IRLS 674 Preservation of Digital Collections

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COURSE NAME, NUMBER AND PREREQUISITES:

IRLS 674 Preservation of Digital Collections

Instructor: Peter Botticelli

For SIRLS M.A. students, the sole prerequisite is IRLS 504, or approval of the instructor. For DigIn students, there are no prerequisites for this course, although it’s recommended that IRLS 671 be taken first.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This three-credit course is one of six required for completion of the Certificate in Digital Information Management (DigIn). This course will introduce the basic problems associated with digital preservation. It will give students a thorough orientation to the technological and organizational approaches, which have been developed to address long-term preservation concerns. Finally, the course will examine the current state of the art in digital preservation and assess what challenges remain in research and implementation efforts. IRLS 674 addresses the following SIRLS Student Competencies: A1, A2, A3, B5, B6, B7, C8, C9, C10.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1) Orient you to the field of digital preservation and the basic problems it addresses.

2) Familiarize you with the key technical and organizational strategies for preserving digital objects.

3) Bring you up-to-date on current efforts to build preservation repositories and sustainable preservation programs.

4) Give you a historical perspective on how preservationists have addressed key problems, and suggestions on what direction the field may be moving in the near future.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

All readings for this course are available online. The majority can be accessed openly on the Web. Others can be accessed through the UA Library e-journal databases, and a few will be made available on a fair-use basis through the D2L.
platform.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

This course will combine some familiar activities—readings, lectures, short writing assignments, and a term project—with newer forms of online interaction and class discussion using the D2L platform.

The course will be taught asynchronously, so you will not be required to log in at any specific time. But this is not a self-paced course, so students will be expected to keep up with the weekly schedule in the syllabus. Also, as this is an evolving field, students should expect some minor changes to the syllabus as we go along.

The course content is divided into 12 units, with each unit lasting one week. At the start of each unit, the instructor will post a lecture on that week’s topic as well as notes giving feedback and updated information about the course. As a guideline, the lecture and accompanying readings for each unit should be read within four days, giving you three days to complete the unit’s mandatory discussion assignment.

Also, students will be asked to complete a semester project that develops a set of policies for preserving a digital collection. The policies must address short-, medium- and long-term risks to digital objects. Students will also choose in detail what aspects of their collection they wish to be preserved, and discuss what strategies are most appropriate to meet their preservation objectives.

**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**

Each assignment in this course will have a specific due date; this means that the date stamps provided by D2L must be the same as the due date. For this course, each unit will start and end on a Wednesday. Therefore, all weekly assignments for the previous unit should carry a Wednesday time stamp. However, as a grace period (and since Internet routing and D2L are less than 100 percent reliable), I will not count a weekly assignment as late unless it is time-stamped for later than 12pm on Thursday.

Late assignments are accepted with one point deducted per week for weekly assignments, and 4 points per day for the semester project. Thus, for postings up to one week late, 1 point will be deducted. Late weekly assignments will carry a maximum penalty of five points and 12 points for the semester project, so it is in students’ best interest to complete assignments even if they are significantly late.

Also, please note that for all late assignments I do not guarantee written feedback beyond the number grade. Exceptions to the late policy will be made, but only in the event of a serious emergency.

**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:**

*Weekly Class Discussion*

In grading the discussion forum for each unit, my main concern is that each posting make a substantive contribution to the discussion. This means that you need to do more than state an opinion, or respond to another’s position. You also need to provide a context for your argument, including supporting details and concrete examples. You also need to write in complete sentences and with correct grammar. Keep in mind that the purpose of assignments like this is to help you learn to communicate effectively in professional settings, particularly in the types of committees that play a big role in shaping the information professions. Thus, to fulfill the grade requirement you will need to contribute one or more posts with a cumulative total of at least 300-400 words, and realistically you should aim for about 500 words.

*Semester Project*

Detailed guidelines and minimum requirements for the term project will be forthcoming. In essence, you will be asked to develop a detailed set of policies for preserving a digital collection.

*Grading*

The final grade for the course will be based on the following elements:

- **Class discussion**: 300 points
  (12 weeks, 25 points each)

  Please note: It’s vitally important to complete all 12 of the weekly assignments, even if submitted late, as each weekly assignment is equal to 8 percent of the total points.

- **Semester Project**: 100 points

- **Course Total**: 400 points

**INSTRUCTOR NAME AND CONTACT ADDRESSES:**

Teaching is more than presenting information. It includes guiding the learning process, and helping students acquire skills as well as knowledge. Students should never hesitate to contact the instructor whenever they have concerns about how well they are doing. Not only will this help the students get assistance they need, it will also provide valuable feedback as to how the course can be improved.

For questions that may be of general interest to the class, please use my instructor’s discussion forum in D2L. For more specific questions or to discuss matters that are personal in any way, please use my UA email account:

“Peter Botticelli” <pkb@email.arizona.edu>

Also, if you are in Tucson, feel free to make an appointment for a face-to-face meeting.
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