COLLEGE OF INFORMATION STUDIES
Fall 2014

LBSC 620 Diverse Populations, Inclusion, and Information

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Preferred communication: Canvas messaging system
Follow me on Twitter - @mmsubram

OFFICE HOURS: Can be arranged by appointment

ONLINE COURSE SPACE: https://myelms.umd.edu/login

SYNCHRONOUS MEETING SPACE: URL will be distributed prior to meeting(s).

TWITTER HASHTAG: #lbsc620 (All students must have a Twitter account)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Information underlies virtually every interaction, is a vital social and political equalizer, and is a unifying thread throughout all human actions. Given the importance of equal access to information by all members of society, the study of information must be framed in the most inclusive terms possible, including issues of socio-economic status, education, geography, language, literacy, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, race ethnicity, and national origin. This course is designed to prepare future information professionals to develop and provide inclusive services to diverse and underrepresented populations, and to analyze and evaluate services to ensure equality of access to information in a range of institutional settings.

COURSE GOALS

The goals of this course are to introduce students to:
- The concepts of inclusion and equal access in terms of information;
- The social, political, and technological barriers to access in society;
- The specific information needs of various diverse and underrepresented populations;
- The history of the provision of services to underrepresented and diverse populations;
- The means of designing, implementing, analyzing, assessing, and evaluating information services in terms of equal access;
- The issues of diversity and underrepresentation in information education; and
- The importance of equality of information access to society.

These goals will be accomplished through exposure to a mix of history, pedagogy, practice, and
There is no textbook assigned for this course. All readings are listed at the end of this document, organized by weeks. All readings are available through Course Reserve (Modules link in Canvas), with the exception of articles with direct links to the entire article.

COURSE METHOD

In order to engage various learning styles in an online environment, this course will utilize a variety of instructional strategies to deliver the content for each week and various assessment methods to measure the achievement of learning objectives each week. There will be four synchronous meetings throughout the semester: (1) Introduction/first class; (2) Mid-semester meeting/guest lecture; (3) Diversity initiative presentation (Week 14) and; (4) Diversity initiative presentation (Week 15). The instructor will administer a Doodle Poll to find late afternoon/evening/weekend slots to conduct these synchronous sessions. All synchronous meetings will happen via Adobe Connect. In preparation for the Adobe Connect session, please make sure that you run the system test to ensure compatibility with Adobe Connect - https://umdischool.adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm

It is essential that every candidate read the course readings, participate in asynchronous activity planned for each week (if any), participate in the synchronous sessions and complete all the assignments. Candidates must read the assigned readings before completing the asynchronous/synchronous activity planned for each week (if any). Class lectures or notes for each week will be released at least ONE week before the actual topic discussion/activity. For example, the lecture notes for September 15 2014 will be released on September 8.

Based on critical examination of course readings, each candidate should develop an analytical stance concerning the issues in the course. The candidates are expected to question, challenge, argue, and discuss issues and topics related to that week's readings.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

As a graduate seminar, the classroom environment should be professional and respectful. Discussions should be based on course readings and critical thinking. Remember—others may have different perspectives on issues than you, but they still deserve your respect. It is expected that during synchronous sessions, you will devote your full attention to the classroom and not be engaged in other activities.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular participation in this class is the best way to grasp the concepts and principles being discussed. However, in the event that participation must be missed due to an illness, the policy in this class is as follows:
1. For every medically necessary delayed participation, a reasonable effort should be made to notify the instructors in advance of the class. The notification (can be in the form of a message through Canvas or phone call) must identify the week that your participation will be delayed and the reason for the delay, and acknowledging that the information provided is accurate.

2. If a candidate is delayed more than TWO times consecutively, the instructor may require documentation signed by a health care professional.

3. If a candidate is unable to submit an assignment before or on the due date, he or she is required to notify the instructor in advance (via a message through Canvas or phone), and upon returning to class, send the documentation of the illness, signed by a health care professional, via email.

EXTENSIONS

Timeliness is extremely important in graduate work, and extensions will only be available during personal emergencies. Candidates who need to request an extension should discuss the matter in advance with the instructor. If an extension is granted, the work must be submitted within the extension period to avoid grade penalties. Unexcused delays in submission of the assignments will result in a deduction of half of a letter grade for each day the assignment is late.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

Candidates with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Disability Support Services office, and (2) discuss any necessary academic accommodation with the instructor. This should be done by the second week of class.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Please check the University's inclement weather number (301-405-SNOW [7669]), which is used for inclement weather and other emergency situations. The University announces closings for snow early each day, not the night before. While local television and radio stations report on University closings, the information is not always correct. Information about the status of the campus is available at http://www.umd.edu/emergencypreparedness/. Information about possible rescheduling of synchronous activities and assignment deadlines will be provided via Canvas once the campus has reopened.
ACADEMIC HONESTY

Work submitted in this course will be individual (unless indicated as group work) and original, in line with the University’s Academic Honor Code and Honor Pledge. Engaging in any academic dishonesty will result in consequences in line with university policies. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to plagiarism, cheating, buying work, multiple submissions of the same paper, forging signatures, submitting fraudulent documents, and facilitating the academic dishonesty of others. When writing papers, be sure to carefully and thoroughly cite all materials you use in writing your paper and make sure all ideas and quotations are properly acknowledged.

GRADING

Candidates grade will be determined through performance on class participation, two group reflective papers, an interview assignment, the diversity initiatives paper and presentation and responses to presentations by other candidates in the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection on first scholarly reading</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection on second scholarly reading</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity initiative paper</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity initiative presentation</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses to diversity initiative presentations</td>
<td>100</td>
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Each component is expected to reflect the highest professional standards, and both substantive and technical quality will be considered in determining student’s grade for each. Thoroughness, accuracy, salience, and effective organization are required; correct English grammar, spelling, punctuation, and usage are expected. Adherence to University policies on matters of intellectual integrity is also imperative. Attendance at each class is required unless prior arrangements have been made.

Grade range that will be used to determine the final grade for this class is 95+ percentage will be an A; 90-94.9 percentage will be an A-; 85-89.9 percentage will be a B+; 80-84.9 percentage will be a B; and below 80 will be a B-.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module/Date</th>
<th>Topic(S)</th>
<th>Class Activity</th>
<th>Graded Assignments due 5.30 pm (EST)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) September 2 – September 7</td>
<td>Introductions Course Overview</td>
<td>Synchronous meeting via Adobe Connect – Date/Time to be determined via Doodle Poll Write a short introduction about yourself under the “Who am I? Why I am here” discussion board, you must provide answers to both of these questions 😊</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) September 8 – September 14</td>
<td>LIS and Inclusion</td>
<td>Watch Helen Turbull’s TedxTalk - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdV8OpXhl2g">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdV8OpXhl2g</a> Read guiding questions prior to watching and as you are reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) September 15 – September 21</td>
<td>Service to Underrepresented Populations</td>
<td>Read Lecture Notes prior to doing the readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) September 22 – September 28</td>
<td>Political, social and technological divides</td>
<td>Read guiding questions provided as you are reading</td>
<td>Scholarly Reflection One Due – September 22 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) September 29 – October 5</td>
<td>Information poverty and socio-economic status</td>
<td>Read guiding questions provided as you are reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>(6) October 6 – October 12</td>
<td>Race, ethnicity and national origin</td>
<td>Synchronous meeting via Adobe Connect – Date/Time: To be determined via Doodle Poll Must ask at least two questions to the presenters. Potential guest speakers: Dr. Kafi Kumasi (Wayne State) and Dr. Nicole Cooke (Illinois)</td>
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<td>Week/Date</td>
<td>Topic(S)</td>
<td>Class Activity</td>
<td>Graded Assignments due (EST)</td>
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<td>(7) October 13</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Read Lecture Notes prior to doing the readings</td>
<td><em>Scholarly Reflection Two Due – October 13 2014</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>– October 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>(8) October 20</td>
<td>Sexual orientation and gender identity</td>
<td>Watch pre-recorded lecture by a guest speaker</td>
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<td>– October 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>(9) October 27</td>
<td>Disability and age</td>
<td>Watch pre-recorded Adobe Connect lecture by Dr.</td>
<td><em>Interview assignment due – October 27 2014</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>– November 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Subramaniam</td>
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<tr>
<td>(10) November 3</td>
<td>Migration and immigration</td>
<td>Read guiding questions provided as you are reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>– November 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(11) November 10</td>
<td>Incarceration</td>
<td>Read Lecture Notes prior to doing the readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>– November 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>(12) November 17</td>
<td>Evaluation and assessment of services for diverse populations</td>
<td>Watch pre-recorded Adobe Connect lecture by Dr. Subramaniam</td>
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<tr>
<td>– November 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>(13) November 24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>– November 30</td>
<td>Holiday!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week/Date</td>
<td>Topic(S)</td>
<td>Class Activity</td>
<td>Graded Assignments due (EST)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(14) December 1</td>
<td>Diversity Initiatives Presentations</td>
<td>Synchronous meeting via Adobe Connect - Date/Time to be determined via Doodle Poll</td>
<td><em>Diversity Initiatives Presentation (due a day before you present)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>– December 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>(15) December 8</td>
<td>Diversity Initiatives Presentations</td>
<td>Synchronous meeting via Adobe Connect – Date/Time: To be determined via Doodle Poll</td>
<td><em>Diversity Initiatives Presentation (due a day before you present)</em> Responses to presentation – December 14 2014</td>
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<td>– December 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>(16) December 15</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Diversity Initiatives Paper – December 16 2014</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>– December 21</td>
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CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation points will be based on active participation during the 11 weeks where actual course content will be discussed, that is Week 2 through Week 12 (10 points per week, with an extra week to include missed participation due to sickness or other life commitments). Every week, candidates will do the following: (1) Complete the readings for the week; (2) View a pre-recorded lecture/webinar OR read lecture notes OR read the guiding questions OR attend a synchronous meeting; and (3) Complete the activity assigned for each week that will count toward the participation points.

To clarify point (3) above, for each week, the instructor will assign one activity that will count towards your participation points. For example, some asynchronous participation activities include providing responses to questions in the discussion board or writing tweets in response to a question/prompt posed. The specifics of the actual activity/question/response needed will be shared in the weekly pre-recorded lectures, lecture notes or guiding questions. Please take note that you will only be able to participate in these activities in a timely manner if you have completed the readings for the week, and have watched/read the lecture presentations/notes for that week. For the week that we meet synchronously (Week 6), you must ask at least two questions to the presenter(s), and this will count as participation points. The instructor will post the first half of the participation grade in Week 7 and the other half on Week 13.
REFLECTIONS ON SCHOLARLY WRITINGS
Due: September 22 AND October 13 at 5:30 PM EST

Although this is an online class, it is essential that we still have opportunities to engage in class discussions. As a result, for the two scholarly writing assignments, you will be randomly assigned through Canvas to groups of approximately 3-4 students. You will be placed in a different group for each reflection. You are expected to meet online with the members of your group using a web conferencing collaboration tool such as Skype, Google Hangout, Adobe Connect or any other tool of your choice. Whichever option chosen, a member of each group should inform the instructor of the meeting time **one week prior to the meeting** and provide information about the web conferencing tool that will be used. The instructor will likely drop in for at least a portion of each collaborative meeting. You should engage in a collaborative meeting at least once for each scholarly reflection. (Note: additional meetings are encouraged, but you need only to inform the instructor of one group session).

Your group reflections should be turned in via the Canvas assignments tab on or before the due date for each assignment. Only one member of each group needs to turn in a reflection, but please list each group member’s name on the assignment.

For each scholarly reflection, your team will respond to the following questions:

1. What were the main points or arguments that was evident in the readings assigned in Week 3 (for the first reflection due on September 22) or Week 6 (for the second reflection due on October 13)?

2. Do you agree or disagree with the authors’ main points/conclusions? Why so?

3. How does this week’s readings relate to other papers/materials that you have read/listened so far in this class?

4. What implications might these readings have for the development of e-government services/programs that meet the needs of underserved, underrepresented and/or disadvantaged populations?

Responses should be no longer than 3 single-spaced pages in 12 pt. type, with one-inch margins.
INTERVIEW WITH AN INFORMATION PROFESSIONAL THAT SERVE AS AN INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY

Paper Due: October 27 at 5:30 PM EST

One of the roles that you may take on when you graduate from this program is to serve as an information intermediary between government and the population that community that you are serving. Another potential could be holding a position in the government whereby you are the key communicator of your agency’s initiative to the general public. This assignment is designed to enable you to gauge what such professionals do and their agency’s or library’s commitment (or lack of) to ensuring that the needs of diverse populations are met and the services/programs/information provided is inclusive. Each candidate is expected to conduct an interview with ONE information professional that serve as an intermediary between government and community and submit an analytical and reflective paper based on the interview.

In your write-up, describe the agency/library that he/she works for, and the qualifications of the information professional and how long he/she has been in this position. Also, describe the roles and responsibilities of this information professional, including the design of programs/services that he/she is responsible for and other responsibilities. You will then find out if the information professional (and his or her agency) paid attention to political, social and technological divides and concept of inclusion that we talk about in this class – in designing and developing programs, services, assistance that they are providing. Regardless of his/her attention or knowledge to such diversity issues, probe him/her by asking specific questions about their target audience, needs analysis done, and how they incorporated feedback received from the community that they serve into the design of their services/programs (if any).

Do not identify the information professional and the agency/library that he/she works for in your report – you can use a pseudonym. Candidates will find an information professional of their choice, and it is recommended that candidates attempt to find this individual as soon as possible, and conduct an interview after Week 5. This assignment requires the administration of skills/knowledge learned in class sessions between Week 2 through Week 5. You must conduct this interview in-person or via phone/Skype/any other conferencing tools – email interviews are not allowed.

The write-up must not exceed 5 pages (single spaced) in 12 pt. type, with one-inch margins. Include the questions that you have asked the information professional in an appendix. Some preliminary examination of readings and advance planning will allow you to carry out an efficient and knowledgeable interview (about 30-45 minutes in length).
DIVERSITY INITIATIVES PAPER, PRESENTATION & RESPONSES TO PRESENTATION

Paper Due: December 16 at 5:30 PM EST
Responses due: December 14 at 5:30 PM EST
Presentation due: One day before your presentation date

This paper – not to exceed 8 pages single-spaced in 12 pt. type, with one-inch margins – should identify and examine the diversity initiatives at TWO information organizations (e.g., public libraries, archives, government agency etc.). These information organization must NOT be an information organization that you work or worked for, to obtain objectivity. The selected information organization cannot be the same organization where your interviewer (from the interview assignment) is affiliated with, to ensure that you gather different perspectives in this class.

You are expected to spend at least a half day (a minimum of four hours) during the semester at these information organizations observing and/or shadowing an information professional, make an oral presentation via Adobe Connect and submit an analytical and reflective paper about your observation and examination.

In addition, the website of each organization should be examined for posted policies about diverse populations and inclusive services, as well as any ongoing programs for specific populations. These materials should be analyzed and contrasted in terms of populations covered, types of inclusive services offered, extent and level of specificity of policies, and any other issues that seem important. Be sure to include the relevant URLs.

During each observation, you are to focus on the following issues, which also are the topics you are to address in your paper:

1. What are the policies that are in place that demonstrate these organizations commitment to diversity issues (or lack of commitment)? What criteria did you use to reach your conclusion? How are these institutions different (if they are)?

2. What are the aspects of diversity that these organizations pay attention to (i.e. race/ethnicity, gender, abilities, age, etc.)?

3. Do they have dedicated information professionals at these organizations whose primary or partial responsibility is to attend to diversity issues? If yes, delineate their responsibilities.

4. Describe examples of services/programs for diverse populations that you observed during your visits. What populations are targeted and how?

5. What were the most striking differences that you observed between these information organizations in terms of their attention to diverse populations? What were the reasons for the differences (in your opinion or based on evidences)?
6. What are the strengths of these information organizations in terms of providing services/programs/access to diverse populations? What are the weaknesses of these information organizations in terms of providing services/programs/access to diverse populations? If weaknesses are identified, what are your recommendations to these organizations to ensure that they meet the needs of diverse populations?

7. What were the most important things that you learned about effective information organizations that are committed to diversity, as a result of your observations?

In addition to the paper, information gathered is to be presented to the class in a 15-minute oral presentation (and 5 minutes of questions and answer session). Your oral report must be supported by a PowerPoint or other visual presentation such as Prezi, Popplet etc (check for compatibility with Adobe Connect). You must familiarize yourself with Adobe Connect and be comfortable to present using Adobe Connect. Submit your PowerPoint presentation or links to other visual presentation at least one day before your presentation, to ensure that the instructor is able to have it ready in Adobe Connect. Presentation dates will be determined via a Doodle Poll that will be distributed before the semester begins.

The analysis in the paper is to be guided by all seven questions listed above; however, your oral presentation must focus on questions 5, 6 and 7.

If you need assistance in identifying information institutions to visit, the instructor can provide you with the names and information organizations in the state of Maryland.

Additionally, you will be asked to respond in writing to specific questions about other candidates’ presentations. The questions, which will change for each presentation, will be designed to help you focus your attention on the elements of diversity at these information organizations.
READING LIST

WEEK 2: LIS AND INCLUSION

WEEK 3: SERVICE TO UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

WEEK 4: POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND TECHNOLOGICAL DIVIDES

WEEK 5: INFORMATION POVERTY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS
**WEEK 6: RACE, ETHNICITY, AND NATIONAL ORIGIN**


**WEEK 7: GENDER**


**WEEK 8: SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY**


**WEEK 9: DISABILITY AND AGE**


**WEEK 10: MIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION**


**WEEK 11: INCARCERATION**


**WEEK 12: EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF SERVICES FOR DIVERSE POPULATIONS**