Course Description

To study the objectives, principles and methods of evaluating digital information sources (especially databases), for advising users in selecting databases and Web sites most appropriate for their information needs, and for making database licensing decisions. Prerequisite: 601 or 670.

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1: Understand, apply and articulate the history, philosophy, principles and ethics of library and information science and the related professions
   1a) Apply LIS theory and principles to diverse information contexts
   1c) Develop and apply critical thinking skills in preparation for professional practice

SLO 2: Develop, administrate, assess, and advocate for information services by exercising principled communication, teamwork and leadership skills
   2b) Work effectively in teams

SLO 3: Organize, create, archive, preserve, retrieve, manage, evaluate, and disseminate information resources in a variety of formats
   3a) Demonstrate understanding of the processes by which information is created, evaluated, and disseminated
   3c) Search, retrieve and synthesize information from a variety of systems and sources

SLO 4: Evaluate and use the latest information technologies, research findings and methods
   4a) Evaluate systems and technologies in terms of quality, functionality, cost-effectiveness and adherence to professional standards
   4b) Integrate emerging technologies into professional practice
   4c) Apply current research findings to professional practice

Course Learning Objectives

• To learn about the criteria that are appropriate for objective evaluation of information resources
• To become familiar with the virtues and vice of digital information resources
• To understand the role of librarians and information specialists in recommending databases for users, and for licensing by the library

To learn the theory and practice of evaluating and comparing the content of databases.

Research Methods

The case study as a method and form of research is incorporated in the readings, assignments and lectures of this course.

Students engage in this form of qualitative and quantitative descriptive research by gauging studying and comparing the composition and size of the databases, the extent and volume of coverage of the types, language and format of sources, the quality of the content of sources (including clarity, comprehensiveness, currency, utility, relevance and pertinence to the target audience (users in public, special, school, and academic libraries) through assignments and readings, and synthesize the collected information, rating the specific databases on a scale from 0 to 4.
Technology Requirements
The following are the basic requirements for this course
Creating Word and Excel documents by specified sets of criteria
Using the Internet for collecting, processing and presenting information in both print and digital format.
Using predominantly subscription-based databases available through the Hawaii State Public Library, UH, and –for school librarians- the DOE databases, as well as appropriate Open Access databases.
Creating visual summaries in Word, Excel and PowerPoint to summarize the findings of their research in a succinct and visually enlightening format with highlighted and annotated graphs, charts, tables and evidentiary screen-shots.

Methodology
A combination of lectures, demonstrations, and class-room discussions about readings, experiences, opinions, current events related to the topics.

Professional Expectations
All students in the Program are expected to become familiar with and adhere to the Professional Expectations posted at http://www.hawaii.edu/lis/students.php?page=profexp

Assignments Learning Outcomes

1. Assignment to compare the variety, objectivity, and balance of books about religion-based crusades and terrorist activities in Amazon.com versus Books in Print versus the state or university library holdings
2. Assignments that require groups to reach a consensus in evaluating and grading the quality of the content of Books in Print and Amazon
3. Assignments to determine the size, composition, topical coverage, time span, journal base, breadth of coverage of 3 library
4. All assignments are supported by required readings reporting about both classical and very current research findings. Students must grade 10% of the readings by specific criteria, and suggest 5% for removal/addition along with succinct justification

Course Assignments and Grading
Initial group paper 20%
Individual evaluations of readings (Sessions 1-4) 5%
Mid-term group paper 30%
Individual evaluation of readings (Sessions 6-9) 5%
Individual term paper 35%
Individual evaluation of readings (Sessions 11-15) 5%

675-Guidelines for the assignments
675-Guidelines for the readings’ evaluation and recommendations

Students shall form at the start of the course small groups of three people. The Initial and mid-term papers are to be submitted as a group work. The term paper and the evaluation of readings will be individual assignments. Late submission will be penalized by deducting 5 points for every 24-hour delay starting at 5:00 p.m. on the day they are due. Derivative works based on existing guides are not acceptable even if acknowledged and this principle will be vigorously enforced. The content and its organization must reflect the students’ choices and opinions about the source. No findings and opinions reported/presented by other students at the Student Presentation sessions can be used in late submissions.

Readings and Instructional Materials


The following additional articles are the minimum required readings. Some of them cover several topics, others
are focused on a specific topic of the course as indicated. Students are urged to follow cited references and/or do their own research for further papers on the subjects.

http://www2.hawaii.edu/~jacso/675/675-reading-list-fall-12.htm

The slides to be presented during classes will be also made available as digital notebooks in a series of PowerPoint files before the session starts.

I will provide access to all the required readings in digital format for your convenience. In return I expect you to explore, find and read additional materials, and use databases intensively.

Most of the readings cover several topics related to database content evaluation, not just the specific ones assigned to the sessions. This helps you to understand the context.

Outlines

Session 1  Course Overview, Introduction to Database Content Evaluation
Session 2  Digital Resources, Producers and Publishers
Session 3  Database Content Evaluation Criteria
Session 4  Database Subject Scope
Session 5  Student presentation of Initial Paper and related readings
Session 6  Database Dimensions I.  - Size and Composition
Session 7  Database Dimensions II.  - Time Span, Depth, Currency
Session 8  Database Source Coverage, Types of Sources, Journal Base
   Database Geographic & Language Coverage
Session 9  Record Content - Special Metadata.
Session 10 Discussion of issues of Mid-term Paper
Session 11 Student presentation of Mid-term Paper and related readings
Session 12 Accuracy, Consistency, Completeness.
   Quality of Subject Indexing & Abstracting
Session 13 Cited References as Special Record Content
   Discussion of issues about Term paper
Session 14 Students’ presentations of Term paper and related readings
Session 15 Beyond Full-text.

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