IRLS588-011 ISSUES IN INFORMATION RESOURCES: Intellectual Freedom

Updated Wed, 04/07/2010 - 02:45

COURSE NAME, NUMBER AND PREREQUISITES:

[Prerequisite: IRLS 504 or consent of the instructor.]

Instructor: Kristy Kay Mathiesen

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Intellectual freedom has been characterized as "the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored" (American Library Association). This course will explore the ideal of intellectual freedom as the foundational value of the Library and Information Professions. We will consider accounts of the value of intellectual freedom and challenges to intellectual freedom in the form of arguments for various forms of censorship. By engaging with a range of viewpoints on these issues students will learn how to defend intellectual freedom while constructively engaging with members of the community whose values may differ.

Content of the Course

Intellectual Freedom is the foundational value of Libraries and the Library Profession. As the American Library Association points out, "As information professionals, librarians are in a unique position to promote and protect intellectual freedom for all people by selecting, producing, providing access to, identifying, retrieving, organizing, providing instruction in the use of, and preserving recorded expression regardless of the format or technology." In this course we will explore the historical and theoretical foundations of intellectual freedom and the special role that libraries and library professionals play as promoters of intellectual freedom.

Topics Covered Will Include:

- History of intellectual freedom and censorship in libraries
- The American Library Association's positions on intellectual freedom and censorship
- First amendment law and libraries
- Accounts of the value of intellectual freedom
- Types of censorship
- Arguments for and against filtering the internet
- Neutrality and bias in selecting books and other information resources
- Children's information rights
- Intellectual freedom and privacy
- Intellectual property as a justification for censorship
- Intellectual freedom in a multicultural and global context

Teaching/Learning Methods

This course will be delivered virtually via d2l. The material for discussion will be presented via podcasts, powerpoint presentations, written lectures, ellluminate sessions, etc. This course is writing and discussion intensive--students will engage via on-line discussion and presentations. Please note that given topic of this course, we may be considering some material that some students may find offensive due to its sexual, violent, or other sensitive content.
COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Successful completion of this course will help students achieve the A1, B7, C8, C9, C10 competencies outlined at http://sirls.arizona.edu/about/studentCompetencies. More specifically, by the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Know the history of censorship especially with regard to libraries and its relevance today.
- Know the basics of First Amendment law and its relevance to libraries.
- Know how to defend the value of intellectual freedom.
- Know and be able to critically evaluate the ALA's position on intellectual freedom.
- Understand how privacy, digital divide, classification, intellectual property impact intellectual freedom.
- Understand and be able to engage constructively in the debates around such issues as filtering the internet.
- Understand intellectual freedom in a multicultural and global context.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

Readings:

The readings for this course will be from various sources, book chapters, journal articles, and on-line lectures and guides. These readings will be made available via d2l.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Graded Assignments

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<tr>
<th>Graded Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Individual Project/Presentation: Each student will pursue an individual project on a topic chosen in consultation with the professor. Students will create an on-line presentation and lead a discussion on their topic.

Quizzes: There will be weekly quizzes on the reading assignments.

Short Assignments: Short writing assignments will ask students to do such things as dissect the readings, apply theories to cases, and defend positions on issues.

Participation: Students will be evaluated on the basis of both the frequency and the quality of their participation.

COURSE, SCHOOL, AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES:
Academic Code of Integrity

Students are expected to abide by The University of Arizona Code of Academic Integrity. '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. 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

- How to submit your assignments: Students should submit their assignments via the D2L drop box.
- Assignment due dates: All assignments and exams are due in the D2L drop box by midnight (MST) on the due date. (Due dates will be listed on the course schedule.) No late work will be accepted without a pre-approved excuse. You must contact me in advance to get approval to turn in work late. Even with permission to turn in work late, work may be docked as much as a third of a grade for every day it is late.
- Writing style: Student written work should be free of grammatical or spelling errors. All sources should be clearly documented. (Any documentation style is fine as long as it is used correctly and consistently.)

Incompletes

The current Catalog reads

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

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

GRADING:

The project and participation will be graded out of 100 on a percentage scale. Individual quizzes and writing assignments will be graded on a 10 point scale. The overall grade for the short assignments and for the quizzes will be assigned a final score out of 100. Final scores will not be rounded up--so, for example, if you have a 89.9 at the end of the semester, you will have a B.

The final grades will be given as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>89-80</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>79-70</td>
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INSTRUCTOR NAME AND CONTACT ADDRESSES:

Kay Mathiesen

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Office Hours TBA

email: kmathies at email dot arizona dot edu
Guided exploration

Click a term to initiate a search.

Audience
- for Students (92)
- for Faculty (28)
- for Alums (24)
- for Staff (17)
- for Prospective Students (7)
  more...

Course
- IRLS417 (2)
- IRLS418 (1)
- IRLS432 (1)
- IRLS470 (2)
- IRLS488 (6)
  more...

People
- Adjunct Faculty (152)
- Faculty (150)