



# School of Information Sciences

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**Course Profile:** Information Behavior

**Course Number:** INF 7500

**Credits:** 3

**MLIS Prerequisite(s):** INF 6080 or consent of the instructor

**MSIM Co-requisite(s):** INF 6000

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## **Rationale for Inclusion in Curriculum:**

Information behavior refers to the totality of human behavior in relation to sources and channels of information. It encompasses a wide variety of topics such as information needs and barriers, information seeking process and models, and information use. Knowledge about how people interact with information and how the interaction is mediated by technology is of vital importance for providing efficient and meaningful service to patrons, and for the design of user-centered information systems.

This course provides an examination of peoples' recognition of their information needs, the actions they may take in resolving those needs, the role of information professionals in supporting those actions, the use of information, and the further dissemination of information. The course will equip students with necessary knowledge in future work such as library services, HCI, information retrieval, and systems design.

## **Course Objectives:**

The objectives for this course include:

1. To introduce students to the literature related to information seeking, including the recognition of information needs, actions toward resolving needs, the roles of intermediaries, and the retrieval and use of information.
2. To explore the ways in which information is created, disseminated and used in a variety of contexts and how the use of information is affected by those contexts.
3. To explore the role and impact of technology in communication.
4. To refine students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills related to information seeking and communication.
5. To provide students with a theoretical foundation for practical applications.

## **Learning Outcomes::**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. understand the range of information behaviors that accompany people in their various roles, contexts, and systems
2. understand problems associated with discovering and exploring the sources of information needs, patterns of information seeking behavior
3. become sensitive to the individual differences that information systems and services may need to accommodate
4. think critically and creatively about how people seek, find and use information
5. Apply the knowledge to the design or improvement of information sources, services and systems.

**Content:**

The following topics will be covered in this course:

1. identifying and analyzing information needs
2. recognizing barriers
3. information seeking process
4. information seeking methods and sources
5. information retrieval
6. information seeking in professional contexts
7. information seeking in everyday life
8. assessing the value of information we use
9. relevance
10. Information dissemination
11. Information behavior in organizational context
12. Information behavior of various types of users
13. User-centered design of information products, systems, and services

**Course Methodology:**

The course delivery methodology will include:

1. Lectures,
2. Readings,
3. Class discussions,
4. Field work

**Bases for Evaluation of Student Performance:**

The student's performance will be evaluated using:

1. Class participation,
2. Assignments applying the concepts covered in the class,
3. Reflective journals or blogs,
4. Projects.

**Text: To Be Determined**

**Approved: 1/12**

**Updated: 8/13**