551 Information Behavior and Search Experience
University of Michigan School of Information Fall 2017

Class Meets: Fridays 1-4 PM in Mason Hall 2306
Class Email list: SI-551-001-FA2017-A@courses.umich.edu
Instructor: Soo Young Rieh (rieh@umich.edu), North Quad 4373
Office Hours: Fridays 11 am-Noon (NQ 4373) and 4-5 pm (MH 2306)

COURSE OVERVIEW
The purpose of this course is to provide theoretical and practical foundations for information professionals who wish to design and evaluate search systems and services, taking user-centered approaches. This course explores search user interfaces, search behavior, search interaction, search user experience, and measures and methods for evaluating search systems. Students will have opportunities to discuss information-seeking behavior in contexts such as academic settings, professional work settings, everyday life, health contexts, and digital learning environments. Students will learn about the nature of interaction with information in a variety of application areas, including search engines, domain-specific information retrieval systems, digital libraries, collaborative search, and social search.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Understand the fundamental concepts and major models in the field of interactive information retrieval, information seeking behavior, and human information interaction.
2. Analyze the behavior and experience of information users in order to provide effective information systems and services.
3. Gain knowledge in user experience with various search interfaces.
4. Gain skills in designing experimental studies to evaluate information retrieval systems.
5. Have an ability to apply appropriate criteria and measures for information retrieval evaluation.
6. Incorporate strong user-centered perspectives into the design and development of search systems and services.

COURSE MATERIALS
The readings are available on our SI 551 Canvas site (see: Files – Course Readings). There is no textbook for this course. However, we will read multiple chapters from these books as course readings. You DO NOT need to buy these books.


EXPECTATIONS
1) **Course Readings**: Read the course readings critically in advance of the class session. The readings are available on our SI 551 Canvas site.
2) **Before-Class Questions “What I want to know”**: Post one question to the 551 Before- and After-Class Questions and Reflections. Do not post questions that are answered in the readings. Post questions that are unanswered or unsolved based on your comprehension of the readings. I will pick 3-4 “best questions” each week and discuss selected questions during class. To be selected as best
questions, your question(s) must be posted before Thursday 5 pm. However, feel free to post your questions after Friday, or even after the class. Begin your post with your full name and the date of your submission.

3) **After-Class Reflections “What I learned this week”:** Once the class is over each week, go back to *551 Before- and After-Class Questions and Reflections* and write up your reflections about the lectures, readings, and discussions. Or, review questions raised by other students to see whether you can now answer any of those questions. Don’t forget to include your name and the date at the beginning of your post.

4) **Canvas:** Check out the 551 Canvas site on a regular basis. Course readings, lecture notes, assignment instructions and grading rubrics, assignment examples, grading feedback, and other course-related resources will be communicated via the 551 Canvas site.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

In-Class and Online Participation: 10%
Assignment 1: SERP (Search Engine Results Page) Analysis and Critique Assignment: 20%
Assignment 2: Diary of Information Behavior: 20%
Assignment 3: Key Informant Interviews: 15%
Term Project Part 1: Title and Abstract
Term Project Part 2: Project Research Design: 5%
Term Project Part 3: Pilot Study and Proposal: 30%

- I use a 100-point scale to grade papers. To be fair to students who have worked hard to meet the deadline, points will be deducted for late submissions (2 points per day, including weekends).
- In terms of turning in assignments late, exceptions may be made in some exceptional circumstances, but you must contact me in advance. Assignments will be accepted late without a penalty only with prior consent of the instructor and in situations where there is a legitimate reason.
- Assignment guidelines and rubrics for each assignment will be available on Canvas – Assignments.
- All assignments should be handed in using Canvas.
- Every paper should include the course number, a **unique title**, the submission date, your name, and your email address at the top of the first page (no cover page).
- All citations should use APA (American Psychological Association) style. For more information on APA style, please see the Purdue University OWL guide: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
- Although I will try my best to answer your questions about assignments promptly, please give me 48 hours to reply to your email. If you do not hear from me within 48 hours, resend your email for my attention. Include “551” in the subject line to get my attention quickly.

**POINTS AND LETTER GRADE**

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**ASSIGNMENTS**

Please see the separate document about this.
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Unless otherwise specified in an assignment all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts, statements, or phrases from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. Any violation of the School’s policy on Academic and Professional Integrity (stated in the Master’s and Doctoral Student Handbooks) will result in serious penalties, which might range from failing an assignment, to failing a course, to being expelled from the program. Violations of academic and professional integrity will be reported to UMSI Student Affairs. Consequences impacting assignment or course grades are determined by the faculty instructor; additional sanctions may be imposed by the assistant dean for academic and student affairs.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING
The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (734) 764-8312 and https://caps.umich.edu/ during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in schools on both North and Central Campus. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (734) 764-8320 and https://www.uhs.umich.edu/mentalhealthsvcs, or for alcohol or drug concerns, see www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources. For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, visit: http://umich.edu/~mhealth/

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way we teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; ssd.umich.edu/) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. I will treat any information that you provide in as confidential a manner as possible.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS OF INFORMATION BEHAVIOR AND SEARCH USER INTERFACE

Week 1 (Sept. 8): Introduction to information behavior and search experience; core concepts

Week 2 (Sept. 15): Information seeking behavior; Search behavior; Browsing

Week 3 (Sept. 22): Search user interface design
**Week 4 (Sept. 29): Exploratory search; Visualization for search interfaces**

**Week 5 (Oct. 6): Relevance; Usefulness; Credibility assessment**

*** Assignment 1: SERP Analysis and Critique Due ***

**UNIT 2: APPROACHES AND METHODS**

**Week 6 (Oct. 13): Approaches to investigating information interaction, behavior, and experience**

*** Final Project Part 1: Title and Abstract Due ***

**Week 7 (Oct. 20): Information retrieval evaluation measures and methods; Experimental design**

***Assignment 2: Diary of Information Behavior Due ***

**Week 8 (Oct. 27): Workshop day: How to collect and analyze the data for user research**
UNIT 3: INFORMATION BEHAVIOR AND SEARCH EXPERIENCE IN CONTEXT

Week 9 (Nov. 3): Information behavior and experience of knowledge workers; Task-based information retrieval
*** Final Project Part 2: Research Design Draft Due***

Week 10 (Nov. 10): Everyday life information seeking; Information sharing; Health information seeking behavior

Week 11 (Nov. 17): Collaborative information seeking; Social search
*** Assignment 3: Key Informant Interviews Due***
- Shah, C. (2017). Social information seeking: Leveraging the wisdom of the crowd. Springer: Cham, Switzerland. Chapter 4 Online Question-Answering (Q&A) (pp. 45-74) and Chapter 5 Social search (pp. 75-90).

Week 12 (Nov. 24): No Class. Enjoy Thanksgiving!

Week 13 (Dec. 1): Searching as learning; Youth information seeking

Week 14 (Dec 8): Wrap-up; Discussion of term project
*** Final Project Part 3: Term Paper Due***