UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDIES

INFO ST (691) SPECIAL TOPICS: INFOPRENEURSHIP

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION ORGANIZATIONS

SYLLABUS

Fall 2015 (September 2 – December 14)

Instructor: Dr Shana Ponelis
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Location: NWQB 3420
Phone: 414-229-2514
Office hours: TBA
Skype: shanaponelis

Meeting Times & Location: D2L

UWM help on D2L:
E-mail: help@uwm.edu
Phone: 414–229–4040
URL: https://pantherfile.uwm.edu/groups/sa/ltc/public/D2L%20student%20help%20files/

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:
INFO ST 110 and 210 (undergraduate). INFO ST 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 amongst current and future librarians.

**What previous students had to say about this class**

- “[T]his course helped me to appreciate library work in a substantially deeper and more analytical way.”
- “I feel much more prepared to view my degree as a set of skills with a multitude of uses than simply preparation to become a public librarian.”
- “This course has proven to be of great use to me, by both developing my skills and knowledge, and by providing me with an extensive project that I can use to pursue my career aspirations, and I am very grateful for the opportunities that have been opened up to me because of this course.”
- “This course has given me better confidence to speak more freely at my workplace about opportunities that we should be exploring from a business perspective.”

**Disclaimer:** 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 (assignment(s) that assess objective):

- Introduce a variety of entrepreneurial concepts and practices in the library and information professions (discussion).
- Create entrepreneurial self-awareness among current and future information professionals (discussion, assignment 1, assignment 6).
- Stimulate intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial thinking among future information professionals (discussion, assignment 6).
- Explore a range of alternative career options for librarians and information professionals and critically evaluate the requirements within those options (discussion, assignment 2).
- Identify appropriate entrepreneurial methods and processes to apply within a library and other information-based organizations based on a critical evaluation (discussion, assignment 3).
- Identify and critically evaluate potential intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial opportunities (discussion, assignment 4).
- Develop (G)/Evaluate (U) a business plan for an identified opportunity whether inside an already existing information-based organization or as an independent information-based business (discussion, assignment 5).
- Critically reflect upon the information needs of entrepreneurs in the community (discussion).
- Develop an appreciation of the impact of political, economic, social (including
diversity issues), technological and legal, regulatory, and environmental factors on entrepreneurship (discussion, assignment 6).

**ALA 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:**
Lectures, independent reading, case studies, discussion, assignments, student presentations, invited speakers (depending on availability).

Students with special test and note-taking needs should contact the instructor as early as possible for accommodations. See policies below.

**WORK LOAD:**
Although you will be assessed on your performance, a minimum of 144 hours of work is expected for the course. This time will be met by doing the course reading, research, assignments, and participating in the class discussion. This workload is an estimate; students are assessed on their performance, not on the time put into the course.

Undergraduates have fewer requirements than graduates enrolled in the MLIS program, as outlined below.

**TEXTS:**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>REQUIRED:</th>
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<th>RECOMMENDED:</th>
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Additional required readings are also assigned from a variety of sources, which will be available on D2L. URLs for web-based articles are accurate at the starting date of the course; if the link doesn’t work please do a search on the website using the article title. Recommended reading is not available on D2L; please consult the Golda Meir Library (GML). You are also encouraged to avail yourself of relevant resources in GML collection.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Discussion assignments</th>
<th>Written assignment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept 2</td>
<td>Course overview and introduction</td>
<td>Post response by Friday 11:59 pm CDT/CST on D2L, post substantive response by Sunday 11:59 pm CDT/CST</td>
<td>Due on Sunday following week start date by 11:59 p.m. CDT/CST on D2L (except where indicated otherwise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 7</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial librarianship</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept 14</td>
<td>The entrepreneurial mindset in information services</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship and libraries + librarians</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sept 21</td>
<td>The non-traditional path</td>
<td>Fostering intrapreneurship in libraries</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sept 28</td>
<td>The non-traditional path (continued)</td>
<td>Fostering intrapreneurship in libraries (cont.)</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual assignment 1: Entrepreneurial self-assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oct 5</td>
<td>The independent path</td>
<td>Key lessons to be learned from entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td>The independent path (continued)</td>
<td>Key lessons to be learned from entrepreneurs (cont.)</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Individual assignment 2: Alternative paths in the information industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oct 19</td>
<td>Work on assignment</td>
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<td>Journal entry*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Individual assignment 3: Informational interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Oct 26</td>
<td>Identifying opportunities / developing the business concept</td>
<td>Most admired innovations</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>The business plan</td>
<td>Role of formal business plans</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Individual assignment 4: Opportunity identification</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nov 9</td>
<td>Work on business plan assignment</td>
<td>Evaluating opportunities and business plans (part 1)</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>Work on business plan</td>
<td>Evaluating opportunities</td>
<td>Journal entry*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TOPICS

Entrepreneurial librarianship

Course objective(s) addressed:
• Introduce a variety of entrepreneurial concepts and practices in the library and information professions.

Required reading:

The entrepreneurial mindset in information services

Course objective(s) addressed:
• Create entrepreneurial self-awareness among current and future information professionals.

Required reading:


• Toftoy, C.N. 2002. The Key to a Librarian's Success: Developing Entrepreneurial Traits, Information Outlook, 6(6):42-47.


Recommended reading:

**Intrapreneurship: the non-traditional path**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course objective(s) addressed:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Explore a range of alternative career options for librarians and information professionals and evaluate the requirements within those options</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Stimulate intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial thinking among future information professionals</td>
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</table>

Required reading:


**Case studies:**

**Recommended reading:**

**Entrepreneurship: the independent path**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course objective(s) addressed:</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Explore a range of alternative career options for librarians and information professionals and critically evaluate the requirements within those options</td>
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<td>• Develop an appreciation of the impact of political, economic, social (including diversity issues), technological and legal, regulatory, and environmental factors on entrepreneurship</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Required reading:**

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

Recommended reading:

Identifying opportunities / Developing the business concept

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Course objective(s) addressed:</th>
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<td>• Stimulate intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial thinking among future information professionals</td>
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<td>• Develop (G)/Evaluate (U) a business plan for an identified opportunity whether inside an already existing information-based organization or as an independent information-based business.</td>
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</table>

Required reading:


**Recommended reading:**


**The business plan**

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**Required reading:**


Recommended reading:

Entrepreneurship and libraries

<table>
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<td>• Critically reflect upon the information needs of entrepreneurs in the community</td>
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Required reading:

Read at least TWO of the following:
Assignment instructions and descriptions

**Discussion assignments instructions**

Instructions: Post your initial post before 11:59 p.m. on the Friday following the Start Date and post at least 1 substantive response to one of your fellow student’s initial posts before 11:59 p.m. on the Sunday following the Start Date. I will post the grades as well as my comments and feedback during the following week. Late posts will not be graded. Please do not attach documents but enter your text directly into the discussion dialog box.

- **Initial post:** Except for the Introduction post you need to provide your answer together with your motivation in your first post. If you refer to any sources please include references.
- **Response post:** You need to substantively address one or more statements in another student’s post. Single sentence “Me too” posts are not acceptable.
- **Assessment criteria:** The rubric for assessment of discussion posts is provided as an appendix to the syllabus.

In cases where a discussion runs over more than one week then we simply repeat the process, another initial post in week two by Friday an a response post by the second Sunday. The nature of some topics is such that you will have an opinion and as you read more of the readings and your fellow students’ posts you may change your mind or have other additional ideas to share.

Discussion assignments will be posted on D2L.

**Written assignments instructions**

Written assignments are due on the dates specified in the Course Schedule. 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.

Please rely on a commonly used style manual for your submissions (e.g. Harvard, Chicago, APA, MLA) that 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.

Suggested lengths are given for the four assigned papers although quality is much more important than quantity. Grades will be reduced for papers that include irrelevant content to “fill up space” to meet the length specifications for a paper. Carefully honed, mellifluous prose is as important as substantive content and is also evaluated so keep the following in mind when writing your assignments:

- In written communication you need to select your words more carefully and make your meaning absolutely clear. Avoid repetition, colloquial language and jargon, sexist language, contractions and awkward syntactical constructions
- Develop paragraphs fully and include transitions between paragraphs. Transitions
are essential to maintain continuity in your writing.
  o Where appropriate use a limited number of succinct headings and subheadings to structure your paper.
  o Underline or italicize when required.
  o Avoid footnotes.
  o Follow the style manual of your chosen reference and citation style carefully. Try to avoid excessive and repeated lengthy quotes. When quoting be sure that the quote is relevant to your point and introduce your quotes in a suitable manner, for example, X (2011) states, “…”; According to X (2011), “libraries …”, X agrees when she writes “…” etc.)

It is expected that undergraduate students enrolling for this course have had experience writing papers. If you need help with your papers, please consult the UWM Writing Center for assistance.

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 complement your profile. 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 two, preferably more, of the following self-assessment questionnaires:

• Entrepreneurs First: http://www.bdc.ca/EN/advice_centre/benchmarking_tools/Pages/entrepreneurial_self_assessment.aspx
• Women's Enterprise Centre: http://www.womensenterprise.ca/content/entrepreneurial-self-assessment
• Women’s Initiative for Self-Employment (on D2L)
• Meyer and Crane’s Personal Characteristics Audit (2011:274)

Having completed the assessments, write a candid evaluation of your strengths and areas for development with respect to entrepreneurial activity based on your understanding of entrepreneurship from the reading and discussions to date. Include action steps that you can realistically take with respect to develop weaknesses into strengths. Please note that you do not need to include your completed questionnaire(s) but you can include them as appendices if you want.

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Between 2 and 4 pages (double spaced) text excluding diagrams and appendices
**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 the profession of librarianship will be driven by new circumstances. ‘New information-based roles’ present alternative opportunities for librarians. She argues that these opportunities in the information economy are nearly endless for librarians.

In your paper address the following two questions:

- What are these new circumstances for librarians?
- What are these ‘new information-based roles’ for librarians?
- How can librarians prepare themselves in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes, competencies, etc. to take advantage of these new ‘alternative information career paths’?
- *GRADUATES ONLY* Do you agree with Dority’s assumption? Do you agree that opportunities in the information economy are nearly endless for librarians. Motivate with evidence to support your view.

**Nature:** Individual  
**Length of paper:** Between 6-8 pages (U) / 8-10 pages (G) double-spaced text excluding any diagrams

**Assignment 3: Informational interview**

Based on the readings and assignments to date compile at least five questions you have about being an intrapreneur and/or entrepreneur. It can be about aspects that you are simply curious about or specific things that would like to know more from an intrapreneur/entrepreneur. Using your personal contacts, Web sites, articles, or other sources, find an intrapreneur/entrepreneur that you know, admire or who is engaged in an industry you are interested in entering who is willing to be interviewed. Conduct an informational interview with this intrapreneur/entrepreneur in person, via the telephone, via Skype or, if no other options is possible, via e-mail and ask him/her your five (or more) questions about being an intrapreneur/entrepreneur. Conducting a synchronous interview is preferable because you can easily ask follow up questions as the interview progresses.

While conducting the interview make notes. If you have access to a voice recorder that can help relieve the need to make notes but make sure that you ask for permission to record the person. Even if your interviewee agrees to being recorded make some notes in case of equipment failure. And don’t for get to thank the person afterwards for their time and willingness to share their knowledge and experience with you!

Once you’ve completed the interview write a report that explains who you spoke to, your relationship to them if any, why you chose to interview them, what you asked them and their responses and conclude your report with your take on the information you’ve gleaned from the interview. You can write in the first person and choose whether you want to write an as-it-happened account (but please do not submit a transcript, you need
to provide some interpretation) or structure it in another way that makes more sense to you, maybe based on topics covered. Include your questions (interview schedule/guide) as an appendix.

*GRADUATES ONLY* Critically compare and contrast what you were told by the interviewee to the theory covered to date.

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Between 4-6 pages (U) / 6-8 pages (G) double-spaced text

**More information about informational interviews**


**Assignment 4: Opportunity identification**

Based on the case studies and discussion of readings, identify at least one and at most five specific opportunities either inside an existing information-based organization if you are employed in one (or hope to be employed in one) or for a new independent venture that YOU can potentially pursue. Describe each opportunity in some detail and critically assess its viability/feasibility.

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Between 3 and 5 pages (double spaced) text excluding diagrams

**Assignment 5: Evaluation of a business plan (UNDERGRADUATES ONLY)**

You will be provided with a business plan to critically evaluate in terms of:

- Completeness of contents: are all the necessary components of a business plan present and in adequate detail?
- Viability: is the need(s) in the market adequate? Is the proposed offering(s) to address this need(s) 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 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.

** Note: If you want to work on a business plan for an opportunity in your organization or for yourself you have the option to do so. Please contact me so that I can set you up in a group of one.**

Nature: Group (individual optional)
Length of paper: Max. 25 pages (double spaced)
Length of presentation: Suitable for a 20 min. presentation

Assignment 6: Journal entries & Reflection
This assignment has two parts: weekly ungraded but required journal entries throughout the semester and an end-of-semester graded reflection essay.

Journal entries: What should you write in your journal? There are two questions for each week to help you structure your entry but you can capture whatever you feel is pertinent:

1. What do you like about the course? What did you learn about entrepreneurship, about yourself and/or about others this week?
2. What would you like to learn more about? Anything you didn't like about the past week?

Your journal entries should not simply be a work log of tasks, events, times and dates. Rather you should record your thoughts about the reading, questions that it sparked, concerns, insights, doubts, fears, and critical questions about issues, people, and, most importantly, yourself. Honesty is an important ingredient to successful journals.

Journal entries aren’t graded and won’t be read except to verify that it is on topic.
However, you do need to submit them on a consistent basis since you will use these journal entries to write your end-of-course reflection that is graded. You need to submit at least half of the journal entries spread evenly across the class period to be able to earn credit for your reflection. You needn’t worry about grammar or spelling in your journal entries, only in the final reflection assignment.

Where should you write your entries? There is a drop box on D2L for each week.

Nature: Individual
Length/Format: No prescribed length or format. You can write as much or as little as you want. You can draw diagrams, sketches or concept maps in PowerPoint, Visio or any other application. You can write or draw by hand and scan it in. You can record your thoughts and upload it as an audio file. It is really up to you because it is your journal so you should use the format that works for you.

Reflection: Using your journal entries write a paper in which you discuss what you learned in the course about entrepreneurship for information-based businesses and intrapreneurship in libraries and information agencies, and about yourself as an intra-/entrepreneur.

Nature: Individual
Length of paper: Between 3 and 5 pages (double spaced)

Evaluation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<th>G</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal entries</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion assignments</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurial self-assessment</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative paths in the information industry</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informational interview</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunity identification / business concept</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate a business plan</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business plan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>Presentation of business plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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Grading Scale:

<table>
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<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>60-63</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<td>Below 60</td>
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UWM and SOIS Academic Policies

The following link will take you to UWM pages/links that contain university policies affecting all UWM students.

http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf

Undergraduates may also find the Panther Planner and Undergraduate Student Handbook useful (http://www4.uwm.edu/dos/student-handbook.cfm).

For graduate students, there are additional guidelines from the Graduate School (http://www.graduateschool.uwm.edu/students/current/), including those found in the Graduate Student and Faculty Handbook:
http://www.graduateschool.uwm.edu/students/policies/expanded/.

The following link will take you to pages/links that contain SOIS policies affecting all SOIS students.

http://www4.uwm.edu/sois/resources/formpol/policies.cfm
## APPENDIX: RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT OF DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Points awarded (/10)</th>
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</table>
| Excellent                   | • The participant integrated evidence from the reading, lecture, or past experience in supporting their argument.  
  • The participant consistently posted insightful comments and questions that prompted on-topic discussion.  
  • The participant consistently helped clarify or synthesize other class members' ideas when posting a response.  
  • If disagreeing with another class members' ideas, the participant stated his or her disagreement or objections clearly, yet politely.                                                                                                                           | 9-10                 |
| Average                     | • The participant was notably lacking in one or two of the items listed for A-level participation.  
  • The participant usually, but not always, expressed herself or himself clearly.                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 8                    |
| Superficial participation   | • The learner may participate in discussion, but comments may be infrequent, untimely, or indicate a lack of preparation prior to responding.  
  • Participation does not indicate familiarity with the concepts or readings, and comments are not always relevant to the topic being discussed.  
  • The comments may not be of appropriate length.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 6-7                  |
| Non-helpful participation   | • The participant’s comments are unrelated to the discussion.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 5                    |
| Non-participation           | • The participant consistently failed or refused to participate at all, even when specifically prompted or questioned, even if the participant's participation otherwise conforms to a higher level on the rubric.  
  • The participant is disrespectful of others views, attempts to dominate the discussion, demonstrates inappropriate communication such as flaming, or is inattentive to the discussion at hand generating side discussions which tend to disrupt others focus of attention  
  • The student does not participate.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 0-4                  |