. Furthermore, it should be **written in non-academic language and at an eighth grade reading level.** For reference, most major newspapers are written at an eighth grade reading level.

The Executive Summary should be single spaced, but absolutely no longer than a single page (note: this is the only assignment/assignment component that should not have 1.5 line spacing).

Assignment Evaluation is as follows:

Summary of issue/problem – 1 mark

Policy recommendations and their evaluation – 2 marks

Written at eighth grade reading level and for a non-academic audience – 1 mark

Writing quality – 1 mark

Please submit the Executive Summary and Final Paper as a single file (eClass will only allow a single file submission) with the Executive Summary as the first page.

Final paper – 40% – Due Apr. 12

Students are required to write a term paper that investigates a specific information policy problem/issue. The paper should:

- Have a clear and manageable scope and focus that examines an information policy
- Have an identifiable thesis or main argument
- Be well structured, with a clear introduction, body and conclusion (and reference section)
- Be well researched drawing on both academic sources and relevant policy literature from government, international and non-governmental sources
- Have a clear discussion of policy recommendations to address the issue/problem

Papers are expected to be approximately 4,000 words in length excluding references. Please include the word total at the end of the paper. There is no mandatory format for citations/references, though if students wish to pursue publication of their paper, they may choose to format their paper in accordance with the target publication venue's submission guidelines. Additional guidelines for writing an effective term paper can be found in the "Considerations for Writing and Effective Term Paper" document contained within the General Course Materials section at the top of the eClass site.

Assignment Evaluation is as follows:

- Introduction, problemization and thesis – 5 marks
- Literature and policy review – 8 marks
- Analysis and discussion – 14 marks
- Policy recommendations and conclusion – 5 marks
- References (depth of research and formatting) – 4 marks
- Writing quality – 4 marks

Please submit the Executive Summary and Final Paper as a single file (eClass will only allow a single file submission) with the Executive Summary as the first page.

Class Discussion and Participation – 25%

Class participation is an integral part of the class. Students must participate in the discussions, which will require active engagement with the lecture, readings and other discussion posts of students and the instructor.

The evaluation of class participation is divided into five components. Such a division is intended to provide students with on-going feedback throughout the term as well as an overall assessment of participation at the end of the course. The five components are:

- Discussion in each module (4 modules total) – 5% per module, total 20%
- Overall participation – 5%

Discussion Groups

In order to facilitate a manageable level of discussion each week, the class has been divided into four Discussion Groups (Groups A, B, C and D). Please see the "Discussion Groups" document within the General Course Materials section at the top of the eClass site to determine which group to post in. Note that all Discussion Groups and posts are visible to all members of the class (not just Discussion Group members); however, for assessment purposes you are expected to make your required posts for each module (discussed below) within your Discussion Group. Posts made to other Discussion Groups will be considered part of the Overall Participation grade. Note that it is possible students will be reassigned to a different Discussion Group if a substantive difference in the number of group members emerges as a result of student withdrawals (affected student(s) will be notified by the instructor).

Discussion Expectations within Each Module

The course has been divided into four modules each lasting three weeks (see the Timetable section below for the specific division of topics/modules). Each week will have a discussion question that can be used as a starting point for the weekly discussion. 5 marks will be awarded to students that complete the minimum requirements for participation in each module. At the end of each module the instructor will provide students an assessment of their participation within each module. Within each three week module students must:

- Make at least **one Substantive Post in two of the three weeks**. A substantive post is a post of approximately 750 words that engages with the lecture **and** readings for the week and specifically addresses the weekly discussion question.
- Make at least **two Response Posts in two of the three weeks**. A response post is at least 150 words and comments directly on previous posts in the weekly discussion. Note that a set of two Response Posts can be made in a week in which a student does not make any Substantive Posts, but to fully meet the requirements there must be two posts within a week to satisfy the requirement.
- At least **one Original Source Post within a module** (made in any of the three weeks) of at least 300 words that comments on a source other than the weekly readings that is relevant to the discussion. The source may be a scholarly source, policy material, or a news story relevant to the weekly topic. In the 300 words the student should briefly summarize the source and comment on its relation to the weekly topic. Note that to obtain full marks the Original Source Post must be distinct from the Substantive and Response Posts.
- Note that it is possible to fully meet the module discussion requirements by only posting in two of the three weeks, provided that each week contains a Substantive Post, two Response Posts and at least one Original Source Post between the two weeks.

Examples of Satisfactory Posting within a Module (full 5 marks)

Example 1

Week 1 – 1 Substantive Post, 2 Response Posts

Week 2 – 2 Response Posts

Week 3 – 1 Substantive Post, 1 Original Source Post

Example 2

Week 1 – No posts

Week 2 – 1 Substantive Post, 2 Response Posts

Week 3 – 1 Substantive Post, 2 Response Posts, 1 Original Source Post

After the completion of each module the instructor will provide students an assessment for the module based on meeting the above criteria. This mark will be based on meeting (or not meeting) the minimum requirements and will not include an evaluation of individual posts. Students are not required to inform the instructor of which posts are made to meet the requirements as this should be clear. In the case of any uncertainty the instructor may follow up with a student to clarify.

The final 5% of the participation grade will be assessed by the instructor at the completion of the course. This final share of the participation grade will assess the overall quality and quantity of each student's participation over the entire course, including participation beyond the minimum requirements within modules.

Timetable of Modules and Weekly Topics:

The course is divided into four modules each lasting three weeks as follows:

Module 1 – Foundational and Theoretical Issues in Information Policy (Jan. 9 to Jan. 29)

Week 1 – Scope and Definition of Information Policy (Jan. 9 to Jan. 15)

Week 2 – The Information Society? (Jan. 16 to Jan. 22)

Week 3 – Trends and Issues in Information Policy (Jan. 23 to Jan. 29)

Module 2 – Government Information Policy (Jan. 30 to Feb. 19)

Week 4 – Access to Information and Government Information (Jan. 30 to Feb. 5)

Week 5 – Privacy (Feb. 6 to Feb. 12)

Week 6 – Surveillance and Intelligence (Feb. 13 to Feb. 19)

Winter Term Reading Week (No Discussion) (Feb. 20 to Feb. 26)

Module 3 – Intellectual Property and Innovation (Feb. 27 to Mar. 19)

Week 7 – Copyright (Feb. 27 to Mar. 5)

Week 8 – Open Content Policies (Open Data, Open Access) (Mar. 6 to Mar 12.)

Week 9 – Innovation Policy (Mar. 13 to Mar. 19)

Module 4 – Communication Policy (Mar. 20 to Apr. 9)

Week 10 – Telecommunications Policy (Mar. 20 to Mar. 26)

Week 11 – Internet Policy (Mar. 27 to Apr. 2)

Week 12 – Broadcasting Policy (Apr. 3 to Apr. 9)

Note there will be no discussion during the final, shortened week (Apr. 10 to Apr. 12)

Readings:

Week 1 – Scope and Definition of Information Policy (Jan. 9 to Jan. 15)

Braman, Sandra. 2011. "Defining Information Policy." *Journal of Information Policy*, 1: 1-5.

Trosow, Samuel E. 2010. "A Holistic Model of Information Policy." *Felicitier*, 56(2): 46-48.

Week 2 – The Information Society? (Jan. 16 to Jan. 22)

Bell, Daniel. 1999. *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting*. New York: Basic Books. Foreword, "Foreword 1999," (p. ix-xxiv, and lii-lxiv).

Giddens, Anthony. 1991. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge, U.K.: Polity. Chapter II (p. 55-78). <http://www.library.ualberta.ca/permalink/opac/4795047/WUAARCHIVE>

Webster, Frank. 2014. *Theories of the Information Society*. 4th Ed. London: Routledge. Chapter II, "Definitions," (p. 10-23).

Week 3 – Trends and Issues in Information Policy (Jan. 23 to Jan. 29)

Cope, Jonathan. 2015. "Neoliberalism and Library and Information Science: Using Karl Polanyi's Fictitious Commodity as an Alternative to Neoliberal Conceptions of Information." *Progressive Librarian*, 43: 67-80.

Harvey, David. 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford. Chapter I, "Freedom's Just Another Word..." (p. 5-38).

<http://www.library.ualberta.ca/permalink/opac/4276269/WUAARCHIVE>

Howlett, Michael. 2009. "Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada." *Canadian Public Administration*, 52(2): 153-175.

Week 4 – Access to Information and Government Information (Jan. 30 to Feb. 5)

Larsen, Mike and Walby, Ben. 2012. "Introduction: On the Politics of Access to Information." In *Brokering Access: Power, Politics, and Freedom of Information Process in Canada*. Mike Larsen and Kevin Walby (Eds.). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press. (p. 1-23 (**note** this is not the whole chapter)).

Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. 2016. "Access to Information and Privacy Statistics Report, 2015-16." <https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/hgw-cgf/oversight-surveillance/atip-aiprp/sr-rs/2016/bulletin39bpr-eng.asp>

Wakaruk, Amanda. 2014. "What the Heck is Happening up North: Canadian Federal Government Information, Circa 2013." *DttP: A Quarterly Journal of Government Information Practice and Perspective*, 42(1): 15-20.

Week 5 – Privacy (Feb. 6 to Feb. 12)

Schwab, Sandra. 2016. *Defining Privacy: A Critical Investigation of Canadian Political Discourse*. Master's Thesis. University of Alberta. Chapter 2 "Privacy" (p. 7-32).

<https://era.library.ualberta.ca/files/c6h440s749#.WHNS8IMrJaQ>

Privacy Commissioner of Canada. 2016. 2015-16 Annual Report to Parliament: Time to Modernize 20th Century Tools. Chapter 3 "Consent and the Economics of Personal Information" (p. 27-32) and Chapter 4 "Reputation and Privacy" (p. 33-38).

https://www.priv.gc.ca/media/4160/ar_201516_eng.pdf

Week 6 – Surveillance and Intelligence (Feb. 13 to Feb. 19)

Foucault, Michel. 1979. *Discipline and Punish*. New York: Vintage. Part III, Chapter III, "Panopticism," (p. 195-228 (skip 195 to 199)).

Lyon, David. 2007. *Surveillance Studies: An Overview*. Cambridge, UK: Polity. Chapter III, "Explaining Surveillance," p. 46-70.

Week 7 – Copyright (Feb. 27 to Mar. 5)

- CCH Canadian Ltd. v. Law Society of Upper Canada (CCH v. Law Society). 2004. 1 S.C.R. 339, 2004 SCC. <http://scc.lexum.org/decisia-scc-csc/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/2125/index.do>
- Nair, Meera. 2013. "The System of Copyright." In *MediaScapes – New Patterns in Canadian Communication*, 4 ed. Leslie Regan Shade (Ed). Nelson Education, 2013. Linked via <https://fairduty.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/mnair-system-of-copyright.pdf>
- Owen, Victoria. 2014. "The Librarian's Role In The Interpretation Of Copyright Law: Acting In The Public Interest." *Feliciter* 60(5): 8-12.

Week 8 – Open Content Policies (Open Data, Open Access) (Mar. 6 to Mar 12.)

- Canada – Science.gc.ca. 2015. "Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications." <http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=F6765465-1>
- Gurstein, Michael. 2011. "Open Data: Empowering the Empowered or Effective Data Use for Everyone?" *First Monday* 16(2): <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/3316/2764>
- Peterson, A.T., Ada Emmett, and Marc L. Greenberg. 2013. "Open Access and the Author-Pays Problem: Assuring Access for Readers and Authors in a Global Community of Scholars." *Journal of Library and Scholarly Communication*, 1(3): 1-8. <http://jisc-pub.org/articles/abstract/10.7710/2162-3309.1064/>

Week 9 – Innovation Policy (Mar. 13 to Mar. 19)

- Feschuk, Scott. 2010. "The Beer Index is Definitely Down," *Macleans*, Sept. 30, 2010: <http://www2.macleans.ca/2010/09/30/the-beer-index/>
- Rogers, Everett M. 2003. *Diffusion of Innovations*. New York: Free Press. Chapter XI, "Consequences of Innovations," (p. 436-471).
- Schumpeter, Joseph. 1950. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. 3rd Ed. London: Routledge. Chapter VII, "The Process of Creative Destruction," (p. 81-86). <http://www.library.ualberta.ca/permalink/opac/6002395/WUAARCHIVE>

Week 10 – Telecommunications Policy (Mar. 20 to Mar. 26)

- Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). 2016. "Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2016-496." <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2016/2016-496.htm>
- McNally, Michael B., Rathi, Dinesh, Evaniew, Jennifer and Wu, Yang. (Forthcoming). "Thematic Analysis of Eight Canadian Federal Broadband Programs from 1994-2016." (Preprint posted in eClass).
- Taylor, Gregory. 2013. "Oil in the Ether: A Critical History of Spectrum Auctions in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Communication* 38(1): <http://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/2600>

Week 11 – Internet Policy (Mar. 27 to Apr. 2)

Birdsall, William F. 2000. "The Digital Divide in the Liberal State: A Canadian Perspective," *First Monday*, 5(12):

<http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/viewArticle/820/729>

CRTC. 2015. "Broadcasting and Telecom Decision CRTC 2015-26."

<http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2015/2015-26.htm>

van Deursen, Alexander J. A. M., and Helsper, Ellen J. 2015. "The Third-Level Digital Divide: Who Benefits Most from Being Online?" *Studies in Media and Communications*, 10: 29-52.

Week 12 – Broadcasting Policy (Apr. 3 to Apr. 9)

Armstrong, Robert. 2010. *Broadcasting Policy in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, Chapter IX, "Social Issues," (p. 143-162).

CRTC. 2011. *Navigating Convergence II: Charting Canadian Communications Changes and Regulatory Implications*. Ottawa, ON: CRTC. Section 3.2, "Consumption," (p. 36-46), Section 3.4, "Evolution of Program Rights," (p.56-57), and Section 3.6, "Regulatory Considerations," (p. 58-62). <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/rp1108.pdf>