Catalog description
Introduces entrepreneurial concepts and practices in the library and information professions, examines alternative career options, and provides an opportunity to apply entrepreneurial methods and processes. 3 credits.

Prerequisites
L&I SCI 110 and 210 (undergraduate). L&I SCI 501 (graduate).

General description
Within a digital economy information entrepreneurs or ‘infopreneurs’ are supporting economic development through provision of information products and/or services. In this course we will examine two types of infopreneur: (a) the intrapreneur who works within an information-based organization, and (b) the entrepreneur who works outside of the traditional library setting. This course is designed to provide students with the requisite skills and knowledge to identify a potential business idea centered on information and/or knowledge, and develop a business plan to secure funding. In addition, it serves to foster an entrepreneurial culture in the workforce.

Please note that legal, tax and accounting considerations are of critical importance when considering an independent business. This course does not cover these due to the complex nature thereof. Please be sure to consult a
qualified professional for advice applicable to your particular situation.

Course objectives
The objectives of this course are:
- To introduce a variety of entrepreneurial concepts and practices in the library and information professions;
- To create entrepreneurial self-awareness among future information professionals;
- To stimulate intrapreneurial thinking among future information professionals;
- To explore a range of alternative career options for librarians and information professionals and evaluate the requirements within those options;
- To provide the opportunity to develop and apply a sufficient understanding of entrepreneurial methods and processes within a library and other information-based organizations;
- To develop the skills and knowledge required to identify opportunities and, through creativity and innovation, to understand and develop business plans to turn these opportunities into reality whether inside an already existing information-based organization or as an independent information-based business; and
- To develop an appreciation of the impact of political, economic, technological, legal, regulatory, environmental and social issues including diversity on entrepreneurship.

MLIS core competencies
This course addresses the following core competencies identified by the ALA in whole or in part:
- ALA 1J: Effective communication techniques (verbal and written).
- ALA 1I: The techniques used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.
- ALA 8A: The principles of planning and budgeting in libraries and other information agencies.

Method
Overview lectures, independent reading, case studies, discussion, practical assignments, student presentations, guest speakers (depending on availability).
Texts

**Required**

**Recommended**

Additional readings are also assigned from a variety of sources, which will be available on D2L or through electronic reserve at the Golda Meir Library.

**Course schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment(s) due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial librarianship</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The entrepreneurial mindset in information services</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial self-assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The non-traditional path</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The non-traditional path (continued)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The independent path</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The independent path (continued)</td>
<td>Alternative paths in the information industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Identifying opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The business plan: planning a new initiative</td>
<td>Opportunity identification</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The business plan: strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The business plan: marketing (overview only, covered in-depth in L&amp;I SCI 622)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The business plan: finance and operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The business plan: case studies</td>
<td>Evaluate a business plan (U)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The business plan: funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The business plan: evaluating the success</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>In-class presentations and discussion of business plans</td>
<td>Business plan + Presentation (G)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>In-class presentation and discussion of business plans</td>
<td>Business plan + Presentation (G)</td>
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### Topics

#### Entrepreneurial librarianship

**Learning objectives**
- To introduce a variety of entrepreneurial concepts and practices in the library and information professions

**Required reading:**

**Recommended reading:**

#### The entrepreneurial mindset in information services

**Learning objectives**
- To create entrepreneurial self-awareness among future information professionals

**Required reading:**
Intrapreneurship: the non-traditional path

Learning objectives
- To explore a range of alternative career options for librarians and information professionals and evaluate the requirements within those options
- To stimulate intrapreneurial thinking among future information professionals

Required reading:
Recommended reading:

Entrepreneurship: the independent path

<table>
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<td>To explore a range of alternative career options for librarians and information professionals and evaluate the requirements within those options</td>
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<td>To stimulate intrapreneural thinking among future information professionals</td>
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<tr>
<td>To develop an appreciation of the impact of political, economic, social (including diversity issues), technological and legal, regulatory, and environmental factors on business</td>
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Required reading:

Case studies – read at least four in addition to the watching the interview on D2L with Uma Gupta, CEO of PlanetGPA:
Identifying opportunities

Learning objectives
• To stimulate intrapreneurial thinking among future information professionals
• To develop the skills and knowledge required to identify opportunities and, through creativity and innovation, turn these opportunities into reality whether inside an already existing information-based organization or as an information-based business.

Required reading:
Recommended reading:

The business plan

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Required reading:

Assignments

Written assignments are due on the specified dates. Grades may be reduced for late papers. Written assignments are to be typed, preferably word-processed. Papers are to be double-spaced using a 12-point kerned font such as Times New Roman with 1 to 1.25 inch margins. You may not resubmit work that has already been used in fulfillment of the requirement of this or any other course. Rules of academic conduct require that you not use the work of others without clearly indicating it as such. Academic misconduct may result in a lowered grade, no credit for a given assignment, or removal from the course.
It is expected that you will consult and appropriately cite the research and professional literature where merited. This means citing a variety of sources. Limiting yourself to an online source like Wikipedia as the entirety of your research efforts is unacceptable and will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Grades will also be reduced for papers that include irrelevant content to “fill up space” to meet the length specifications for a paper. Please rely on a commonly used style manual for your submissions (e.g. Turabian, Chicago, APA, MLA). These are available in the Library or UWM Bookstore or may be purchased through online book vendors. If you are uncertain about how to cite electronic sources, consult one of the many electronic guides to citing electronic sources available on the net. Minimal reference content includes: author (if known), date (if given), title, URL, and date accessed.

**Assignment 1. Entrepreneurial self-assessment**

Self-awareness, understanding one’s own strengths and weaknesses, is vital when choosing to embark on an intrapreneurial or entrepreneurial path. You should capitalize on your strengths and address your weaknesses, either through development or consulting or hiring others to cover those. Although self-assessment or personality tests are not absolute predictors they do serve as useful indicators of potential strengths and weaknesses. For this assignment you are required to complete one or, preferably, more of the following self-assessment questionnaires:

- Meyer and Crane's (2011:274) Personal Characteristics Audit

Having completed the assessment(s), write a candid evaluation of your strengths and areas for development with respect to entrepreneurial activity. Include action steps that you can realistically take with respect to developing weaknesses into strengths. Please note that you do not need to include your completed questionnaire(s).

Nature: Individual
Assignment 2. Alternative paths in the information industry
In her book, *Rethinking Information Work* (2006), Dority argues that librarians and other information professionals need to rethink their career paths. This statement is based on her assumption that our profession (librarians) will be driven by new circumstances. Libraries are closing down but also ‘new information-based roles’ are opening new opportunities for librarians. She argues that these opportunities in the information economy are nearly endless for librarians.

In a paper of no more than 8 pages address the following two questions:

• What are these ‘new information-based roles’ for librarians in the information economy?
• How can librarians prepare themselves (competences, skills, attitudes etc.) to take advantage of these new ‘alternative information career paths’?

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Max. 8 pages (double spaced) text, i.e. excluding diagrams

Assignment 3. Opportunity identification
Based on the case studies and discussion of readings, brainstorm in your groups to identify potential opportunities that you see either inside existing information-based organizations or for a new independent venture. Describe each opportunity briefly and indicate your initial feeling as to its viability/feasibility (you do not need to consider this in-depth at this stage).

Nature: Group
Length of paper: Max. 5 pages (double spaced) text, i.e. excluding diagrams

Assignment 4. Evaluate a business plan (UNDERGRADUATES ONLY)
You will be provided with a selection of business plans. Choose one to critically evaluate in terms of:

• the completeness of contents: are all the necessary components of a business plan present and in adequate detail?
• viability: is the need in the market adequate? Is the proposed offering to address this need compelling? Does the strategy for capturing the market
make sense? Is the person/team sufficiently experienced to realize this? Are the financial projections realistic?

Nature: Group
Length of paper: Max. 10 pages (double spaced) text, i.e. excluding diagrams

**Assignment 5. Business plan and presentation (GRADUATES ONLY)**

Develop a business plan to either exploit one of the opportunities identified earlier (it can be an opportunity inside an information-based organization or for a new independent information business.) You can use the templates provided on the CD in Harriman or the business plan template of the SBA at http://web.sba.gov/busplantemplate/BizPlanStart.cfm.

Your group will be expected to present your business plan as if to management (in the case of an internal opportunity) or to a prospective investor (in the case of an independent information business). All members will be expected to be able to answer questions from the audience.

Nature: Group
Length of paper: Max. 25 pages (double spaced)
Length of presentation: 30 min. (20 min. presentation, 10 min. Q&A)

**Evaluation**

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<tr>
<td>Enterpreneurial self-assessment</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative paths in the information industry</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity identification</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate a business plan</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business plan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of business plan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
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**Grading Scale**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>91-95</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-90</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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The following links contain university policies affecting all SOIS students. Many of the links below may be accessed through a PDF-document maintained by the Secretary of the University: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf). For graduate students, there are additional guidelines from the Graduate School ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/StudentInfo/](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/StudentInfo/)), including those found in the *Graduate Student and Faculty Handbook*: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/Publications/Handbook/](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/Publications/Handbook/).

**Students with disabilities.** If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of a course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. Students with disabilities are responsible to communicate directly with the instructor to ensure special accommodation in a timely manner. There is comprehensive coverage of issues related to disabilities at the Student Accessibility Center ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/MainOffice.html](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/MainOffice.html)), important components of which are expressed here: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/SACltr.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/SACltr.pdf).

**Religious observances.** Students’ sincerely held religious beliefs must be reasonably accommodated with respect to all examinations and other academic requirements, according to the following policy: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S1.5.htm](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S1.5.htm). Please notify your instructor within the first three weeks of the Fall or Spring Term (first week of shorter-term or Summer courses) of any specific days or dates on which you request relief from an examination or academic requirement for religious observances.

**Students called to active military duty.** UWM has several policies that accommodate students who must temporarily lay aside their educational pursuits when called to active duty in the military ([http://www3.uwm.edu/des/web/registration/militarycallup.cfm](http://www3.uwm.edu/des/web/registration/militarycallup.cfm)), including provisions for refunds, readmission, grading, and other situations.

**Incompletes.** A notation of “incomplete” may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantial cause beyond the student’s control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or
some limited amount of other term work. An incomplete is not given unless the student proves to the instructor that s/he was prevented from completing course requirements for just cause as indicated above (http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S31.pdf).

**Discriminatory conduct** (*such as sexual harassment*). UWM and SOIS are committed to building and maintaining a campus environment that recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of every person, fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect, and encourages the members of its community to strive to reach their full potential. The UWM policy statement (http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S47.pdf) summarizes and defines situations that constitute discriminatory conduct. If you have questions, please contact an appropriate SOIS administrator.

**Academic misconduct.** Cheating on exams and plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, ranging from a failing grade for a course or assignment to expulsion from the University. See the following document (http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html) or contact the SOIS Investigating Officer (currently the Associate Dean) for more information.

**Complaints.** Students may direct complaints to the SOIS Dean or Associate Dean. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy.

**Grade appeal procedures.** A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow SOIS appeals procedures or, in the case of a graduate student, those of the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School (http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S28.htm).

**Examinations, Finals.** The Secretary of the University is authorized to prepare the final examination schedule. The time of the final examination for an individual or a class may be changed only with the prior approval of the dean or director of the respective college/school. The change will involve a postponement to a later date. For individuals with exam conflicts, a separate week at the very end of the exam week will be reserved to take one of the conflicting exams (http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad+admin_policies/S22.htm).