**IRLS553 Issues in Culture & Information Technology**

Instructor: Richard Chabran

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

*Draft*

"An examination of the cultural impact of traditional and future information systems on diverse populations."

At the most general level the course will explore how all information systems emerge from traditional and changing cultural practices. This course considers present and historical practices of communication within *selected* cultural communities. Institutions such as libraries, and museums which seek to selectively capture, organize and make accessible the products of these communications will be surveyed. The challenges and opportunities presented by the rise of advanced technologies will be explored.

This course will seek to establish a dialogue centered on the following major questions.

- What is cultural competency?
- Why consider information systems through a cultural lens?
- How does traditional definition of the printed word impact what is included in libraries?
- How do linguistic codes affect subject access in information systems?
- How do various versions of culture impact what is collected in museums and how it is presented?
- How does the rise of new information technologies impact low-income communities?
- What ethical issues are related to information technologies

Today librarians find themselves working in information environments that they may not have imagined. This course attempts to selectively present different information ecologies that are impacted by socio-historical events. The primary focus will be on Native and Latino peoples but will include other groups as well. The examples used will be illustrative rather than comprehensive.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

SIRLS competency C8: Students will demonstrate an understanding of how diversity contributes to the library and information professions and analyze information issues from diverse perspectives.

- Be able to provide examples of how cultural knowledge is not always included in library collections
- Be able to provide examples of how linguistic codes can be offensive to information seekers
- Be able to provide examples of how linguistic codes can obscure cultural information resources
- Be able to articulate the major challenges impacting diverse cultures in the new information age
- Become familiar with how to implement a culturally relevant content management system

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

All course material will be available through D2L, the Web, and Elluminate. We will also use other cloud-based tools such as Diigo, a blog, and Google Docs.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students will work through the course as a cohort rather than as independent learners. The approach will be to frame topics, provide a set of reading/web resources, and present questions to be answered in short weekly exercises. Students will be asked to summarize readings. Students will also be required to participate online activities. Students will share examples which are part of assignments. These examples which will be available on D2L are considered part of the assigned reading.

COURSE, SCHOOL, AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Academic Code of Integrity

Students are expected to abide by The University of Arizona [Code of Academic Integrity](http://tech.sbs.arizona.edu/node/2677). 'The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student's submitted work must be the student's own.' If you have any questions regarding what is acceptable practice under this Code, please ask an Instructor.

Accommodating Disabilities

The University has a [Disability Resource Center](http://tech.sbs.arizona.edu/node/2677). If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the Disability Resource Center and request that the DRC send me, the Instructor, official notification of your accommodation needs as soon as possible. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate.

Assignment Policies

- Submission: The papers are to be submitted usually by the d2l assignment Dropbox, which can be found as a link on the toolbar.
- Format, style and content: Content is all important in this course. Style should be plain and transparent (be guided by the classic Strunk and White Elements of Style).
- Late papers: There will be due dates and students are expected to meet them. With an online course like this, difficulties can arise (such as computers or d2l being temporarily out of service) and appropriate decisions will be made as needed.

Incompletes

The 1997-8 University of Arizona General Academic Manual, p.23 reads

The grade of I may be awarded only at the end of a semester, when all but a minor portion of the course work has been satisfactorily completed. The grade of I is not to be awarded when the student is expected to repeat the course; in such a case the grade of E must be assigned. Students should make arrangements with the instructor to receive an incompete grade before the end of the semester ...

If the incomplete is not removed by the instructor within one year the I grade will revert to a failing grade.

Participation in online resources such as D2L.
GRADING:

You will be expected to do graduate level work. I will be looking for thoughtful answers that demonstrate that you have engaged to readings and the questions they respond to. This means more than just summarizing the article. It goes to why the readings are relevant to either traditional or emerging information technologies.

Feedback on assignments and exams will be provided within a week of time submitted by email. Questions concerning grades must be raised within a week of the time you receive a grade.

Assignments: 60%

Participation: 20%

Final Exam/Paper/Project: 20%

Students begin with 100 points. Students lose points for late assignments, incomplete assignments, poorly written assignments, lack of participation, inaccurate information, using d2l to carry on personal conversations, etc. At the end of the semester the points will be converted to a letter grade as follows:

A=90-100 points for Superior Work: highest quality, ideas are discussed thoughtfully and well formulated; demonstration of a thorough understanding of the content and an openness to diverse perspectives. All assignments submitted on time with excellent written expression and grammatically correct.

B=80-89 points for Very Good Work: discussions indicate a good or very good understanding of content. Must complete assignments on time and be well written with few grammatical errors.

C=70-79 points for Marginally Satisfactory Work: meets minimum requirement; discussions reflect limited understanding or interest. Written work contains errors, needs editing, and not submitted in a timely manner.

INSTRUCTOR NAME AND CONTACT ADDRESSES:

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Guided exploration

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Audience
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Course: IRLS553
People: Adjunct Faculty » Chabran
Semester: Fall 11

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