
GLS691 Information Search and Evaluation

Class: Friday January 12 to April 6, 2018
Time: 11:35 am to 2:25 pm
Room: EDUC 434 (lecture: 11:35am to 1:15pm) and EDUC 341 (lab: 1:35pm to 2:25pm)

Contact

E-mail: jonathan.dorey@mcgill.ca
Office: SIS 207 (Course Lecturer Office). 3661 Peel St.
Available Friday 10:00am to 11:15am, or by appointment.

Description (from McGill catalogue)

The course focuses on search tools, search aids, search strategies and database structures in a variety of disciplines. Topics include selection of relevant databases, search strategies, and evaluation of the results in the social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, law, business, engineering, and health sciences.

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Choose appropriate databases in different disciplines to meet their clients' information needs.
- Design and apply advanced search strategies.
- Evaluate and retrieve relevant information to meet their clients' information needs.

Methods

- To achieve a satisfactory understanding of the course material and to meet the learning outcomes, students are expected to attend the lectures, read and comment on the readings, participate in discussions and in-class exercises, and explore examples and tutorials.
- The second part of class will take place in the computer lab. Attendance is strongly suggested, however lab work is mandatory and can be done off site.

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).*
- If you have a disability or require a specific accommodation, you may contact me to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 514-398-6009, or go to room RS56 (Redpath Library).
- *Si vous êtes en situation de handicap ou si vous nécessitez un accommodement particulier, vous pouvez communiquer avec moi pour en discuter. Je vous invite à prendre contact avec le Bureau pour les étudiants en situation de handicap au 514-398-6009 ou rendez-vous au local RS56 (Bibliothèque Redpath).*
- 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.
- Guidelines for the use of mobile computing and communications devices in classes at McGill have been approved by the Academic Policy Committee. Please note that disruptive behaviour will not be tolerated in the classroom.
- 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 on Mercury, the online course evaluation system. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.
- McGill has policies on sustainability, paper use and other initiatives to promote a culture of sustainability at McGill.
- In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.
- All policies on Student Rights and Responsibilities can be found here: <http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/policies-student-rights-and-responsibilities>.

Attendance

- Attendance to the lectures is mandatory.
- Attendance to labs is strongly suggested.
- As a matter of courtesy, you must ensure to arrive before class starts (before 8:35am).
- Please turn off all electronic devices during the class period and disable all sounds and vibrations.

Absence and late assignments

- No extension, delay or late assignments will be accepted. The only acceptable circumstances for an extension or a delay are personal illness and illness in the immediate family (physician's certificate required).
- Late assignments, except when an extension has been granted (or supported by a medical certificate), will be penalized by downgrading the final mark one letter grade per day (e.g. from A to A- or from B+ to B).

Email Policy and Procedures

- All emails to the instructor must be sent at: jonathan.dorey@mcgill.ca.
- To avoid lost emails, please include GLIS 691 and your full name (FIRST NAME and LAST NAME) 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

Search assignments (5)	5 X 5%
Search reports (3)	3 X 15%
Term paper	30%
Total	100%

Validation of learning outcomes

Learning outcomes	Lab work	Search assignments	Term paper
Choose appropriate databases in different disciplines to meet their clients' information needs.			X
Design and apply advanced search strategies.	X	X	X
Evaluate and retrieve relevant information to meet their clients' information needs.		X	X

Course Schedule

Date	Week	Topics	Mandatory Readings	Evaluation*
Jan. 12 2018	01	Introduction to course Introduction to information search and evaluation	<i>Bell, chapter 1</i>	
Jan. 19 2018	02	Pre-search preparation: reference interview and information-seeking behaviour Laboratory	<i>Bell, chapters 10, 11</i>	
Jan. 26 2018	03	Search systems: databases, retrieval mechanism and interfaces Laboratory	<i>Bell, chapter 2</i>	Assignment (5%)
Feb. 2 2018	04	Search tools: Boolean search, proximity, truncation & limits, controlled vocabulary Laboratory	<i>Bell, chapter 3</i>	1st search report (15%)
Feb. 9 2018	05	Search techniques: concept maps, citation searching, recall & precision Laboratory	<i>Bell, chapter 4</i>	Assignment (5%)
Feb. 16 2018	06	Social sciences and humanities: databases & vocabulary Laboratory	<i>Bell, chapters 5, 7, 8</i>	Assignment (5%)
Feb. 23 2018	07	Natural sciences, engineering and patents: databases & vocabulary Laboratory	<i>Bell, chapters 6, 9</i>	2nd search report (15%)
Mar. 2 2018	08	Health sciences: databases & vocabulary Laboratory	<i>Bell, chapter 6</i>	Assignment (5%)
STUDY BREAK – no class				
Mar. 16 2018	09	Law and business: databases & vocabulary Laboratory		Assignment (5%)
Mar. 23 2018	10	Data and statistics: databases & vocabulary Laboratory	<i>Bell, chapter 9</i>	3rd search report (15%)
GOOD FRIDAY (stat. holiday) – no class				
Apr. 6 2018	11	Ethics and managing search services	<i>Bell, chapter 12</i>	
Apr. 13 2018	12	No class		Term paper (30%)

***Note on evaluations:** Search assignments are handed to students on date indicated in calendar and to be submitted before the following Monday morning. Search reports and term paper (shaded in grey) are to be submitted by 11:30am on date indicated in calendar (first column).

Readings

Textbook: available in the GLIS 691 Course Reserve (Humanities and Social Sciences Library – McLennan Library)

***Bell, S. S. (2015). *Librarian's Guide to Online Searching. 4th edition.* Santa Barbara, Calif.: Libraries Unlimited.**

Chowdhury, G. G. (2010). *Introduction to modern information retrieval (3rd ed.)*. London: Facet.

Chu, H. (2007). *Information representation and retrieval in the digital age*. Medford, NJ: Information Today.

Markey, Karen. (2015). *Online Searching: A Guide to finding quality information efficiently and effectively*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. (available as ebook)

Meadow, C. T., Boyce, B. R., Kraft, D. H., & Barry, C. (2007). *Text information retrieval systems (3rd ed.)*. London: Academic Press.

Additional Readings (optional)

Week 1:

Bourne, C. P. & Hahn, T. B. (2003). *A History of Online Information Services, 1963-1976*. Mass: MIT Press.

Haigh, T. (2011). The history of information technology. *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology*, 45(1), 431-487.

Hall, J. L. (2011). Online retrieval history; how it all began: some personal recollections. *Journal of Documentation*, 67(1), 182-193.

Hannigan, M. (2000). What a Long Strange Trip It's Been: The History of Online Searching. *Indiana Libraries*, 18, 2-11.

Week 2:

Chowdhury, G. G. (2010). *Introduction to modern information retrieval (3rd ed.)*. London: Facet. (Chapters 9, 10)

Markey, Karen. (2015). *Online Searching: A Guide to finding quality information efficiently and effectively*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. (Chapter 3, 4, 5, 10)

Week 3:

Chowdhury, G. G. (2010). *Introduction to modern information retrieval (3rd ed.)*. London: Facet. (Chapter 6)

Chu, H. (2007). *Information representation and retrieval in the digital age*. Medford, NJ: Information Today. (Chapters 2, 3)

Meadow, C. T., Boyce, B. R., Kraft, D. H., & Barry, C. (2007). *Text information retrieval systems (3rd ed.)*. London: Academic Press. (Chapters/sections 4.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.5)

Week 4:

- Chowdhury, G. G. (2010). *Introduction to modern information retrieval (3rd ed.)*. London: Facet. (Chapter 7)
- Chu, H. (2007). *Information representation and retrieval in the digital age*. Medford, NJ: Information Today. (Chapters 4, 5)
- Markey, Karen. (2015). *Online Searching: A Guide to finding quality information efficiently and effectively*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. (Chapter 6)
- Meadow, C. T., Boyce, B. R., Kraft, D. H., & Barry, C. (2007). *Text information retrieval systems (3rd ed.)*. London: Academic Press. (Chapters 7)

Week 5:

- Chu, H. (2007). *Information representation and retrieval in the digital age*. Medford, NJ: Information Today. (Chapter 6)
- Markey, Karen. (2015). *Online Searching: A Guide to finding quality information efficiently and effectively*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. (Chapter 7, 8)
- Meadow, C. T., Boyce, B. R., Kraft, D. H., & Barry, C. (2007). *Text information retrieval systems (3rd ed.)*. London: Academic Press. (Chapters 8)

Other sources:

Online searching's companion videos are available at <http://onlinesearching.org>.

List of recommended serials:

- From Information Today:
- Information Today
- Online Searcher
- Online
- Searcher
- EContent (Formerly Database)

Online Information Review. (Formerly On-line Review and On-line & CD-ROM Review.) MCB University Press.

Internet Reference Services Quarterly. Haworth Information Press.

Search Engine Watch (<https://searchenginewatch.com/>)

Other readings as needed throughout the semester.