DISCLAIMER: This course outline is provided for informational use only. The specific content and assignments may change before the start of the course. Students registered to this course should retrieve the official course outline which can be downloaded from myCourses.

GLIS 655 - Language and Information - 3 credits
Syllabus

Class: Thursday - January 12 to April 6, 2017
Time: 08h30 to 11h30
Room: Education Bldg. Room 434

Contact

E-mail: elaine.menard@mcgill.ca
Phone: 514-398-3363 (Do not leave message on voice mail)
Office: SIS Building - Room 303A
Availability: By appointment only

Description (from McGill catalogue)

An explanation of the relationship between language and information science through consideration of: document representations for information retrieval; bilingual/multilingual systems; natural language processing; language barriers to information transfer.

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:
• Review the role of language as a potential barrier to communication as well as a facilitator of communication.
• Discuss the different approaches that can be applied to minimize the extent of such a language barrier.
• Describe the challenges of machine translation and script conversion and the techniques employed to achieve
• Compare the performance of machine translation systems
• Differentiate cultural and linguistic factors in the design of web pages
• Evaluate cultural and linguistic factors in actual web pages.

Methods

• To achieve a satisfactory understanding of the course material, students are expected to attend the lectures, read and comment on the readings, participate in discussions and in-class activities, and explore examples and tutorials.
• One project will be completed individually and two projects as team efforts. Students will be expected to make individual and/or group presentations. Students are also expected to participate to weekly activities.

Attendance

• Attendance to the lectures is mandatory and will be monitored.
• As a matter of courtesy, you must ensure to arrive before class starts.
• Please turn off all electronic devices during the class period.

Readings

• There is no textbook for this course. Individual readings will be recommended for the weekly topics covered in the course (see below). These readings will be found in myCourses.

General Information

- McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information.

- L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

- In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

- *Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).*

- The University Student Assessment Policy exists to ensure fair and equitable academic assessment for all students and to protect students from excessive workloads. All students and instructors are encouraged to review this Policy, which addresses multiple aspects and methods of student assessment, e.g. the timing of evaluation due dates and weighting of final examinations.

- © Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

- As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities, 514-398-6009.

- End-of-course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.

- In keeping with McGill's preparedness planning strategies with respect to potential pandemic or other concerns, the Administration suggests that all course outlines contain the statement: "In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

- Additional policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the McGill Charter of Students' Rights (see the Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities).

- McGill has policies on sustainability, paper use and other initiatives to promote a culture of sustainability at McGill. (See the Office of Sustainability.)

- Guidelines for the use of mobile computing and communications (MC2) devices in classes at McGill have been approved by the APC. Consult the Guidelines for a range of sample wording that may be used or adapted by instructors on their course outlines.

Email Policy and Procedures

- All emails to the instructor must be sent at: elaine.menard@mcgill.ca.
- To avoid lost emails, please include GLIS 655 and your full name (FIRST NAME and SURNAME) in the object box of any message sent to this address.
- All emails will be answered as quickly as possible.
- Emails posted in the evening will not be answered the same evening.
- Emails posted on Friday night will be answered no earlier than the following Monday.
- Email posted on a holiday will be answered no earlier than the first working day following the holiday.

- Students will be responsible for checking their email account regularly.
- Students should use their McGill University address at all time. Emails sent with other addresses will not be answered.

Evaluation

Project 1 - Essay	30%
Project 2 - Evaluation of machine translation systems	25%
Project 3 - Exploration of interface design and cultural diversity	25%
Participation to weekly activities (including guest speakers presentations) 10 x 2%	20%
	100%

Validation of learning outcomes

Learning outcomes	Weekly activities	Essay	Evaluation of machine translation systems	Exploration of interface design and cultural diversity
Review the role of language as a potential barrier to communication as well as a facilitator of communication.	X	X		X
Discuss the different approaches that can be applied to minimize the extent of such a language barrier.	X	X		X
Describe the challenges of machine translation and script conversion and the techniques employed to achieve	X		X	X
Compare the performance of machine translation systems	X		X	X
Differentiate cultural and linguistic factors in the design of web pages	X			X
Evaluate cultural and linguistic factors in actual web pages.	X			X

Assignments

- No extension, delay or late assignments will be accepted. The only acceptable circumstances for an extension or a delay: personal illness and illness in the immediate family (physician's certificate required).
- Late assignments, except when an extension has been granted (supported by a medical certificate), will be penalized at the rate of five per cent (5%) per day.
- Assignments are to be handed in at the beginning of the class (at 08h30) on the indicated date.
- No electronic submissions will be accepted.

Course Schedule*

Week	Topics	Suggested readings	Evaluation**
01	Introduction to course Introduction to languages	Chen & Bao; Flammia & Saunders	
02	Language, culture, and society **Activity:** How fluent are you in multiple languages?	Bouckaert et al.; Hermes, Bang & Marin; Zare	**Activity - 2%**
03	Introduction to linguistics and translation **Activity:** Test your Linguistics knowledge	Malmkjær ; McDonough Dolmaya	**Activity - 2%**
04	Automatic/Machine Translation; Cross-language information retrieval **Guess speaker:** Jonathan Dorey	Gey, Kando & Peters; Kishida; Oard	**Essay - 30%** **Activity - 2%**
05	Script diversity and script conversion **Guess speaker:** Tomasz Neugebauer	Millard; Smith; European Commission	**Activity - 2%**
06	Multilingual controlled vocabularies **Activity:** Thesaurus required!	Hudon; Soergel	**Activity - 2%**
07	Artificial languages **Activity:** Artificial languages Trivia	Gillet & Ausloos; Large	**Activity - 2%**
08	Interfaces for cultural communities **Activity:** Quality & Culture Quiz	Callahan 1; Wurtz	**Machine translation - 25%** **Activity - 2%**
09	Localisation; Advertising adaptation **Activity:** How Localicious are You?	de Pedro Ricoy; Ulvydienė	**Activity - 2%**
10	Language and Information Services **Guess speaker:** Marc-André Bernier	Dobransky & Hargittaia; Maata Smith	**Activity - 2%**
11	Language trends (good and bad!) **Activity:** RUPC?	Berman; Olson	**Activity - 2%**
12	Project presentations	Callahan 2; Pauwels	**Interface design - 25%**

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* Please note that a more detailed plan will be distributed at the beginning of each class.
** In addition to the 3 projects, 20% of the grade will be assigned to your participation in-class activities, including attendance to guest speakers' presentations.