

Syllabus Information Architecture (LIS 4700-5)

1. Course Information

Course #: Title: LIS 4700: Information Architecture

Quarter: Spring 2013, Wednesday 7:00 - 9:20pm | KAR 305

Meetings: March 25, 2013 – May 31, 2013

2. Faculty Information

Instructor: Shimelis Assefa, PhD.

Contact Information: P. 303-871-6072 Email: sassefa@du.edu Office: KAR 244
Office Hours: Monday 2:00 – 4:00pm, Wednesday 4:00 - 6:00 pm and
other times by appointment. During my office hours, I am
available for chat in my virtual office on Blackboard.

3. Course Description

The web is a complex information environment consisting of billions of web pages, users, and clicks and interactions every single day. This course introduces students to the fundamentals of web information architecture (IA) – a discipline that aims to understand the information needs and activities of web visitors and create design elements to help users find their way around in this complex information environment with ease. The course will cover various strategies and skills, in which information architects structure, organize, label, navigate, and search for information on large websites. A service learning component is built into this course so that students can transfer their IA knowledge and skills to a real-world project. The course is designed following a project management approach and students will be exposed to different activities from start to finish.

4. Course Materials, Highly Recommended and Suggested

Readings and additional resources for each learning modules can be accessed through the Blackboard site.

Required Books:

Ding, W., & Lin, X. (2010). Information Architecture: The Design and Integration of Information Spaces. Synthesis Lectures on Information Concepts, Retrieval, and Services. Morgan & Claypool Publishers. eBook available at Penrose Library.

Morville, P., & Rosenfeld, L. (2008). Information Architecture for the World Wide Web: Designing large-scale Web sites. 3rd ed. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media. eBook available at Penrose Library.

Supplemental Books:

Barnum, C.M. (2011). Usability Testing Essentials: Ready, set...test!. Burlington, MA: Morgan Kaufman. eBook available at Penrose Library.

Morville, P., & Callender, J. (2010). Search patterns: design for discovery. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly Media. eBook available at Penrose Library.

Resmini, A., & Rosati, L. (2011). Pervasive Information Architecture. Amsterdam: Morgan Kaufmann. eBook available at Penrose Library.

5. Learning Outcomes

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Develop IA strategy documentation for specific case and client.
- Demonstrate competency in using appropriate tools and software to document and communicate design features.
- Define the four components that make up an IA – organization, labeling, navigation, and searching systems.
- Discuss information behavior of users and prepare personas to profile users' needs and characteristics.
- Create different kinds of organization and navigation systems for assigned web sites.
- Design search user interface that improves information accessibility and findability.
- Demonstrate effective use of project management software.

6. Methods of Assessment

All assignments are to be completed from within Blackboard. Please review descriptions of individual assignments that are available in the Assignments page. For the Discussion forum assignments, a separate rubric and outline of expectations is provided.

Points Possible:

Assignments	Weight (percentage)	Points
Assignment 1: Icebreaker	5%	100
Assignment 2: Project Identification	10%	100
Assignment 3: User Research and Requirement	15%	100

Analysis		
Assignment 4: Website Critique	10%	100
Assignment 5: Conceptualization and Site Planning	15%	100
Assignment 6: Prototyping and Site Design	20%	100
Assignment 7: Final Project – IA Specifications Document and Presentation	25%	200
Total	100%	800

Evaluation: Grades will be based on points accumulated and converted to 100 percentile according to the following scale:

Grades	Points (%)	Grades	Points (%)
A	95-100	C+	76-79
A-	90-94	C	73-75
B+	86-89	C-	70-72
B	83-85	D	60-69
B-	80-82	F	<60

7. Course and Related DU Policies

Student Responsibilities. As a student you are expected to challenge yourself, to actively participate in your education, and to search both inside and outside of the classroom for answers to your questions. Answers are rarely black and white at this level of study. I expect you to actively participate in the classroom, to listen and to discuss ideas with your colleagues. I expect you to read all assigned materials, and research additional sources for more information. The sources I have chosen are only some of those available in the field; you are encouraged to find other resources and share them with the class. Most importantly, you are expected to learn, and to leave this course with new ideas. My goal is to provide you with the foundation to continue to explore these ideas when you leave the classroom.

Faculty Responsibilities. My primary role is to serve as a facilitator in a manner that supports a meaningful learning. I will present information related to the topics covered, help you synthesize materials assigned for the course. I will both ask and answer questions; this class is your opportunity to discuss the issues. I am available outside of class time to answer questions concerning assignments and topics covered in class. I will also give you a grade. My expectations for your performance are clearly outlined in this syllabus. If anything appears unclear, or if you have any questions, please ask me. Most of all, my role is to encourage you to learn -- *encourage, not force*. You will take from this course what you put into it. I hope you will take advantage of the opportunity to learn in this class, from me, from the materials on the subject, and from your colleagues.

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need any test or course materials provided in an alternative format, notify the instructors.

HONOR CODE STATEMENT

All members of the University community are entrusted with the responsibility of observing certain ethical goals and values as they relate to academic integrity. Essential to the fundamental purpose of the University is the commitment to the principles of truth and honesty. The Honor Code is designed so that responsibility for upholding these principles lies with the individual as well as the entire community.

The Honor Code fosters and advances an environment of ethical conduct in the academic community of the University, the foundation of which includes the pursuit of academic honesty and integrity. Through an atmosphere of mutual respect we enhance the value of our education and bring forth the highest standard of academic excellence. Members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, administrators and trustees, must not commit any intentional misrepresentation or deception in academic or professional matters

8. Course Schedules

Week	Topic/Readings** **See Respective Modules in Bb for Readings	Assignments, Deliverables and due dates
1 3/27	Course overview; Information Architecture (IA) concepts, definitions; Project assignment discussions Ding & Lin, chapter 1 Morville, chapter 1	Assignment 1: Icebreaker Due 4/2, 11:55 pm Deliverables – Select one poorly designed site from the list provided and post your reflection on discussion board. Prepare to share your observation in class.
2 4/3	IA research, design, and evaluation. Context, Content, Users. Research methods and user research profiles. Ding & Lin, chapter 3 Morville, chapter 10	Assignment 2: Project Identification (Identify Client and formulate project concept) Due 4/9, 11:55 pm Deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization/Business profile • Purpose and scope of the website, and • Content inventory (use Excel spreadsheet).
3 4/10	User information behavior, information seeking behavior theories and design implications. Ding & Lin, chapter 5 Morville, chapter 3	Assignment 3: User research and requirement analysis Due 4/16, 11:55 pm Deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User profiles/Personas • Use case diagrams
4 4/17	From research to strategy, Content representation – controlled vocabularies; taxonomies; metadata; RDF; classification systems Morville, chapter 11	Assignment 4: Website Critique Due 5/28, 11:55 pm Deliverables: Critique matrix and report.
5 4/24	The anatomy of IA – organization and labeling Ding & Lin, chapter 4 (4.1 & 4.2) Morville, chapters 5 & 6.	Assignment 5: Conceptualization and site planning Due 4/30, 11:55 pm Deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitemaps • Flowcharts
6 5/1	The anatomy of IA – navigation and searching Ding & Lin, chapter 4 (4.3 & 4.4) Morville, chapters 7 & 8	

<p>7 5/8</p>	<p>Design and Documentation Morville, chapter 12</p>	<p>Assignment 6: Prototyping and Site design Due 5/14, 11:55 pm</p> <p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wireframes • Controlled vocabulary design
<p>8 5/15</p>	<p>Interaction design and multicultural issues Ding & Lin, chapters 6 & 8.</p>	<p>Assignment 7: Final Project - IA Specifications Document and Presentation Due 5/29, 11:55 pm</p> <p>Deliverables: Compile all the deliverables thus far together; see the assignment description for detail.</p>
<p>9 5/22</p>	<p>Usability testing Barnum, chapters 5, 6, 7</p>	
<p>10 5/29</p>	<p>Wrap-up; Evaluation</p>	<p>Final project presentation</p>