



School of Information Sciences

Course Profile: Information Architecture

Course Number: INF 7470

Credits: 3

MLIS Prerequisite(s): INF 6080

MSIM Co-requisite(s): INF 6000

Rationale for Inclusion in Curriculum:

Information architecture (IA) involves the dissemination of information in a manner that takes into account context, content, and user. While typically associated with website development, information architecture is also key in user centered design system analysis and information research. Librarians have been pioneering the practices and developing the core tools of information architecture for hundreds of years. While it is true that there is no one official certification process or academic program for information architecture, an ALA-accredited MLIS degree is one of the key credentials for IA practitioners. The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with the theory and practice of information architecture, and to help students to leverage their skills and knowledge in the field of librarianship within the broad context and practice of information architecture.

Learning Outcomes:

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

1. Understand the basics of optimizing websites for search engines
2. Gain a solid comprehension of the definition and topics of information architecture
3. Learn the roles for information architecture in web design / redesign teams
4. Learn the basic tools used in by practicing information architects
5. Gain experience with organization structure, labeling and taxonomy design
6. Develop a working knowledge of user centered design and usability testing
7. Understand the issues currently being researched in information architecture

Content:

1. Introduction & History of Information Architecture
2. Principles of information architecture, including organization systems and user needs
3. Information architecture strategy development, based on principles of user centered design

4. Fundamentals of graphical user interface design
5. Creation of navigation blueprints and rapid prototyping techniques
6. Passive analysis & Heuristic evaluation
7. Organization structure, labeling and taxonomies
8. Search optimization and theory
9. Deliverables
10. Other domains closely related to IA practice, such as CMS, Project management, and usability analysis

Course Methodology:

1. Lectures
2. Readings
3. Hands-on assignments
4. Group project

Basis for Evaluation of Student performance:

1. IA concepts exams
2. Class participation
3. Assignments demonstrating practical application of the concepts covered in the class
4. Reports / Projects

Text: To Be Determined

Approved: 1/12

Updated: 8/13