INF 2184 H: Appraisal for Records Retention & Archives Acquisition (Winter 2017)

Course Syllabus

Time: Wednesdays, 1:00-4:00pm
Location: BL 507
Instructor: Fiorella Foscarini
Office Phone: (416)-978-8295
Office Hours: Room BL 638 – Wednesdays, 4:00-6:00pm, and by appointment
Email Address: fiorella.foscarini@utoronto.ca

Teaching Assistant: Nathan Moles
Email Address: n.moles@mail.utoronto.ca

Course Description:
This course focuses on the theories, methods, and practices of appraisal for records retention and archives acquisition, including deciding what to capture as a record in a recordkeeping system, constructing historical identities at both an organizational and a personal level, and pluralizing social memory. The multiple uses of appraisal will be emphasized, especially in information management, recordkeeping systems design, institutional records policies and strategies development. Emphasis will be placed on professionally responsible accountability to contemporaries and the future.

Pre-requisite: INF1330 – The course is open to second year students.

Course Goals and Objectives:
The goal of the course is to familiarize students with the ideas and methods informing the process of assessing the value of records/archives for the purpose of determining the length and conditions of their preservation.

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:
- discuss the concept of appraisal for records retention and archives acquisition (demonstrated through all assignments);
- understand the evolution of the appraisal discourse over time (demonstrated through assignment #2);
- relate the function of appraisal to the management, use, and preservation of current and historical records (demonstrated through all assignments);
- develop and implement appraisal policies and acquisition plans (demonstrated through assignment #3);
- make professional decisions concerning the selection and acquisition of archival material, both public and private, and the formation of the documentary heritage (demonstrated through all assignments);
- critique appraisal projects or programs from theoretical, methodological, and historical perspectives (demonstrated through all assignments);
- formulate their own ideas about this contentious aspect of archival work (demonstrated through all assignments).
**Relationship to Master’s of Information (MI) Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes:**

This course is intended primarily to meet three of the six learning outcomes of the MI Program ([http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca/studies/learning-outcomes](http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca/studies/learning-outcomes)), i.e.,

1) Students understand and are conversant with fundamental concepts, theories, practices and the diverse horizons of information disciplines, and can respond to changing information practices and needs of society.

2) Students develop knowledge and values appropriate to their future exercise of economic, cultural, and/or social leadership.

3) Students develop the ability to contribute through research and publication, to the continuous expansion and critical assessment of the body of knowledge underlying the information and archives sciences.

**Format of the Course:**

The class meets for three hours each week. The format of the course consists of lectures, student-led discussions, in-class activities, guest-speaker presentations, written and oral assignments.

**Course Website:**

Course documents are available electronically through Blackboard. Students are responsible for checking Blackboard periodically for newly posted materials, including syllabus updates, additional readings, lecture slides, assignments, and announcements.

**Evaluation:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Student-led discussion (group)</td>
<td>As scheduled</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Response paper (individual)</td>
<td>February 7</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Activity report (group)</td>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In-class activities: Weeks 3, 5, and 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Appraisal plan (individual)</td>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In-class discussion: April 5</td>
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**Assignment #1: Student-led discussion.**

Students will work in groups, according to a presentation schedule made available on the first day of class. Each group is assigned one or more of the readings marked with a red flag ( notwithstanding the course outline, and is responsible for: 1) preparing a handout summarizing the most important ideas in the article; 2) providing the class with the gist of the points covered in the handout by means of a short oral presentation (no more than 5 minutes); and 3) facilitating an extensive in-class discussion (10-15 minutes) on pertinent issues. To facilitate the discussion, groups may develop a set of questions as part of their presentation.

**Evaluation criteria:** The handout will be evaluated based on clarity, accuracy, and coherent articulation of content. It may include reference to other relevant material. The presentation should be concise and to the point. Its effectiveness will be assessed based on the quality of the discussion generated in class.
Assignment #2: Response paper.
In this individual assignment, you are given an opportunity to analyze and respond to a variety of views on the role of theory in the practice of appraisal and the place of appraisal within archival theory and practice, as expressed in the following articles:

  http://archivists.metapress.com/content/pu548273j5j1p816/?p=0ec322ef199d40018e26dcffbb444ed&pi=7
  http://archivists.metapress.com/content/K3X81G0852825L31

In your own words, provide a brief summary of the positions of the different authors. Critically evaluate the major ideas presented in the articles. This may include constructing sound arguments to support/refute the authors’ positions, and discussing the implications of the different positions for appraisal. You are encouraged to use other readings discussed in the course thus far and any other material you consider relevant to the discussion.

Evaluation criteria: Papers will be assessed on the basis of demonstrated understanding of the three articles, thoughtfulness and insightfulness of analysis, and clarity and coherence of written articulation.

Length, format and other requirements: 6-8 pages, including reference. The font to be used is 12-point and pages should be double-spaced. The paper should be submitted through Blackboard.

Due Date: Tuesday, February 7, end of the day. [Start date: January 18]

Assignment #3: Activity report.
Students will organize in large groups for the purpose of carrying out the in-class activities planned for Weeks 3, 5, and 9. These activities will serve as a preparation and a model for the deliverables in Assignment #3. To be executed in smaller groups, this assignment will consist of drafting (a) an appraisal policy, and (b) a functional analysis for one of the organizations listed in the write-up of the assignment. Together with these two documents, each group will submit a Statement of Responsibility signed by all the members of the group.

Length, format and other requirements: The appraisal policy should not exceed 6 pages (including references), and the functional analysis should not exceed 8 pages (including references). The font to be used is 12-point and pages should be double-spaced. Group members can divide among themselves the different tasks involved in the assignment as they see fit. All documents should be submitted through Blackboard.

Due Date: Tuesday, March 14, end of the day. [Start date: January 25]
**A write-up with more specific details on the assignment will be posted onto Blackboard by Week 3.**

**Assignment #4: Appraisal plan.**
In this assignment, you are given an opportunity to develop a plan to appraise a donation for a repository, along the lines of either an actual or a fictional scenario. You may choose the scenario you want to focus on. Details about both scenarios will be provided in the assignment write-up. On the last day of class, the main findings of this assignment will be discussed.

**Length, format and other requirements:** 12-16 pages, including references. The font to be used is 12-point and pages should be double-spaced. The assignment should be submitted through Blackboard.

**Due Date:** Sunday, April 2, end of the day. Class discussion: April 5. [Start date: March 1]

**A write-up with more specific details on the assignment will be posted onto Blackboard by Week 6.**

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**General Rules**

**Attendance:**
Regular on-time attendance in class is an important part of this course. Students who are unable to make it to class (due to illness or other reasons) are expected to notify the instructor beforehand.

**Grading:**
Please consult the iSchool’s Grade Interpretation Guidelines (http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca/grade-interpretation) and the University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy (http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf). These documents will form the basis for grading in the course.

**Late Assignments:**
A penalty of 2% per day will be imposed on assignments that are not handed in by the due date. Papers that are still outstanding seven days after the due date will not be accepted. Extensions without penalty will only be granted in cases of legitimate illness or emergencies. This policy is to ensure fairness to all students.

**Extensions within the Term:**
Requests for extensions must be submitted to the instructor by email before the due date. The instructor may ask that requests for extensions be supported by appropriate documentation.

**Extensions beyond the End of Term:**
Extensions beyond the term in which the course is taken are subject to guidelines established by the School of Graduate Studies (SGS). Please see: http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/informationfor/students/track/extsn.htm.

**Academic integrity:**
Please consult the University’s site on Academic Integrity (http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/). The iSchool has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism as defined in section B.I.1.(d) of the
University’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters

Writing support:
The SGS Office of English Language and Writing Support
(http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/English-Language-and-Writing-Support.aspx) provides writing support for graduate students. The services are designed to target the needs of both native and non-native speakers of English, and all programs are free. Please consult the current workshop schedule (http://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/currentstudents/Pages/Current-Years-Courses.aspx) for more information.

Accommodations:
Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services Office (http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as) as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let them and/or me know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Additional information:
Academic Dates: http://current.ischool.utoronto.ca/studies/academic-dates
- Final date to drop full-year and winter session (S) courses without academic penalty: February 27, 2017.
### Course Outline
(Subject to revision)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>January 11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong></td>
<td>Introduction to the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
<td>No readings assigned</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>January 18</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong></td>
<td>Traditional views of appraisal (I): Jenkinson and Schellenberg on archival appraisal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Recommended:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>January 25</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong></td>
<td>Traditional views of appraisal (II): The Grigg Report</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>In-class activity:</strong></td>
<td>Analysis of appraisal policies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
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**Recommended:**


**Week 4**

**February 1**

**Topic:** Appraisal theories and methods (I): Overview of fundamental concepts

**Readings:**

**Required**

- + 3 readings included in Assignment #2

**Recommended:**
Week 5 | February 7 (Tuesday)
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Assignment #2 | Response paper due today (by midnight)

Week 5 | February 8
--- | ---
Topic: | Appraisal theories and methods (II): Functional approaches
In-class activity: | Functional analysis

Readings: | Required:
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Recommended:
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### Week 6  
**February 15**

**Topic:** Acquisition theories and methods (I): Documentation plans

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<tr>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Required</th>
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### Week 7  
**February 22**

Reading Week  **NO CLASS**

### Week 8  
**March 1**  *Invited speaker: Amy Furness, AGO*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic:</th>
<th>Acquisition theories and methods (II): Appraising and acquiring personal records</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Readings: Required:</td>
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<td>Recommended:</td>
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<th>Week 9</th>
<th>March 8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic:</td>
<td>Appraisal practices (I): Selecting current records: Records scheduling; Planning and managing records retention; Sampling</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-class activity:</td>
<td>Records retention</td>
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<td>Readings: Required:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>March 14 (Tuesday)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #3</strong></td>
<td>Activity report due today (by midnight)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 10</th>
<th>March 15</th>
<th>Invited speaker: Michael Moir, York University Libraries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong></td>
<td>Appraisal practice (II): Monetary appraisal; Retention, appraisal, and acquisition practices; Re-appraisal</td>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Recommended:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 11</th>
<th>March 22</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong></td>
<td>Appraisal in the digital world</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Recommended:</strong></td>
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Course Reserves, and Inforum: CD973 .D3 A734 1991 – Course Reserves – check availability


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<tr>
<th>Week 12</th>
<th>March 29</th>
<th><em>Invited speaker: Jamila Ghaddar</em></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong></td>
<td>Contemporary views of appraisal – Reflections on the work of Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hughes, Kit. “Appraisal as Cartography: Cultural Studies in the Archives.” <em>The American Archivist</em> 77 (Spring-Summer 2014): 270-96. [e-article] <a href="http://dx.doi.org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/10.17723/aarc.77.1.85175154j4m45578">http://dx.doi.org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/10.17723/aarc.77.1.85175154j4m45578</a></td>
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**Recommended:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 13</th>
<th>April 2 (Sunday)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #4</strong></td>
<td>Appraisal plan due today (by midnight)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 13</th>
<th>April 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong></td>
<td>Class discussion re: final assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
<td>No readings assigned</td>
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