IST 601: Information & Information Environments

Point of Contact: Prof. Martha Garcia-Murillo (mgarciam@syr.edu)

Class Time: August 23rd and 24rd, 2014, 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location:

You are expected to begin work on this course before arriving on campus, doing the required reading and completing the information literacy and scholarship modules as well as your essay (Deadline August 14th). You are encouraged to browse the school’s website at http://ischool.syr.edu before class and be familiar with the three graduate programs, since students from these programs will be your teammates.

You must attend the entire day on both Saturday and Sunday. **Availability for group work will also be required on Saturday evening.** The course ends at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday.

**Description**

This interdisciplinary course is the first required course for master’s degree students at the School of Information Studies. It brings together entering students from all of the school’s master’s level programs to share their perspectives on various issues and topics. The main objective is to make students aware of how their specific course of study relates to those of the other iSchool graduate students. In addition, students are exposed to the school’s scholarly expectations as well as the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship that prevails at the iSchool.

**Course Objectives**

- To learn about the information field and its evolution.
- To foster innovative thinking in solving organizational problems.
- To learn about innovation processes within the context of the information field.
- To understand the challenges associated with changes that happen as a result of innovation.
- To become aware of three main of the information field (resources, technology and policy)
- To make students aware of graduate work and expectations.

**Grading Criteria**

This is a pass/fail class. If you don’t receive at least 70% of the total score you could fail the class.
Required Readings
All readings are to be completed before the course starts. Students will be expected to integrate what they have read into their assignment, class discussions and team work. The readings will be linked at the class website in our learning management system (LMS).

Here is the direct URL to bookmark your access to the iSchool’s learning management system: URL: http://blackboard.syr.edu. Please log in with your NetID and password. Questions regarding Blackboard should be directed to ilms@syr.edu.

There are several themes that run through IST 601: innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, collaboration, technology, policy and resources. The readings below will begin to introduce you to these areas.

Readings about the information field

Required

Recommended

These readings explain the evolution of the information field as well as its key contributors and makes you aware of the latest development in computing that is making possible the collection of massive amounts of data from all sorts of contexts.

Reading about information resources


Recommended


**Reading on information policy:**

**Reading on information technology:**

**Required**

**Readings about innovation and creativity**

**Required**

**Recommended**


We expect you to be a contributor, an enabler, and a problem solver – in short an innovator. This reading presents some of the traits of a successful information professional. While it focuses on universities these skills are applicable to all sorts of organizations.

Reading about group work


Other resources

While these are not directly applicable to IST 601, they are resources that you will soon want to explore.

iCareers at Syracuse University
https://ischool.syr.edu/current/career/Default.aspx

Syracuse University Career Services: Main Webpage
http://careerservices.syr.edu/

Syracuse University Career Services: Graduate Student Career Guide (online)
http://careerservices.syr.edu/pdf/grad.pdf

Syracuse University Career Services: Resume and Cover Letter Writing Tip
http://careerservices.syr.edu/masters/Resumes_and_coverletters.html
Assignments

1. Quiz from the "becoming a scholar" modules
Go to the class website http://blackboard.syr.edu, where you will complete the "becoming a scholar" modules at the end of which you will find a quiz. Successful completion of the modules and quiz will constitute this portion of your grade. You also need to obtain a minimum score of 18 in the evaluation of the information literacy and scholarship modules.

2. Issue Brief (1000 word maximum)
Several of the readings for the class address innovation and innovation in the information field. They provide examples where innovation can take place, the manner in which innovation can occur, and the challenges that organizations encounter when they need to change as a result of an innovation.

For your individual issue brief (1000 words maximum), we expect you to incorporate the main ideas from at least two of the required readings and at least three more scholarly (not websites) peer-reviewed articles to answer the following question:

Using the readings to elicit your imagination, think of a situation from a previous job or from an organization you interacted with where an innovative solution could have been beneficial. For your essay make sure that your essay address the following questions: what was the problem that you observed? Why was it a problem? And most importantly What would you have done to solve it? Here we are looking for your own innovative ideas as well as the manner in which information and technology could be used. What are the challenges that you think you may have encountered if you had implemented your idea? I know that some of you may not yet be familiar with your field and may not have any professional experience either. In this case you can use experiences that you may have had as a student or a consumer. For this assignment the description of the solution (half of the answer) is much more important than the description of the problem. In graduate work, it is more valuable to deeply explore a specific example than to present a broad overview of a general topic. Make sure that you incorporate the readings and appropriately cite them into your essay. Please note that this is a formal essay which needs to be written and presented in a professional manner.

Write your name and the name of the program you are pursuing at the top of the page. Use calibri 12 pt font, 1.5 space and list your references using APA style.

The essay is due on Thursday August 14th at midnight. Please upload your assignment to the ILMS webpage of the course. Refer to the appendix for grading criteria.

The maximum number of points that you can receive on this assignment is 25 and a minimum of 18 is necessary to pass the class.

3. Team Case and presentation
Prior to class, every student will be assigned to a specific class section and to a specific team within that section. Each team will work on solving a problem. Your team's presentation will thus involve planning for the innovative use of information and technology in a specific situation. Your section instructor will provide the specific problem you're your team will try to solve.

The team is expected to use and cite ideas from the assigned readings as well as conduct your own additional research. Teams are expected to work outside of class – in other words, in the evening – for this group work.

Each team will give an oral presentation (using PowerPoint or equivalent) on Sunday morning that describes the solution to the problem that the instructor provided. The solution, ideally should be innovative and even entrepreneurial.

Computers will be available for presentation but students must provide their own storage media to bring the file to the classroom.

4. Participation
The class will be divided into sections, each led by one of the professors, where you (students) will present your team assignment. You should come prepared to be active participants in the section discussions.

Attendance will be taken each day of class, both in the sections and in the larger assembly. You are expected to be present at every session. Skipping a session will impact your overall grade.

Academic Integrity
The academic community of Syracuse University and of the School of Information Studies requires the highest standards of professional ethics and personal integrity from all members of the community. Violations of these standards are violations of a mutual obligation characterized by trust, honesty, and personal honor. As a community, we commit ourselves to standards of academic conduct, impose sanctions against those who violate these standards, and keep appropriate records of violations. The academic integrity statement can be found at: http://supolicies.syr.edu/ethics/acad_integrity.htm.

Student with Disabilities
If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), http://disabilityservices.syr.edu, located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.
You are welcome to contact Blythe Bennett privately to discuss your academic needs, although she cannot arrange for disability-related accommodations. She can, however, assist with your interaction with the Office of Disability Services. Blythe can be reached at (315) 443-5445 or by e-mail babennet@syr.edu.

**Syracuse University Policy on Religious Observances**

It is the policy of Syracuse University that no student should be refused admission or be expelled because he or she is unable to participate in any examination, study or work requirement because of his or her religious holy day requirements. An opportunity will be provided to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may have been missed because of an absence due to a religious observance providing that the professor has been notified in writing one week before the absence. Students will not be charged any fees for costs incurred by the University for such make-up work. In effecting this policy, the University agrees that no adverse or prejudicial effect should result to any student who avails herself or himself of its provisions. (Academic Rules and Regulations, 2.1)

**iSchool’s Learning Management System (LMS)**

The iSchool uses the Syracuse University’s Blackboard system to facilitate distance learning and main campus courses. The environment is composed of a number of elements that will help you be successful in both your current coursework and your lifelong learning opportunities. To access Blackboard, go to the following URL:  http://blackboard.syr.edu. Questions regarding Blackboard should be directed to ilms@syr.edu or Peggy Brown at (315) 443-8144.
### Appendix: Rubric for issue brief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Needs Much Improvement</th>
<th>Needs Some Improvement</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complied with Assignment Requirement</strong></td>
<td>The text does not comply at all with the assignment requirements. [0-1 pts.]</td>
<td>The text complies with many of the assignment requirements. [2 - 4 pts.]</td>
<td>The text complies with all aspects of the assignment requirements. [5 pts.]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>The material is not organized logically. Information that would help is organization is missing. The material is difficult to comprehend because it is not logical. [0-1 pts.]</td>
<td>The material needs some reorganization in order to improve its flow and to aid the reader. Information may be missing (e.g., the conclusion). [2-3 pts.]</td>
<td>The material is organized logically and in a way that aids the reader. The material includes an introduction and conclusion, with both being well written. [4 pts.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style &amp; Clarity</strong></td>
<td>The text is not well written. It contains numerous grammatical and/or typographical errors. The writer does not use punctuation well. Run-on sentences are prevalent. Formatting is not helpful to the reader. [0 - 1 pts.]</td>
<td>The text contains a few typographical and/or grammatical errors. In general, the writer uses punctuation appropriately. [2 pts.]</td>
<td>Word usage and sentence construction would be appropriate for a professional piece (e.g., journal article). There are no errors. Writer has used formatting appropriately (information design). [3 pts.]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong></td>
<td>The writer has stated information/facts and has provided no or erroneous analysis. [0 pts.]</td>
<td>The writer has stated information/facts and has provided limited (obvious) analysis. [2 pts.]</td>
<td>Analysis provided is appropriate for a professional piece (e.g., journal article). [4 pts.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence</strong></td>
<td>The writer has provided no evidence (or out of date) to support the person’s point of view or analysis. [0 pts.]</td>
<td>The writer has provided some evidence to support the person’s point of view or analysis. The person has not challenged himself (herself) to locate more than a few pieces of evidence and thus had not demonstrate an ability to &quot;dig deeper.&quot; [2 pts.]</td>
<td>The writer has provided evidence in the text and in &quot;Works Cited&quot; or &quot;Reference List&quot; that support the person’s thoughts and analysis. All of the citations are formatted correctly. [4 pts.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creativity in presenting innovative solution of the problem</strong></td>
<td>Lack of creativity; few or no innovative uses presented[0-1 points]</td>
<td>Some creativity and some innovative uses demonstrated.[2-3 points]</td>
<td>Creativity adequately demonstrated through innovative uses. [4-6 points]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Highest Possible Score = 25*

*Passing Score = 18 or above*