
SYLLABUS: INFORMAL LEARNING SPACES AND PEDAGOGIES

IS490IL ONLINE, 1:00 – 3:00 PM, JUNE 12 – JULY 31, 2018

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COURSE OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the design of space and pedagogy for informal learning in libraries, museums, the workplace, and other collaborative spaces. We will investigate together a variety of informal learning spaces such as information and learning commons, learning labs, and Makerspaces to understand the impact environment has on learning, and will review key literature concerning informal learning pedagogy and critical sociotechnical perspectives on technology and society. We will also consider qualitative and quantitative evaluation strategies for measuring output and impact of design of space and programming for informal learning in libraries, museums, and other public venues.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The general learning outcome objectives for IS418 are to help students:

- Create a working definition of informal learning that can be used as a starting point in support of evolving professional and community valued beings and doings;
- Develop a holistic and nuanced understanding of informal learning pedagogies in support of community cultural wealth and multiple ways of knowing;
- Advance personal and collaborative agency to appropriate and innovate-in-use physical spaces & tools, analog and digital technologies, and people's functional diversities to achieve high performance in their own learning outcome goals; and
- Create a list of possible evaluation tools that could be effectively tested within different contexts to assess application of the first three learning outcomes in a given moment, facilitating use of a growth/fail-forward mindset in community, with community, for community to further advance informal learning.

PRE- AND CO-REQUISITES

None for LIS graduate students or consent of instructor for non-LIS graduate students (LIS490IL); Junior or senior standing (LIS490ILU).

REQUIRED BOOK

John Dewey (1936) *Experience and Education*. ISBN: 0-684-83828-1

ASSIGNMENTS AND METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Students will be graded on a 90% (A), 80% (B), 70% (C), 60% (D) scale. Graded assignments and the overall percentage for each category of assignments are listed below.

CONCEPT PAPERS (30% OF GRADE)

Students will submit three 1000-word concept papers plus bibliography in response to the four learning outcomes listed above during the course of the semester. In support of the research for these papers, weekly class meetings will be used to:

1. Identify sub-questions and research themes related to the guiding question;
2. Identify potential resources related to the sub-questions and research themes;
3. Discuss our interpretations of the resources in light of our personal histories, race and culture, and lived experiences; and
4. Develop a framework for better practices as professionals in support of informal learning spaces and pedagogies.

WEEKLY READINGS, DISCUSSIONS, AND JOURNAL REFLECTIONS (25%)

Students will select from and review a list of readings in advance of class each week. Given the 8-week format with a shortened 2-hour weekly synchronous meeting, rather than entering into small groups during class, students will write a reflective journal bringing together their own descriptive, dialogic, and critical reflection as it relates to their readings by midday Friday. Students will then read through the weekly posts of students in their assigned asynchronous breakout groups. Finally, each student will write a second personal post expanding further on the descriptive, dialogic, and critical reflections based on this asynchronous discussion. Students should spend about 6 hours each week reading their selected article(s), and another 2 hours reading/writing their journal reflections.

ANALYSIS OF AN INFORMAL LEARNING SPACE IN A LIBRARY, MUSEUM, OR OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE COLLABORATIVE SPACE (35%)

This final project is a 2000-2500-word paper plus references that analyzes an informal learning space in a library, museum, or other public/private collaborative venue. You may do the investigation in collaboration with another class member. The length of the paper doesn't change if it is done in collaboration with another student, however I expect that the depth of information that goes into the paper to be greater.

Students are highly encouraged to consult with regular staff of the space to develop guiding questions to be addressed as part of the analysis so as to better serve the interests of the host organization and their community.

The analysis must include various sources of information, such as:

- An interview with one or more regular staff (paid or volunteer) and one or more active users of the space;
- Articles and case examples, including but not limited to those for the course;
- Websites with resources on the programming and the organization; and
- The organization's mission and identified goals in the area

The analysis should incorporate an overview of the informal learning space, an analysis of the space and program design inspirations, a consideration of several examples of uses of the informal learning space and how the successes and failures of that use has informed subsequent uses, and strategies used to evaluate the overall impact of the space. For full credit, the paper should make clear connections between the analysis of the informal learning space and the primary literature reviewed for the class.

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION (10% OF GRADE)

The instructor will evaluate student attendance, active participation, and overall progress throughout the course of the semester. The following rubric will be used to assign a score mid-semester and again at the end of the semester. These will be averaged together to create the final score.

- 10 = Student has been an active participant in class discussions, bringing to the class insights from their interpretations of readings and lived experiences and is demonstrating an increasing grasp of the key concepts covered in class.
- 8 = Student has been an active participant in some of the class discussions and is demonstrating some gains in grasping key concepts covered in class.
- 6 = Student is occasionally active in class and is demonstrating some learning, but it is clear they are not performing to their full capabilities
- 4 = Student has missed several classes and/or is not always active when attending class
- 0 = Student has consistently missed class during the rated period

RESOURCES AND REQUIREMENTS

ATTENDANCE, PARTICIPATION, AND STATEMENT OF INCLUSION

Students are expected to attend all class sessions except in case of emergency. If you have an emergency, communicate with the instructor as early as possible to prevent negatively impacting your grade.

The instructor stands in full agreement with the Chancellor's Commitment Statement

(<http://www.inclusiveillinois.illinois.edu/chancellordivstmtswf.html#ValuStmt>):

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AS THE STATE'S PREMIER PUBLIC UNIVERSITY, THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN'S CORE MISSION IS TO SERVE THE INTERESTS OF THE DIVERSE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS AND BEYOND. THE INSTITUTION THUS VALUES INCLUSION AND A PLURALISTIC LEARNING AND RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT, ONE WHICH WE RESPECT THE VARIED PERSPECTIVES AND LIVED EXPERIENCES OF A DIVERSE COMMUNITY AND GLOBAL WORKFORCE. WE SUPPORT DIVERSITY OF WORLDVIEWS, HISTORIES, AND CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE ACROSS A RANGE OF SOCIAL GROUPS INCLUDING RACE, ETHNICITY, GENDER IDENTITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, ABILITIES, ECONOMIC CLASS, RELIGION, AND THEIR INTERSECTIONS.

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As such, active participation is therefore expected not only to satisfy requirement to earn course credit, but as a professional courtesy to the class as a communities of practice. Our community of practice is vitally enriched when each participant contributes to fieldwork and class discussion by bringing into dialogue their unique perspectives and lived experiences. On the other hand, failure to fully prepare each week for participation in fieldwork and class discussion weakens the community of practice by less-than-fully bringing into dialogue your diverse worldview, history, and cultural knowledge.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

To obtain accessibility-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603 (V/TTY), or e-mail a message to disability@uiuc.edu If you are concerned you have a disability-related condition that is impacting your academic progress, there are academic screening appointments available on campus that can help diagnosis a previously undiagnosed disability by visiting the DRES website and selecting "Sign-Up for an Academic Screening" at the bottom of the page.

If you are interested in obtaining information to improve writing, study skills, time management or organization, the following campus resources are available to all students:

Writer's Workshop, Undergrad Library, 217-333-8796

<http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop>

<http://disability.illinois.edu/strategies>

<http://www.counselingcenter.illinois.edu/self-help-brochures/>

Syllabus: IS451, Spring 2018

Also, most college offices and academic deans provide academic skills support and assistance for academically related and personal problems. Links to the appropriate college contact can be found by going to this website and selecting your college or school: <http://illinois.edu/colleges/colleges.html>

If you are experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression or are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or in crisis, you can seek help through the following campus resources:

Counseling Center
206 Fred H. Turner Student Services Building
7:50 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday
Phone: 333-3704
McKinley Mental Health
313 McKinley Health Center
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday
Phone: 333-2705

McKinley Health Education offers individual consultations for students interested in learning relaxation and other stress/time management skills, call 333-2714.

CONTENT WARNING

If you are a student with a disability (or would qualify as a student with a disability) who will be significantly affected by traumatic course content such as (specific reading/video/blog) or words (imagery/tone/situations) please contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603, e-mail disability@illinois.edu or go to the DRES website.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students should review and follow the University policy on academic integrity, available online at: http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1_part4_1-402.html . When you submit an assignment, you are certifying that the work is your own, or that of your project group, and that all use of other people's material is used in accordance to fair use and copyright policies and is properly referenced.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

<http://www.library.illinois.edu/lx/> ; lilib@library.illinois.edu; 217-333-3804