COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the ways in which various levels of government organize, produce, and disseminate information. With a focus on the Canadian context, and drawing on select international comparisons, the course will explore a diverse range of government information and data resources, approaches for working with these types of materials, and key themes such as access, copyright, open government, and preservation. The course takes a practical, thematic approach that will be beneficial to those seeking employment in the many environments that engage with government information resources.

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES

There are no prerequisites. INFO 5530 is recommended.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course will:

1. Explain and critique the policy environment in which government information is produced, managed, distributed, accessed, and preserved.
2. Establish a broad view of the complex nature of the government information landscape, including barriers to and opportunities for collaboration.
3. Guide students in techniques for identifying user needs, as well as varying communication strategies and approaches to responding to these needs.
4. Demonstrate advanced strategies to systematically gather, analyse, synthesize, and communicate information and research findings, including through the use of technology.
5. Provide hands-on experience using advanced strategies for navigating and locating government information and data from a diverse range of sources.
6. Provide practical examples of the ways in which technology and government information and data can intersect.
7. Compare and contrast the relative strengths and weaknesses of government information and data publication, distribution, access, and preservation across several jurisdictions.
8. Demonstrate the value of advocacy, community engagement, and accountability across a variety of themes.
LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this course, students will:

1. Understand and be able to critically assess the policy environment in which government information is produced, managed, distributed, accessed, and preserved.
2. Possess a broad view of the complex nature of the government information landscape, including barriers to, and opportunities for, collaboration.
3. Understand the value of identifying diverse user needs and be able to deploy a wide range of communication strategies to respond to those needs.
4. Be able to deploy advanced strategies to systematically gather, analyse, synthesize, and communicate information and research findings, including through the use of technology.
5. Understand the need for and be able to deploy advanced strategies for navigating and locating government information and data from a diverse range of sources.
6. Have created outputs that demonstrate the ways in which technology and government information and data can intersect.
7. Be able to articulate the relative strengths and weaknesses of government information and data publication, distribution, access, and preservation across several jurisdictions.
8. Understand the value of advocacy, community engagement, and accountability across a variety of themes.

LICENSING

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TECHNOLOGY USED

This course will make extensive use of Brightspace for lectures and class discussions. Online tools and applications, such as wiki editors and data manipulation or visualization tools will also be used.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

A combination of online lectures, readings, discussions, and exercises will be used throughout this course. Where practical and relevant, guest speakers will also be included as a component of weekly activities.

LEARNING MATERIALS

There is no required textbook for this course. The course draws on books, journal articles, news articles, reports, podcasts, and other types of materials to build the foundational knowledge for this course.
METHODS OF EVALUATION

Detailed instructions regarding each assignment will be provided via Brightspace. Assessment of all assignments is directly related to attention to the instructions, clarity of expression and presentation, and evidence of significant analysis and reflection. For more information, see the SIM Grading Policy. Assignments are listed below in the order in which they will be distributed to the class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT</th>
<th>DETAILS</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
<th>VALUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>Online class participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>Article summaries</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>Evaluating long-term access</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>Finding government information</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>Contributing to open knowledge</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 5</td>
<td>Policy comparison</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PARTICIPATION EVALUATION RUBRIC

As this is an online course, preparation and participation are vital to the success of the course overall, as well as to your individual success as a student in this course. A more detailed overview of the expectations for class participation will be provided on Brightspace.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>WEIGHTING</th>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>The student demonstrated consistent preparation for class. Readings were always completed and the student was able to relate readings to each other and to other course material (discussions, presentations, guest speakers, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of contributions</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>The student’s comments were relevant and reflected an understanding of the readings and other course material. The student’s contributions helped move the discussion forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>The student was actively engaged in the class and/or discussions at all times. They actively participated in all in-class activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/Punctuality</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>The student was always punctual and had no unexcused absences. [appropriately modified for online course]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## INTEGRATION OF MI Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM COMPETENCY</th>
<th>COURSE LEARNING OUTCOME</th>
<th>COURSE ASSESSMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Management of Information Technology (1.2)         | - Understand and be able to critically assess the policy environment in which government information is produced, managed, distributed, accessed, and preserved.  
  - Understand the value of identifying diverse user needs and be able to deploy a wide range of communication strategies to respond to these needs. | Assignment 1: Contributing to open knowledge  
Class participation                                      |
| 2. Information Management Leadership (2.2, 2.3)       | - Understand and be able to critically assess the policy environment in which government information is produced, managed, distributed, accessed, and preserved.  
  - Possess a broad view of the complex nature of the government information landscape, including barriers to and opportunities for collaboration.  
  - Understand the value of advocacy, community engagement, and accountability across a variety of themes. | Assignment 2: Evaluating long-term access  
Assignment 3: Finding government information  
Assignment 4: Policy comparison  
Class participation                                      |
| 3. Risk & Change Management (3.2, 3.4, 3.8)            | - Understand and be able to critically assess the policy environment in which government information is produced, managed, distributed, accessed, and preserved.  
  - Be able to deploy advanced and alternative strategies to systematically gather, analyse, synthesize, and communicate information and research findings, including through the use of technology.  
  - Understand the value of advocacy, community engagement, and accountability across a variety of themes. | Assignment 4: Policy comparison  
Class participation                                      |
| 4. User-centred Information Services (4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7) | ○ Possess a broad view of the complex nature of the government information landscape, including barriers to and opportunities for collaboration.  
○ Understand the value of identifying diverse user needs and be able to deploy a wide range of communication strategies to respond to these needs.  
○ Be able to deploy advanced and alternative strategies to systematically gather, analyse, synthesize, and communicate information and research findings, including through the use of technology. | Assignment 1: Contributing to open knowledge  
Assignment 3: Finding government information  
Class participation |
| 5. Research and Evaluation (5.1, 5.2, 5.3) | ○ Understand and be able to critically assess the policy environment in which government information is produced, managed, distributed, accessed, and preserved.  
○ Be able to deploy advanced and alternative strategies to systematically gather, analyse, synthesize, and communicate information and research findings, including through the use of technology.  
○ Understand the value of advocacy, community engagement, and accountability across a variety of themes. | Assignment 1: Contributing to open knowledge  
Assignment 2: Evaluating long-term access  
Assignment 3: Finding government information  
Assignment 4: Policy comparison  
Class participation |
| 6. Workplace Skills & Attributes (a) Collaborate & communicate (6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.4, 6.1.5, 6.1.6) | ○ Possess a broad view of the complex nature of the government information landscape, including barriers to and opportunities for collaboration.  
○ Understand the value of identifying diverse user needs and be able to deploy a wide range of communication strategies to respond to these needs.  
○ Understand the value of advocacy, community engagement, and accountability across a variety of themes. | Assignment 1: Contributing to open knowledge  
Assignment 2: Evaluating long-term access  
Assignment 3: Finding government information  
Assignment 4: Policy comparison  
Assignment 5: Article summaries  
Class participation |
(b) Organize, Plan & Manage (6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.4)

- Understand and be able to critically assess the policy environment in which government information is produced, managed, distributed, accessed, and preserved.
- Possess a broad view of the complex nature of the government information landscape, including barriers to and opportunities for collaboration.
- Understand the value of identifying diverse user needs and be able to deploy a wide range of communication strategies to respond to these needs.
- Understand the value of advocacy, community engagement, and accountability across a variety of themes.

Assignment 1: Contributing to open knowledge
Assignment 3: Finding government information
Class participation

Assignment 4: Policy comparison
Assignment 5: Article summaries

(c) Develop Personally & Professionally (6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.3.3)

- Understand the value of advocacy, community engagement, and accountability across a variety of themes.

Assignment 1: Contributing to open knowledge
Assignment 2: Evaluating long-term access
Assignment 3: Finding government information
Assignment 4: Policy comparison
Assignment 5: Article summaries
Class participation

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance
Class attendance is required in all MI courses and is included in the participation mark. Attendance records will be kept by the instructor.

Absence from class (one class) [not applicable for online courses]
Students are required to inform the instructor ahead of time of any absence from class. This absence may affect participation marks or class activities.
Absence from class (extended)  ○
Emergencies  ○ Contact the MLIS Program Coordinator and provide a list of the courses you are taking and your instructors’ names. ○ Illness
○ Contact your instructor(s) as soon as possible prior to class to inform him or her of your illness.
○ All absences due to illness must be supported by a physician’s note to be submitted to the MLIS Program Coordinator (JoAnn Watson) with a list of courses you are taking and your instructors’ names.

Citation style
SIM courses use APA as the default standard citation style. Unless the instructor provides alternative written instructions, please use the APA citation style in your assignments to briefly identify (cite) other people’s ideas and information and to indicate the sources of these citations in the References list at the end of the assignment. For more information on APA style, consult Dalhousie Library website at https://libraries.dal.ca/help/style-guides.html or the APA’s Frequently Asked Questions about APA.

Late penalties for assignments
A penalty for late assignments will be assessed, unless prior permission has been given by the instructor to submit an assignment late, which normally will be for extended illness, medical, or family emergencies only (see above). Late submissions will be assessed a penalty of five percent per day, including weekends. Assignments will not normally be accepted seven days or more after the due date; in such cases the student will receive a grade of zero.

SIM GRADING POLICY

For more information, see the SIM Grading Policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Demonstrates original work of distinction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>Demonstrates high-level command of the subject matter and an ability for critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>Demonstrates above-average command of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Demonstrates average command of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>Demonstrates acceptable command of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>Demonstrates minimally acceptable command of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;70</td>
<td>Unacceptable for credit towards a Master's degree.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACCOMMODATION POLICY FOR STUDENTS

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers experienced related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic protected under Canadian human rights legislation.

Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation form.
A note taker may be required as part of a student’s accommodation. There is an honorarium of $75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information or send an email to notetaking@dal.ca.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to fully participate in the class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

In general:
The commitment of the Faculty of Management is to graduate future leaders of business, government and civil society who manage with integrity and get things done. This is non-negotiable in our community and it starts with your first class at Dalhousie University. So when you submit any work for evaluation in this course or any other, please ensure that you are familiar with your obligations under the Faculty of Management’s Academic Integrity Policies and that you understand where to go for help and advice in living up to our standards. You should be familiar with the Faculty of Management Professor and Student Contract on Academic Integrity, and it is your responsibility to ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

Dalhousie offers many ways to learn about academic writing and presentations so that all members of the University community may acknowledge the intellectual property of others. Knowing how to find, evaluate, select, synthesize and cite information for use in assignments is called being “information literate.” Information literacy is taught by Dalhousie University Librarians in classes and through Dalhousie Libraries’ online Citing & Writing tutorials.

Do not plagiarize any materials for this course. For further guidance on what constitutes plagiarism, how to avoid it, and proper methods for attributing sources, please consult the University Secretariat’s Academic Integrity page.

Please note that Dalhousie subscribes to plagiarism detection software that checks for originality in submitted papers. Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a very serious academic offence that may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie, there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course; students should read the Policy on Academic Dishonesty contained in the Calendar.

Furthermore, the University’s Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student assignments be submitted in both written and computer readable format, e.g.: a text file or as an email attachment, and to submit any paper to a check such as that performed by the plagiarism detection software. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand. Use of third-party originality checking software does not preclude instructor use of alternate means to identify lapses in originality and attribution. The result of such assessment may be used as evidence in any disciplinary action taken by the Senate.

Finally:
If you suspect cheating by colleagues or lapses in standards by a professor, you may use the confidential email: ManagementIntegrity@dal.ca which is read only by the Assistant Academic Integrity Officer.
Faculty of Management clarification on plagiarism versus collaboration:

There are many forms of plagiarism, for instance, copying on exams and assignments. There is a clear line between group work on assignments when explicitly authorised by the professor and copying solutions from others. It is permissible to work on assignments with your friends but only when the professor gives you permission in the specific context of the assignment. University rules clearly stipulate that all assignments should be undertaken individually unless specifically authorised.

Specific examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Copying a computer file from another student, and using it as a template for your own solution
- Copying text written by another student
- Submitting the work of someone else, including that of a tutor as your own

An example of acceptable collaboration includes the following:
- When authorised by the professor, discussing the issues and underlying factors of a case with fellow students, and then each of the students writing up their submissions individually, from start to finish.

UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

ACCESSIBILITY

The Advising and Access Centre serves as Dalhousie’s Centre for expertise on student accessibility and accommodation. Our work is governed by Dalhousie’s Student Accommodation Policy, to best support the needs of Dalhousie students. Our teams work with students who request accommodation as a result of: disability, religious obligation, an experienced barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Canadian Human Rights legislation.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don’t follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner—perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can’t be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality.

Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2).

RECOGNITION OF MI’KMAQ TERRITORY

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi’kmaq Territory.

The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit the office in the McCain Building (room 3037) or contact the programs at elders@dal.ca or 902-494-6803 (leave a message).
COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction & Framing the Issues

Required Reading(s)

A selection of recent news items will be posted to the course website prior to the first class.

Online activity: Questionnaire

Students will be asked to complete a short survey about their familiarity with, and interest in, government information and data.

Week 2: Contextual Considerations

Required Reading(s)


Recommended Reading(s)

Week 3: Management & Dissemination of Information

Required Reading(s)

https://login.ezproxy.library.dal.ca/login?qurl=https://doi.org/10.1108/09565691311325004

Recommended Reading(s)


Online activity: Critical article review


Week 4: Access to Information & Protection of Privacy

Deadline
Assignment 2: Evaluating long-term access

Required Reading(s)


Recommended Reading(s)


Week 5: Copyright & Licensing

Required Reading(s)


Recommended Reading(s)


Virtual guest presentation [to be determined]

Week 6: Open Government (Part One)

Required Reading(s)


Recommended Reading(s)

Week 7: Open Government (Part 2)

**Deadline**
Assignment 3: Finding government information

**Required Reading(s)**


**Recommended Reading(s)**


https://login.ezproxy.library.dal.ca/login?qurl=https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-14799-9_5

Virtual guest presentation [to be determined]

Week 8: Numeric & Geospatial Data

**Required Reading(s)**

http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/vanishing-canada-why-were-all-losers-in-ottawas-war-on-data/


**Recommended Reading(s)**


**Week 9: Legislative & Parliamentary Information**

*Required Reading(s)*

[https://login.ezproxy.library.dal.ca/login?qurl=https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423916001165](https://login.ezproxy.library.dal.ca/login?qurl=https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423916001165)


*Virtual guest presentation [to be determined]*

*Online activity: Network visualization using parliamentary data*

Students will learn how to create a basic network visualization using data from Parlinfo. As part of the process, they will learn how to do basic data cleanup and manipulation functions in OpenRefine.

**Week 10: Preservation & Archiving**

*Required Reading(s)*


*Recommended Reading(s)*


*Online activity: Fugitive government information*

Students will participate in an exercise to locate and report fugitive federal government information. This exercise will make use of a tool created by librarians at the University of Toronto for tracking fugitive publications by department, the content from which is directly picked up by staff at Publishing and Depository Services who then add the content to the publications.gc.ca catalogue.

*Virtual guest speaker [to be determined]*

INFO 6300 | Summer 2020
Week 11: Advocacy & Community of Interest

Deadline
Assignment 4: Contributing to open knowledge

Required Reading(s)


https://login.ezproxy.library.dal.ca/login?qurl=https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2017.03.004

Virtual guest presentation [to be determined]

Week 12 (Part One): Research & Professional Development

Required Reading(s)


http://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/isstaffsp/7

Online activity: Career planning

This week will feature brief reports prepared by students based on contact with a diverse group of government information professionals. The goal of this session is to provide students with an opportunity to learn from selected individuals currently working in the field.

Students will be tasked to collaboratively develop a list of questions, related to themes of the course and their professional interests, to be posed to those selected individuals. This activity will give the students the opportunity to understand and gain an appreciation for the real-life application and relevance of key issues, challenges, and opportunities in the field. Subject matter experts will be selected based on student interests, as identified at the beginning of and developed throughout the course.

Following this online activity, students will be required to post a short, reflective discussion post outlining lessons learned, key takeaways, and outstanding questions.
Week 12 (Part 2): Course Conclusion

Deadline (July 27, 2020)

Assignment 5: Policy comparison

Required Reading(s)

A selection of recent news items newly published research will be posted to the course website. These materials will be used to contextualize and situate the main themes of the course and course learning outcomes.

Online activity: Discussion and reflection

After engaging in a series of discussions about the themes of the course and lessons learned, students will be asked to reflect how the content of the course may apply to their future educational and professional activities, along with areas they would like to study or explore more. The class will consolidate these conversations as a group and students will post a summary of their discussions and reflections to the course discussion forum.
CLASS PARTICIPATION
Online class participation [15%] Deadline:
Ongoing

This online course relies heavily on the weekly engagement of all students in the course. As noted in the course syllabus, the weekly sessions will consist of a combination of lectures, readings, discussions, and hands-on tutorials and exercises. Where practical and relevant, guest lectures will also be included as a component of weekly activities. Preparation and participation are vital to the success of the course overall, and to your success in the course as a student.

The participation component of this course seeks to contribute to various aspects of all course learning objectives outlined in the syllabus. By remaining fully engaged each week, students will gain practical experience applying the knowledge they develop in the course and will also gain practical skills that will be of benefit in their professional careers.

By registering for this course, it is expected that you will participate fully to help make the course as engaging and dynamic as possible. Students are required to participate, on a regular basis, in discussion forum threads on the course website and in in-class discussions.

There are also in-class activities that have been integrated throughout the course. These activities are intended to be completed during allotted class time each week. These activities include:

- Week 3: Critical article review
- Week 8: Mapping government information
- Week 9: Network visualization using parliamentary data
- Week 10: Fugitive government information
- Week 12: Career planning

N.B.: Online activities may be adjusted or modified to meet the needs and interests of students in the course. All information for online activities will be posted to Brightspace in advance of the scheduled class.

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