

**LIS 640: Information Organization and Access
Section 01
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Spring 2024 Syllabus
Class Time: Mondays, 5:30-8:20 PM (Eastern)
Class Location: Online (via Teams)**

Instructor Information:

Professor: Dr. Colin Post

Email: ccpost@uncg.edu

Office: SOE 352

Office hours (via Teams): By appointment, schedule using [my calendar](#)

UNCG is located on the traditional lands of the Keyauwee and Saura. Let us venture to honor them with our work together.

Communication:

To me:

If you have a problem, concern, or question, please communicate with me. The sooner you come to me with any concern, the sooner we can resolve the issue. Don't hesitate to bring up any issue—major or minor. I'll be checking in with the whole class periodically to make sure the course is going smoothly on all fronts.

The best way to get in touch with me is via email (ccpost@uncg.edu). I will respond to all emails within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours during the weekend. I will also create a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) thread on the Canvas discussion forum. If I receive several similar questions, I'll post a generalized and anonymized version of the question there.

For more detailed questions about assignments, grades, and so on, I will want to schedule a meeting (via Teams) to discuss in-depth. You can schedule an appointment by visiting [my calendar](#).

From me:

You can expect to hear from me via email and through Canvas. I will send individual emails (to your UNCG email account) regarding things like specific questions about an assignment or following up on something from a class session. I will make general class announcements through Canvas.

Teaching and Learning Philosophy:

I believe that my role as a teacher is facilitating a collaborative and active process of knowledge construction. I don't have all (or even most) of the answers. My role is not to pass a clearly defined body of information directly to you, the student. While there is some foundational information relevant to professional practice that we will work through in this course, my main goal is to inspire inquiry, critical reflection, and creative thinking launching off from this

foundational information. I also hope to establish a space for us to all share in this inquiry, a space where we can all contribute and where everyone's contributions are valued.

Your role as a student is to be an active participant in the construction of knowledge. While aspects of the subject matter for this course may be entirely new to you, you are expected to contribute to the process by asking critical and inquisitive questions, making connections to your own experience, and embracing the unknown with curiosity. As an information professional, you will often be confronted with novel challenges that you need to solve by gaining new skills and wading into new areas of knowledge. I encourage you to treat the classroom as a safe space to develop the essential mindset of the 'reflective practitioner.'

Course Description:

Introduction to the theory, principles, concepts, standards, and methods of the organization of and access to information. (3:3, Core)

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

This class will focus in large part on [Program Learning Outcomes](#) (PLOs) 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, and 1.7.

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Describe the development and principles of the organization of recorded information. (PLO 1, 6)
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the standards, methods, and concepts related to information organization. (PLO 1, 4, 6)
3. Explain principles of access and retrieval tools such as inventories, bibliographies, catalogs, indexes, finding aids, registers, and other organizing entities. (PLOS 1, 3, 4, 6)
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of cataloging, authority control, controlled vocabularies, indexing and abstracting, and classification. (PLO 1, 2, 4, 6)
5. Articulate the importance of information organization and the roles of metadata in information organization. (PLO 1, 2, 4- 7)
6. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of organizational tools. (PLO 1-4, 6, 7)
7. Examine current library issues and their impact on the organization of collections. (PLO 1-7)

Teaching methods:

Course readings for each week will introduce key concepts, and we will begin to explore these concepts through asynchronous discussion board forums (more on this below). You are expected to complete course readings and discussion board posts *before* our weekly meetings. During our synchronous class sessions, we will further unpack the key concepts for the week through lecture, discussion, and activities that will help you to achieve the learning outcomes for the course. These weekly sessions will also provide time and space for us to build a community supportive of everyone's learning and growth. I will provide some introductory remarks and slides highlighting key concepts each session, but my formal lecturing will be balanced with interactive discussions and activities.

Attendance:

Attending the synchronous online class sessions each week will be a foundation for your success in the course. Because your and your classmates' learning in the course depends on these synchronous meetings, you will be expected to attend all synchronous sessions. I also understand that everyone has busy schedules and many commitments outside of class, so let me know ahead of time if you need to miss a class session for any reason and we can make accommodations.

Classes will be recorded to assist those that need to miss a synchronous session, as well as to provide an easy way to review class lectures and discussions. However, these recordings should not be circulated to anyone outside of the class.

Assignments:

Assignments are listed in the Assignment Table, in the Course Schedule below, and are available on Canvas. Each assignment will ask you to perform tasks, create examples, and/or provide analysis related to topics covered in this class. All assignments are due by the beginning (5:30 PM) of class on the date listed (see the assignment table and course calendar below).

Assignments need to be turned in via Canvas.

Late work policy: I am generally accommodating in receiving late work, though I appreciate if you let me know as soon as possible if you are not able to complete an assignment by the deadline. I do not assess a penalty for late work if arrangements for an extension have been made, or if the assignment is turned in within a day of the due date. Otherwise, late work will be docked 10% of the earned grade.

I have included brief overviews of the assignments below; full descriptions and grading rubrics for all assignments may be found on Canvas.

Assignment	Due Date	Percent of Final Grade
Everyday Information System	2/12	20%
Comparing Bibliographic Records	2/26	10%
Finding Aid	3/18	10%
Presentation	4/8	20%
Information System Report	4/26	20%
Discussions	Weekly	20%
Total		100%

Everyday Information System: You will select an information organization system that you use regularly (e.g. a music streaming service, an online shopping website) to consider how some of the principles of organizing information resources in libraries also apply in other contexts.

Comparing Bibliographic Records: You will examine bibliographic records for the same item from three different systems (two different library catalogs and a commercial retailer) and reflect

on the significance of the similarities and differences between how these various systems represent the same item to support the needs of diverse user groups.

Make a Finding Aid: As we will learn, finding aids are a type of metadata record for representing archival collections to potential users. You will have the opportunity to make a finding aid for your own personal archives (e.g. letters, documents, photographs, papers, both analog and digital).

Information Organization Standard Presentation: Working in groups of 2-3, you will create a presentation that provides a critical introduction to an information organization standard. Your group will create a video of the presentation to share with the rest of the class. We will devote a week of the semester to asynchronously viewing and commenting on each other’s presentations.

Information System Research Report: This is the culminating assignment for the course. You will select an information organization system used in a cultural heritage institution (library, archive, or museum) and assess how it functions to support essential user tasks. You will apply key concepts learned throughout the semester and consider how these concepts are working in practice in the context of a real world information system.

Discussions: We will be using the discussion forums to discuss key concepts and think through real-world applications and situations for ideas from the readings. Each week, I will post questions or prompts to think about as you read, and I will share other relevant items (e.g. stories on current events, links to interesting videos) to expand our conversation. Each week, you should make substantive and thoughtful contributions to the discussions. These contributions can be responses to my questions, comments on other students’ posts, or your own questions that you’d like to pose to the class. The goal is to sustain engaging discussions among the class on the forums and NOT for each student to make one post directly responding only to my questions. Participation in the discussion forums constitutes 20% of your overall class grade, based on points assessed each week. There is no strict quota or requirement for discussion forum posts, though you need to post *something* to the forum every week. For grading purposes, discussion posts need to be made **before the class meeting for a given week**, but you are welcome to continue ongoing discussions from previous weeks.

Grading:

Grade	Range	GPA	Meaning
A	95-100	4.0	Exceptional work: Student work exceeds expectations by demonstrating strong command of concepts, depth and originality of thought, and superb articulation of ideas.
A-	90-94.999	3.7	Outstanding work: Student work demonstrates solid command of concepts and completes all assignment requirements at a superior level.
B+	87-89.999	3.3	Very good work: Student work is squarely above average in grasp of course concepts, articulation of ideas, and completion of assignment requirements.

B	84-86.999	3.0	Good work: Student performance meets expectations for graduate-level work in library and information science.
B-	80-83.999	2.7	Marginal work: Student work demonstrates an incomplete comprehension of course materials, or the articulation of ideas may be underdeveloped; students may not complete all requirements of assignments.
C+	75-79.999	2.3	Unsatisfactory work: Student work is well below average and demonstrates inadequate comprehension of course concepts; significant requirements of assignments are not fulfilled.
C	70-74.999	2.0	
F	0-69.999	0.0	Failing: Student needs to retake course to achieve credit; student position in program may be at risk.

I = Incomplete; indicates inability to complete course requirements by the end of the term in which the course was offered. Students who take Incompletes are granted additional time to complete coursework, at which point the final grade is assigned, following the above rubric. Incompletes are only assigned after consultation with the Instructor and are only granted under exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control.

Note: This is a graduate-level course, and I will be assessing work and assigning grades accordingly. Earning a B in a graduate course is a fine accomplishment and will mark progress toward earning your MLIS degree just as well as an A grade.

Required Texts:

There are no textbooks required to purchase for this class. All readings will be made available through the Canvas site as PDF documents, links to ebooks available through UNCG Libraries, or free online resources.

Accommodations:

UNCG seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) in 215 Elliott University Center, 334-5440, oars.uncg.edu (<http://ods.uncg.edu/especially-for-faculty/>)

If you will need any accommodation in order to successfully complete the course, please contact OARS as soon as possible. I will be happy to work with you and OARS to make sure you are able to fully participate in the course.

Academic Integrity Policy and Student Ethics Statement:

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Integrity Policy, which you can find here: <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity-policy-pledge/>. Each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the university community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the university community.

Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Pledge as part of the admissions and/or orientation into the program. **UNCG recommends each new student sign the Academic Integrity Pledge during new student orientation:** <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/the-pledge/>

Students should recognize their responsibility to uphold the *Academic Integrity Policy* and to report apparent violations to the appropriate persons. Students who do not understand the *Policy* or its application to a particular assignment are responsible for raising such questions with their faculty member.

UNCG Plagiarism Policy:

- Plagiarism- Representing the words of another, as one's own in any academic exercise.
 - Plagiarism may occur on any paper, report, or other work submitted to fulfill course requirements. This includes submitting work done by another, whether a commercial or non-commercial enterprise, including web sites, as one's own work.
- Types and Sanctions
 - Failure to Cite References: Intentional or obvious failures to properly cite sources. Recommended sanctions range from requiring the student to re-do the paper to a zero on the paper
 - Submitting, as one's own, work done by or copied from another: Includes work done by a fellow student, work done by a previous student, or work done by anyone other than the student responsible for the assignment. Recommended sanctions range from F on assignment to a recommendation for expulsion
- **UNCG Acceptable Use of Computing and Electronic Resources Article 10-** (Anti-plagiarism policy: https://policy.uncg.edu/university_policies/acceptable-use/)

Students agree that by taking courses at UNCG, all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to an anti-plagiarism service for the detection of plagiarism. **I will not be conducting these reviews on all papers, but I will use this tool if it is warranted** All submitted papers may be included as source documents in the reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. UNCG's anti-plagiarism service is maintained by ITS. The currently used service can be identified by contacting 6-TECH at 336-256-TECH (8324) or 6-tech@uncg.edu.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools: We now have access to a range of easy-to-use tools powered by artificial intelligence that can assist in creative and critical work (e.g. ChatGPT). Because the application of these tools for tasks like writing complex documents is relatively new, rules and policies governing usage in academic settings remain nascent. I am not opposed to using these tools on principle, but any usage of these tools should be done responsibly and reflectively—just as with any other tool for supporting creative work. You can use these tools to brainstorm or think through difficult concepts, but you should not use these tools as a replacement for your own writing. **The usage of these tools to complete entire or significant portions of assignments will be regarded as plagiarism. Any direct quotation or paraphrasing of**

content generated by an AI tool should be cited like any other external source. You should also critically evaluate the output from an AI tool like you would any other external source. AI learns by processing data generated by humans and, as the saying goes, *to err is human*.

UNCG Copyright Ownership and Use Policy:

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro is dedicated to its mission of instruction, research and service. It is the policy of this University that its faculty, staff and students carry out their scholarly work in an open and free atmosphere, and that consistent with applicable laws and policy they publish the results of such work without restraint. Additionally, this University is administratively committed to providing an environment that maximizes the creative potential of its faculty, staff and students.

To that end, the University believes that support for and ownership of creative works should be given to the creator or creators of those works subject to the retention by the University of rights for internal educational use and research. Ownership of Copyright by the University is reserved for those works created at the direction of the University or pursuant to negotiated agreements. Additionally, the University supports the responsible, good faith exercise of full fair use rights by employees and students in furtherance of their teaching, research, service and other educational activities. This Policy implements these principles and commitments

(<http://policy.uncg.edu/university-policies/copyright/>)

Contrapower Statement:

As your instructor, I am committed to creating a productive and non-discriminatory learning environment of mutual respect. Title IX and UNCG's school policy prohibit gender-based harassment, sexual harassment, and sex discrimination for all members of the University community. Harassment can come in many forms - both direct and indirect - and can occur in subtle or overt ways. Traditionally, harassment is seen from a formal power-over structure. However, harassment can occur without a formal power structure. Contrapower, when a student harasses an instructor or peer, is a type of behavior that can create an intimidating environment in and outside of the classroom. Either form of harassment can include direct or indirect comments, physical intimidation, emails, anonymous notes, and course evaluations. Both Contrapower and traditional forms of harassment are prohibited and subject to the same kinds of accountability applied to offenses against protected categories, such as race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

If you experience or witness such instances of harassment, please seek out the following resources:

- UNCG Counseling Center (non-reporting agency/confidential): 336.334.5874
- Murphie Chappell, Title IX Coordinator (reporting agent): 336.256.0362 or mechappe@uncg.edu
- University Police (reporting agent): 336.334.4444

For more information on UNCG's policies regarding harassment, visit [UNCG Sexual Harassment Policy](#)

Health and Wellness:

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience.

You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at [Student Health Services](#), or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting [Spartan Recovery Program](#) or reaching out to recovery@uncg.edu.

Technology Support:

6-TECH ITS Service Desk: 6tech@uncg.edu, (336) 256-TECH, [\(336\) 256-8324](tel:336-256-8324), Open 24/7

[6-TECH Online](#), a web-based central access point for all of your technical needs! [6-TECH Online](#) will allow you to search for your own solutions from a global knowledge base, submit and view your own tickets, and more. All of these services available 24x7.

Note: [As a UNCG student you have access to Microsoft 365 products.](#)

Schedule:

Week	Topic	Reading for this class	Assignments due
1: 1/8	Why organize?	Borges	
2: 1/15	No class; MLK Jr. Holiday		
3: 1/22	Organizing information, organizational systems	Hoffman, Ch. 1; Feinberg	
4: 1/29	Resource description	Hoffman, Ch. 2; Riley	
5: 2/5	Bibliographic description	Hoffman, Ch. 3; Keenan; Riva et al., Ch. 3 and 6	Sign up for presentation group
6: 2/12	Authority control	Hoffman Ch. 4; Gross, Taylor, & Joudrey	Everyday information system
7: 2/19	Subjects	Change the Subject; Adler	
8: 2/26	Archival organization	Roe; DACS, pp. x-xxii; explore finding aids	Compare bibliographic records
9: 3/4	No class; Spring Break		
10: 3/11	Encoding data	Seikel & Steele; Eidson & Zamon	
11: 3/18	Classification systems	Hoffman, Ch. 5; Nunes; Hoerman	Make a Finding Aid

12: 3/25	Standards development	Hoffman, Ch. 6; Maron & Feinberg	
13: 4/1	Linked data in libraries	Carlson, Ch. 1-2; Kroeger	
14: 4/8	Library systems	Breeding; Pace	Submit presentations
15: 4/15	NO CLASS – Student presentations	Explore student presentations	
16: 4/22	Politics of organization	Bowker & Star, Ch. 1; Christen	
4/26	FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE		System Report

Readings:

All readings and other resources will also be made accessible via the Canvas site.

Adler, Melissa. 2017. “Classification Along the Color Line: Excavating Racism in the Stacks.” *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 1 (1).

Borges, Jorge Luis. 1998 (1941). “The Library of Babel.” In *Collected Fictions*, translated by Andrew Hurley, 112–18. New York: Penguin Books.

Bowker, Geoffrey, and Susan Leigh Star. 1999. *Sorting Things out: Classification and Its Consequences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. <https://uncg.on.worldcat.org/oclc/44963790>.

Breeding, Marshall. 2023. “2023 Library Systems Report.” *American Libraries Magazine*, May 1, 2023. <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2023/05/01/2023-library-systems-report/>.

Carlson, Scott, Cory Lampert, and Darnelle Melvin. 2020. *Linked Data for the Perplexed Librarian*. Chicago: American Library Association. <https://uncg.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1135089761>.

Change the Subject. Hanover, NH: Trustees of Dartmouth College, 2019. <https://n2t.net/ark:/83024/d4hq3s42r>

Christen, Kimberly. 2017. “We Have Never Been Neutral: Search, Discovery, and the Politics of Access.” Lecture, OCLC Distinguished Scholar Series. Available at: <http://www.oclc.org/research/events/2017/07-13.html>

Eidson, Jennifer G., and Christina J. Zamon. 2019. “EAD Twenty Years Later: A Retrospective of Adoption in the Early Twenty-First Century and the Future of EAD.” *The American Archivist* 82 (2): 303–30.

Feinberg, Melanie. 2022. *Everyday Adventures with Unruly Data*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

- Gross, Tina, Arlene G. Taylor, and Daniel N. Joudrey. 2015. "Still a Lot to Lose: The Role of Controlled Vocabulary in Keyword Searching." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 53 (1): 1–39.
- Hoerman, Heidi Lee. 2002. "Why Does Everybody Hate Cataloging?" *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 34 (1–2): 29–39.
- Hoffman, Gretchen L. 2019. *Organizing Library Collections: Theory and Practice*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. <https://uncg.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1099544085>
- Keenan, Teresa M. 2014. "Resource Description and Access: Cataloging Standards Affect Reference Service." *Reference Services Review* 42 (3): 446–66.
- Kroeger, Angela. 2013. "The Road to BIBFRAME: The Evolution of the Idea of Bibliographic Transition into a Post-MARC Future." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 51 (8): 873–90.
- Maron, Deborah, and Melanie Feinberg. 2018. "What Does It Mean to Adopt a Metadata Standard? A Case Study of Omeka and the Dublin Core." *Journal of Documentation* 74 (4): 674–91.
- Nunes, Zita Cristina. 2018. "Remembering the Howard University Librarian Who Decolonized the Way Books Were Cataloged." Available at <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/remembering-howard-university-librarian-who-decolonized-way-books-were-catalogued-180970890/>
- Pace, Andrew. 2009. "21st Century Library Systems." *Journal of Library Administration* 49 (6): 641–50.
- Riley, Jenn. 2017. "Understanding Metadata: What Is Metadata, and What Is It For?" Baltimore, MD: National Information Standards Organization. <http://www.niso.org/publications/understanding-metadata-riley>.
- Riva, Pat, Patrick LeBœuf, and Maja Žumer. 2017. "IFLA Library Reference Model: A Conceptual Model for Bibliographic Information." Den Haag, Netherlands: International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.
- Roe, Kathleen D. 2005. *Arranging & Describing Archives & Manuscripts*. Archival Fundamental Series II. Chicago: Society of American Archivists.
- Seikel, Michele, and Thomas Steele. 2011. "How MARC Has Changed: The History of the Format and Its Forthcoming Relationship to RDA." *Technical Services Quarterly* 28 (3): 322–34.