Syllabus

LIS/KM 5413
Indexing and Abstracting
School of Library and Information Studies
University of Oklahoma
Fall 2012

Dr. June Abbas, Ph.D.
Online Course in Desire to Learn (learn.ou.edu)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION
From the Course Catalog: Prerequisite: graduate standing. History, principles, techniques and applications of indexing, abstracting, and vocabulary control. Critical analysis of the organization, preparation, evaluation, and use of indexes and thesauri. Includes file organization and maintenance, information representation and coding, natural language processing, and thesaurus construction. Examines the effects of indexing practices on information storage and retrieval.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Through the successful completion of this course the student will:
1. Become acquainted with some of the technical literature, methodologies, reference aids, and issues in the field of indexing
2. Gain knowledge of the principles and purposes of indexing in modern information retrieval systems.
3. Gain an understanding of thesaurus construction and controlled vocabulary in indexing.
4. Develop a proficiency at evaluating indexes, abstracts, and thesauri.
5. Develop a proficiency in basic index construction.
6. Gain an understanding of the role of information technology in modern indexing.

METHODOLOGY
The objectives of LIS 5413 will be accomplished through the following:
• Online class lectures and discussions
• Readings about subject representation and indexing and abstracting
• Participation in online activities and discussions
• Evaluation of application exercises and other course assignments
REQUIREMENTS

Textbook and Readings
Readings are required in both the textbook and the professional and scholarly literature. All readings complement and supplement class lectures and discussion. Class lectures are not specific to the readings but rather build on and synthesize the content of the readings. Although readings may be listed in connection with specific topics, several readings relate to more than one topic. Students should read the assigned materials before the appropriate class week. There is one required textbook for the class as well as an extensive readings list. The required textbook is:

- See the "Readings List" on the Desire to Learn (D2L) Contents page, Assignments folder for additional readings as well as a schedule of reading topics.

Discussion Lists
The following is a high-volume list, but you may consider joining it for the semester: Index-L http://www.indexpup.com/index-list/about.txt

Through groups.yahoo.com you may also consider joining: indexersdiscussionlist or indexstudents

Web Site
Please thoroughly peruse the website for The American Society of Indexers:
http://www.asindexing.org

Style Manual
In written reports, students are required to cite sources according to the format rules in the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition. This style manual is the official style manual of the College and of SLIS.

ASSIGNMENTS
The grade earned for this course will be based on the following assignments:

Application Exercises (40%)
A series of application exercises will be assigned throughout class and will focus on the practical application of indexing and abstracting techniques and tools, thesauri construction, and evaluation of existing indexes.

Thesaurus Construction Project (25%)
Students will have the opportunity to construct a subject (discipline)-specific thesaurus applying the standards, theoretic constructs and processes learned in class. Please refer to "Thesaurus Construction Project" assignment for further details.
**Readings Reactions (25%)**
This assignment gives students an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the fundamental concepts of indexing presented in the class readings and lectures and to read, think and write critically about issues central to the practice of indexing. Students will have the opportunity to be both Reactor and Respondent in this assignment. Roles of each are described further in the "Reading Reactions" assignment.

**General and Online Participation (10%)**
Students are expected to read assigned materials prior to the topic being discussed online, participate in online class discussions and activities, follow instructions for assignments, and meet deadlines.

Students are required to submit all assignments electronically using the course Dropbox feature. They are also expected to visit the site three to four times a week to read announcements, new course material, and communications.

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**GRADING**

**Grade Distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>% of grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application exercises</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesaurus Construction Project</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readings Reactions</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Grades indicate the degree to which a student completes assignments according to stated requirements. Grades are determined as follows:

A = 90-100 percent  
B = 80-89 percent  
C = 70-79 percent  
D = 60-69 percent  
F = 59 percent and below

The School of Library and Information Studies policy requires that any student receiving a grade of C in a required course retake the course. The Graduate College considers a grade of D to be a failing grade in terms of graduate degree credit. School of Library and Information Studies policy requires that any student receiving a grade of D or F be recommended for dismissal from the master's program.

**Grading Criteria: Participation**
As noted above, participation is a requirement. To effectively participate in this online course, the web site of the course should be visited at least three to four times a week to check for updates, announcements, and postings to the class discussion board. Student participation in the course through use of the course web site will be monitored through the course management system.
Elements included in the evaluation of participation in individual postings to the class discussion board are (1) evidence of critical thinking, (2) clarity of identification of the issues, (3) understanding of the topic(s) and issue(s), and (4) knowledge of available information resources for relevant topics of interest. It is expected that discussion will reflect reading related to the topic and give evidence of incremental progress in meeting course objectives through critical comments offered, questions asked, synthesis and understanding of issues demonstrated.

**Deadlines**
To facilitate timely grading, all assignments must be submitted on time. **One-half grade will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.** An exception may be made if a student absolutely cannot meet the deadline and notifies the instructor before the deadline.

**Grading Criteria: Application exercises and thesaurus construction project**
Both the substantive content of the assignment and the quality of the writing will be considered. Substantive content includes completeness and adherence to the assignment, knowledge of appropriate concepts, and application of indexing and abstracting principles and conventions. Quality of writing covers organization and clarity of expression, adherence to the format prescribed by the assignment, and correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

**Grading Criteria: Written reports**
Both the substantive content of the report and the quality of the writing will be considered. Substantive content includes completeness and adherence to the assignment, knowledge of appropriate concepts, strong supporting material, and reasonable conclusions or solutions. Quality of writing covers organization and clarity of expression, appropriate use of references, adherence to the format prescribed by the assignment, and correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. References must be made in Chicago author-date style (see above). **Up to one-half grade will be deducted for inaccurate references.** Students should be mindful of what constitutes plagiarism and giving appropriate attribution to resources and authors when writing the report. See below for information regarding SLIS and OU policy on academic integrity.

**Extra credit**
No assignments for extra credit will be made under any circumstances. A student who is having trouble with regular assignments is strongly encouraged to contact the instructor as early as possible for personal advising.

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**COURSE COMMUNICATION**

I encourage regular communication from students. You may reach me via email at any time. You may also schedule a meeting with me during my office hours. Meetings outside of office hours are possible if you give me enough notice I will try my best to accommodate you.

The course website also has a Discussion Board for all class discussions. If you have a question about class, the readings, the assignments, etc. you may post it to the Discussion Board, Questions forum as well. Remember, any message posted to this space can be read by ALL of your classmates, so do not post private email messages here.
POLICIES

Class Conduct
Students are expected to be prepared for each week's topic and online discussions by reading the assigned readings for the topic and completing all activities listed on the Course Schedule. As this is an online course students participating in online class discussions are expected to develop positive interaction skills that demonstrate mutual respect for others' ideas and approaches.

The instructor will be available for student consultation during office hours, by appointment, and via email, Skype, or phone.

Course Policies
This web-based course will be conducted in accordance with the web policies of the University of Oklahoma as stated at http://www.ou.edu/provost/

All participants are expected to welcome open expression of opinions, attitudes, and beliefs and to accept the legitimacy and value of dissent, whether the dissenting opinion is considered valid or not. In discussion conducted electronically, whether in the course web site discussion area, in the course chat room, or in email, participation is expected to reflect the tenor of a professional discussion among colleagues, just as is the case in discussion within a physical classroom. The instructor reserves the right to delete any forum postings or other posted class material that violates any of the policies stated above.

Student Evaluation of Course and Instruction
At the end of the semester, each student will be asked to complete a standard evaluation form that elicits opinions about the quality and relevance of course content and the quality of instruction. The instructor will not see course evaluations until well after grades have been turned in to the registrar's office. This student input is used by the instructor for improvement of teaching and by the School for annual assessment and tenure and promotion decisions. It is important that you be careful and accurate. This evaluation is administered online by the College of Arts and Sciences Director of Online Learning Programs.

Related Policies

Incompletes:
The Graduate College has strict conditions under which a student is given an incomplete in a regularly scheduled, letter-graded course. A grade of Incomplete (I) will be given only for a justifiable reason (due to unavoidable circumstances, not lack of planning on the student's part) and only if the student is passing the course. It is the responsibility of the student to request a grade of I and to meet with the instructor as early as possible to determine the requirements for completing the course. Any incomplete granted must be removed by the deadline specified by the instructor. The time limit set for removal of an incomplete will take into account the circumstances of the situation but may not exceed one calendar year.
As noted in the OU SLIS Graduate Student Handbook:

Fundamentally, responsibility for education at the graduate level belongs to the individual student. Faculty provide the basic frame in which the study is undertaken, offer assistance in setting the parameters of study, and serve as facilitators and mentors. This approach to the learning environment is particularly necessary as a conceptual framework for the development of information professionals who must exercise critical thinking, analyze problems, and design solutions as a daily part of their work life, who must be independent and lifelong learners who also function effectively as team members in a diverse and dynamic information environment.

It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays. Students who plan to observe a religious holiday should notify the instructor as soon as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements.

**Codes And Policies Of Behavior**

To protect its faculty and students, the School fully subscribes to the University's codes, policies, and procedures involving academic integrity and academic misconduct, grievances, sexual and ethnic harassment, and discrimination based on physical disability. You should acquaint yourself with both your responsibilities and your protections. Links are available from http://integrity.ou.edu/index.html.

**Special Accommodations**

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent full demonstration of the student's abilities should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate educational opportunities.

Please advise the instructor of such disability on the first day that this course site is open. The instructor will work with you and the Office of Disability Services to provide reasonable accommodations. The Office of Disability Services accepts requests from students for reasonable accommodation after the student has self-identified as an individual with a disability. The Office of Disability Services in Norman is located in Goddard Health Center, Suite 166, phone 405/325-3852 or TDD only 405/325-4173. Students in Tulsa should contact OU-Tulsa Student Affairs located at 4502 East 41st Street - OU-Tulsa Schusterman Center.

**Academic Integrity**

“Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities, and those privileged to be members of a university community have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty and a right to expect the same standards of all others. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the university and therefore is unacceptable and rigorously proscribed.” University of Oklahoma Academic Misconduct Code

You should review expectations for the academic integrity of your work by reading and reviewing the items posted at the URL listed below.
Academic Integrity
http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html

WRITING CENTER
Assistance in writing and in interpreting the standards for observance of the rules for use of ideas and material of others is available from the OU Writing Centers. Online assistance is available at http://www.ou.edu/content/writingcenter/.html. In Norman, the OU Writing Center is located in 280 Lissa and Cy Wagner Hall. In Tulsa the OU/Tulsa Writing Center is located in Schusterman Campus Building 3, Room 3109.

DISCLAIMER
This syllabus represents the plan for this course and will be followed to the extent that it is feasible to do so in meeting the instructional goals of the course and the needs of the class. However, it is not, and should not be interpreted as, a contract between the student and the instructor. If necessary, due either to unforeseen circumstances or to unanticipated variations in class progress, it may be changed or adjusted as needed

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