The University of Texas at Austin
School of Information

INF 384F: Subject Cataloging and Indexing (26200)
Spring Semester 2006

I. Course Description
The study of problems in the content analysis of information entities and their subject representation in
library catalogs and indexing systems. Special emphasis on the Dewey Decimal Classification, the
Library of Congress Classification, and the Library of Congress Subject Heading systems. (Graduate
standing) [from School of Information Website—Course Descriptions]

II. Objectives

Overall:
My tasks as an instructor are to the best of my ability to
1) explain subject cataloging and indexing,
2) identify (and supply where necessary) a set of readings and tools for class members,
3) provide a series of performance events for each student and student team to accomplish,
4) serve as a personal resource during the course.

Your tasks as students are to the best of your ability to
1) listen to and try to understand my tentative explanations of matters related to subject
cataloging and indexing, with a commitment to asking for clarifications when needed,
2) study the readings intelligently and complete the performance events scheduled for the
course.
3) enter into public and team discussions of topics of the course (recognizing that you will
remember more readily the ideas to which you contribute out loud your own thoughts),
4) contribute equitably to the work of your team.

The overall goal is, of course, that somehow in the process of each of us doing our tasks, you will
learn about subject cataloging and indexing, and I will learn better not simply to teach subject
cataloging and indexing but to learn anew vital issues in subject cataloging and indexing that are
provoked by your point of view and by the questions you ask.

All things being equal, I cannot make you learn anything about anything, let alone subject
cataloging and indexing. Only you can do that. Nor is there any automatic road to your
accomplishing the latter. Each of you will do so in your own individual way and to varying
degrees of success.

If you really wish to make the very best use of this course of study, you will view it as a vast
mountainous terrain of topics about which neither I nor you know all the answers (nor even all the
by-ways), but that with encouragement and exploration on each of our parts, is actually able to be
figured out at least in a beginning way. I function best if I can serve as a resource, an adviser, a
person who with respect to subject access has been around the block a few times, who is more
than willing to answer questions, advise about meanings of things, and so on. But, that requires
that you “get into” the course enough to consider it a serious challenge to your belief that you need
to learn, and that you come with questions, answers to be compared, ideas to be turned over,
personal triumphs that you are willing to share with others—including any odd fumbling or
success about the topic that you experience.

Formal behavioral objectives:
Upon completion of the course, each student will have:
• Expressed in both oral and written form an understanding of principles underlying subject
cataloging and indexing.
• Demonstrated competence in applying three systems of subject categorization to subject
cataloging task—the Dewey Decimal Classification; the Library of Congress Classification,
and the Library of Congress Subject Heading system.

Objectives stated less formally:
In order to work wisely and efficiently as a librarian, each student of librarianship must get
some intellectual handles on what subject access consists of and why it is important, and some
practical handles on how it has been and is accomplished in typical libraries.

III. Course Conduct

Lectures and class discussions will be conducted each week on Monday evenings in SZB 546 from
6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Students will be expected to attend these sessions. If you have to miss a
session, please notify Don Drumtra and myself of it as far in advance as you can.

Three exercise assignments will be completed as team efforts. Three essay tests (take home) will be
completed by students individually.

IV. Course Reading Resources

Textbook:
Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited.—[or Revised 9th ed., 2004] (There is not much
difference between the two versions of this 9th ed. Obviously, it would be better for you to
obtain the most recent if you are buying it, but if you have access only to the unrevised 9th
edition, that is okay. I have listed the paging in each version for the class readings.)

Other Recommended (but not required) works:
Libraries Unlimited.
Cambridge, MA: MIT. (The chapters on subject access are very well done and very
thoughtful.)
Selected Writings of Professor F. Miksa:
- Professor Miksa will also assign sections of his own writings relevant to various parts of the course.

Blackboard:
The class will have the writings of Dr. Miksa and other resources available on Blackboard or through Internet links, along with other communication and discussion opportunities. To gain access to the course Blackboard site, you must be a registered student in the University such that your name and userid are registered with the Blackboard system. All you need do is go to http://courses.utexas.edu and the Blackboard system will come up. When you login, you will be asked for your university electronic ID (EID) and password. Emails dealing with the course will be sent via your official UT email address so please be sure it is current. You may change your email address at https://utdirect.utexas.edu/utdirect/bio/address_change.wb

V. Course Grading
Grades are based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100-99</th>
<th>= A+</th>
<th>90-89</th>
<th>= B+</th>
<th>80-79</th>
<th>= C+</th>
<th>70-69</th>
<th>= D+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>98-93</td>
<td>= A</td>
<td>88-83</td>
<td>= B</td>
<td>78-73</td>
<td>= C</td>
<td>etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92-91</td>
<td>= A-</td>
<td>82-81</td>
<td>= B-</td>
<td>72-71</td>
<td>= C-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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This course will involve the following assignments and concept essay exams:
- Team Assignment 1: DDC Issues (Due March 6)
- Team Assignment 2: LCC Issues (Due April 3)
- Team Assignment 3: LCSH Issues (Due May 1—last class period of the course)
- Essay Test # 1 (Due March 10—Friday after Assignment 1 is due & just before spring vacation)
- Essay Test # 2 (Due April 7—the Friday after Assignment 2 is due)
- Essay Test # 1 (Due May 8—one week after the last class period)

All assignments and essay tests will be due electronically by 5 p.m. of the day indicated as attachments sent to both Drumtra and Miksa.

The three team assignments will each be worth 16% of the course grade for a total of 48%. The first two essay tests will each be worth 17% of the course grade; the third essay test will be worth 18%, for a total of 52%.

To show how this all works, suppose a person working individually and on a team compiles the following scores for the six grading units:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team Assignment 1:</th>
<th>Team Assignment 2:</th>
<th>Team Assignment 3:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92 x 16% = 14.72</td>
<td>89 x 16% = 14.24</td>
<td>94 x 16% = 15.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay test # 1</td>
<td>Essay test # 2</td>
<td>Essay test # 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88 x 17% = 14.96</td>
<td>86 x 17% = 14.62</td>
<td>93 x 18% = 16.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for all assignments &amp; tests</td>
<td></td>
<td>90.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The total, 90.32, = B+ on the 100 point scale above. (Had the score been 90.5 or more, it would be rounded to 91, and therefore an A- on the same scale.)

VI. Communication with the Instructor and TA

Dr. Miksa will have the following office hours for the semester:
   Mondays: After class.
   Other times may be set up by appointment.

Don Drumtra, TA, will the following office hours for the semester:
   Thursdays, 4-5 PM, at Prufrock’s (by the main Library).
   Other times and places may be set up by appointment.

The best way to communicate with either Dr. Miksa or Mr. Drumtra is by email, either with questions directly, or as a way to set up a personal appointment time. If you plan to stop by Dr. Miksa’s office after class, it will be useful to know in advance that you plan to do so.