

Course Number & Name: LIS 421 - Social Informatics

Description: Social Informatics refers to the body of research and study that examines social aspects of computerization -- including the roles of information technology in social and organizational change and the ways that the social organization of information technologies are influenced by social forces and social practices. This graduate seminar is for students interested in the influence of information technology in the human context, including cultural heritage, professional concerns, and social inequities. The course introduces some of the key concepts of social informatics and situates them into the view of varied perspectives including readers, librarians, computer professionals, authors, educators, publishers, editors, and the institutions that support them.

- **Prerequisites:** None
- **Audience (level, environment/setting):** Masters and Doctoral; all areas, extending beyond library and information science
- **Student Learning Outcomes** [by number]: 5, 7, 9, 10
- **Topics/List of Lectures:**
 - Defining information, technology, and the professions that depend on them
 - Lessons from the history of technology
 - Technology-costs and benefits
 - Social relations in a keyboard world
 - Changing sense of the individual
 - The government and the social good/need
 - Social inequities-how are we divided?
 - Shifting notions of publishing and the “public word”
 - Scholarly publishing and the public good
 - Distance education and services-how far should we go?
 - Cultural heritage in a digital age
 - Altered views of professional roles and responsibilities
 - Scanning the professional horizon
- **Suggested Textbooks/Readings**
 - Block, Marylaine (Editor), (2003) Net Effects: How Librarians Can Manage the Unintended Consequences of the Internet
 - Pew Internet and American Life Project (pewinternet.org)
 - Kling R., Social Informatics and Why Does It Matter (1999) (<http://www.dlib.org/dlib/january99/kling/orikling.htm>).

- **Course History:**
 - February 1997: Added as a 530 course
 - January 2005: discussed at curriculum retreat; name and description change (voted in at February 2005 Faculty Meeting)
- **Document prepared by:** Robin Peek, 1/05