

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP

Course Description

This course provides students with in-depth knowledge of intellectual freedom and related access issues that information professionals cope with in libraries and information settings. Students learn about the history of censorship practices, the evolving and sometimes controversial role of librarians/information professionals and others who promote the philosophy of intellectual freedom, the policies of various countries and associations regarding intellectual freedom and ethical practice, freedom of information and privacy legislation, and overall influence of technology on censorship and access issues.

Course Outcomes

Building on the SLIS [program learning outcomes](#), students in this course will further:

1. Analyze ethical codes and issues related to intellectual freedom and censorship and their significance to the information professions.
2. Examine, evaluate and apply ethical codes to a range of intellectual freedom and censorship issues within a variety of professional settings.
3. Understand the impact of violations of intellectual freedom and censorship on democracy, citizenship, and diverse populations.
4. Develop and defend a personal ethical code in relation to intellectual freedom and censorship.

Note: This syllabus is not a contract. The instructor reserves the right to adjust the schedule as needed throughout the semester, including adding readings. Every effort will be made to keep assignment due dates the same.

COURSE OUTLINE

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments	Assignments
6/14	Introduction/Overview Historical Background		
6/16	ALA Ethics Policies & Procedures	ALA Library Bill of Rights http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill Doyle, T. C. (2002). A critical discussion of the "The ethical presuppositions behind the Library bill of rights". <i>Library Quarterly</i> , 72(3), 275-293. ALA Code of Ethics http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics United Nations Declaration of Human	

		<p>Rights http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml</p> <p>Freedom to Read http://www.ala.org/offices/oif/statementspols/ftstatement/freedomreadstatement</p> <p>Suggested: Dodge, T. (2006). Handling intellectual freedom challenges from a state legislator. <i>Tennessee Libraries</i>, 56(2): 82-85.</p> <p>Preer, J. (2014). Prepare to be challenged! <i>Library Trends</i> 62(4): 759-770.</p>	
6/21	<p>Intellectual Freedom & Censorship Legal history and definitions</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Fred Lane</p>	<p>Oltmann, S. s. (2016). Intellectual Freedom and Freedom of Speech: Three Theoretical Perspectives. <i>Library Quarterly</i>, 86(2), 153-171</p> <p>ACLU. (n.d.) What is censorship? https://www.aclu.org/what-censorship</p> <p>United States Courts. (n.d.) What does free speech mean? http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/about-educational-outreach/activity-resources/what-does</p> <p>Suggested: Cain, C. (2006). “Librarians and censorship: The ethical imperative.” <i>Louisiana Libraries</i>, 68(3): 6-8</p> <p>Knox, E. e. (2011). Intellectual Freedom. <i>Public Services Quarterly</i>, 7(1/2), 49-55.</p> <p>The Free Dictionary. (n.d.) Freedom of Speech. http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Freedom+of+Speech</p>	
6/23	<p>Information Access Physical Social Intellectual</p> <p>Human Rights</p>	<p>Sturges, P., & Gastinger, A. (2010). Information literacy as a human right. <i>Libri: International Journal of Libraries and Information Services</i>, 60(3): 195-202.</p> <p>Saunders, L. (2013). Information as weapon: Propaganda, politics, and the role of libraries. In Mueller, D. M. (Ed.).</p>	Current News Discussion Due

	<p>Ethical Decision-Making</p>	<p><i>Imagine, Innovate, Inspire: The Proceedings of the ACRL 2013 Conference</i>, Indianapolis, IN: ACRL.</p> <p>Doyle, T. (2001). A utilitarian case for intellectual freedom in the library. <i>The Library Quarterly</i>, 71(1), 44-61.</p> <p>Burnett, G., Jaeger, P. T., & Thompson, K. M. (2008). Normative behavior and information: The social aspects of information access. <i>Library And Information Science Research</i>, 30, 56-66. doi:10.1016/j.lisr.2007.07.003</p>	
<p>6/28</p>	<p>Information Access and the Government Privacy, Security and Surveillance</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Alison Macrina</p>	<p>Magi, T. J. (2007). Protecting library patrons' confidentiality: A checklist of best practices. <i>Illinois Library Association Reporter</i>, 25(6): 14-16.</p> <p>Carpenter, Z. (2015). Librarians vs. the NSA. (Cover story). <i>Nation</i>, 300(21), 12-15.</p> <p>Macrina, A. (2015). The Tor Browser and Intellectual Freedom in the Digital Age. <i>Reference & User Services Quarterly</i>, 54(4), 17-20.</p> <p>Bowers, S. L. (2006). Privacy and Library Records. <i>Journal of Academic Librarianship</i>, 32(4), 377-383.</p> <p>Suggested: Magi, T. J. (2011). Fourteen reasons privacy matters: A multidisciplinary review of scholarly literature. <i>Library Quarterly</i>, 81(2): 187-209.</p>	
<p>6/30</p>	<p>Information and Power/Gov't Creating, Control and Dissemination</p> <p>FOIA</p>	<p>FOIA.gov. What is FOIA? http://www.foia.gov/about.html</p> <p>Mendoza, M. (2013). Access denied: Testing FOIA laws. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I97FOBBUW8U</p> <p>Richmond, L. (2014). Information as a problem for human freedom. http://www.wheaton.edu/~media/Files/Academics/Faculty/Richmond/Richmond_Info_Problem_Ellul.pdf</p> <p>Wong, E. (2016). Book debate raises question of self-censorship by foreign</p>	

		<p>groups in China. New York Times. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/28/world/asia/china-teng-biao-american-bar-association.html?smid=tw-nytimesworld&smtyp=cur&_r=1</p> <p>Suggested: Chenault, J. (2014). The myth of freedom of information in the united states. <i>Kentucky Libraries</i>, 78(2), 32-39.</p>	
7/5	Censorship and Sex Pornography and Obscenity	<p>CQ Researcher Libraries and the Internet: Are Filters Needed to Block Pornography? June 1, 2001 11(21). Available through Beatley Library e-resources</p> <p>The Free Dictionary. <i>Obscenity</i>. http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/obscenity</p> <p>Burke, S. K. (2008). Removal of Gay-Themed Materials from Public Libraries: Public Opinion Trends, 1973-2006. <i>Public Library Quarterly</i>, 27(3), 247-264.</p>	
7/7	Censorship and Violence Free speech and hate speech Comedy as a Special Case	<p>Voloch, E. (2015). No, there’s no “hate speech” exception to the first amendment.” <i>The Voloch Conspiracy</i>. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2015/05/07/no-theres-no-hate-speech-exception-to-the-first-amendment/</p> <p>Sturges, P. (2015). Limits to freedom of expression? The problem of blasphemy. <i>IFLA Journal</i>, 41(2), 112. doi:10.1177/0340035215584778</p> <p>Parody and satire. (2002). First amendment Center. http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/parody-satire</p> <p>Neil Gaiman Talks about Charlie Hebdo... Bleeding Cool. http://www.bleedingcool.com/2015/04/02/neil-gaiman-talks-about-charlie-hebdo-and-british-censorship-with-cblfd/#.VR8JlvNkfoY.twitter</p> <p>Burke, S. K. (2010). Social Tolerance and Racist Materials in Public Libraries. <i>Reference & User Services Quarterly</i>, 49(4), 369-379.</p> <p>Suggested:</p>	Online Discussion—Class Does Not Meet This Week

		<p>Bossaller, J., & Budd, J. B. (2015). What We Talk about When We Talk about Free Speech. <i>Library Quarterly</i>, 85(1), 26-44.</p> <p>Cravatts, R. L. (2006, Feb. 6). When librarians protect terrorists. <i>The Boston Globe</i>. Retrieved from ProQuest.</p> <p>Wick, D. (2015).</p>	
7/12	<p>Intellectual Freedom and Censorship with Children & Youth</p> <p>Filtering</p> <p>School Libraries</p> <p>Public Libraries</p> <p>Responding to Challenges</p>	<p>Intellectual Freedom for Youth: http://www.pbs.org/teachers/librarymedia/asl/lamb.pdf</p> <p>Calksin, E. (2014). The right to read: The how and why of supporting intellectual freedom for teens. <i>In the Library with the Lead Pipe</i>: 1-8.</p> <p>Panter, S. L. (2015). To protect and serve: as servants of our school community and protectors of our students' rights, it is the ethical duty of school librarians to champion student privacy and resist threats to it. <i>Knowledge Quest</i>, (1), 68.</p> <p>Jaeger, P. I., & Zheng, Y. (2009). One Law with Two Outcomes: Comparing the Implementation of CIPA in Public Libraries and Schools. <i>Information Technology & Libraries</i>, 28(1), 6-14.</p> <p>Suggested: Oltmann, S. M. (2016). Public Librarians' Views on Collection Development and Censorship. <i>Collection Management</i>, 41(1), 23-44.</p>	Case Study Due
7/14	<p>Intellectual Freedom and Censorship across settings and communities</p> <p>Academic libraries</p> <p>Rural vs. urban</p> <p>Prisons</p> <p>Responding to Challenges</p>	<p>(2010). Prisoners' right to read. <i>Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom</i>, 59(5):192-193.</p> <p>Conrad, S. (2012). Collection development and circulation policies in prison libraries: an exploratory survey of librarians in us correctional institutions. <i>Library Quarterly</i>, 82(4), 407.</p> <p>Patai, D., & Silvergate, H. (2016). From suppressing to compelling. <i>Inside Higher Ed</i>. https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2016/04/25/new-diversity-requirements-umass-amherst-compel-speech-and-belief-essay</p> <p>Suggested:</p>	Policy Analysis Due

		<p>Gallup. <i>Free Expression on Campus</i>. http://www.knightfoundation.org/media/uploads/publication_pdfs/FreeSpeech_campus.pdf</p> <p>Browse Inside Higher Ed, Chronicle of Higher Education, etc. for new stories on campus protests, “chalkings,” etc.</p>	
7/19	Collection Development & Cataloging	<p>Moody, K. (2004). Censorship by Queensland Public Librarians: Philosophy & Practice. <i>APLIS</i>, 17(4): 168-185</p> <p>Cushing, L. (2015). Cataloging as political practice. <i>Stansbury Forum</i>. http://stansburyforum.com/cataloging-as-political-practice/</p> <p>Morrissey, L.J. (2008). Ethical issues in collection development. <i>Journal of Library Administration</i> 47(3/4): 163-171.</p> <p>Jemisin, N.K. (2010). <i>Don't put my book in the African American section</i>. http://nkjemisin.com/2010/05/dont-put-my-book-in-the-african-american-section/ And/or Barlow, S. (2014). <i>The dark side of the bookstore</i>. http://bookriot.com/2014/08/04/the-dark-side-of-the-bookstore-problem-african-american-section/</p> <p>Suggested: CannCasciato, D. (2011). Ethical considerations in classification practice: A case study using creationism and intelligent design. <i>Cataloging & Classification Quarterly</i>, 49(5): 408-427.</p> <p>Fox, M.J., & Reece, A. (2012). Whose ethics? Whose morality? An analysis of ethical standards for information organization. <i>Knowledge Organization</i> 39(5): 377-383</p>	
7/21	Reference Services	<p>Luo, L., & Trott, B. (2016). Ethical Issues in Reference An In-Depth View from the Librarians' Perspective. <i>Reference & User Services Quarterly</i>, 55(3), 189-198.</p> <p>Hauptman, R. (1996). Professional responsibility reconsidered. <i>RQ</i>, 35(3):327.</p> <p>Hauptman, R. (1976). Professionalism or culpability? An experiment in ethics. <i>Wilson Library Bulletin</i>, 50:626-627</p>	

7/26	Information Literacy Evaluation and Informed Skepticism	<p>Walsh, J. (2010). Librarians and controlling disinformation: is multi-literacy instruction the answer? <i>Library Review</i> 59(7): 498-511.</p> <p>Arbesman, S. (2012). <i>The half-life of facts</i>. YouTube video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GaxYnvd7YAM#t=62</p> <p>Kraft, P.W., Lodge, M., & Taber, C.S. (2015). Why people don't 'trust the evidence:' Motivated reasoning and scientific belief. <i>The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science</i> 658(1): 121-133.</p>	
7/28	Technology Bubbles, Echo Chambers, & Self-Censorship	<p>Dresang, E. T. (2006). Intellectual freedom and libraries: Complexity and change in the twenty-first century digital environment. <i>Library Quarterly</i> 76(2): 169-192.</p> <p>Pariser, E. (2011). Beyond the online filter bubble. https://www.ted.com/talks/eli_pariser_beware_online_filter_bubbles?language=en</p> <p>Slavin, K. (2011). How algorithms shape our world. http://www.ted.com/talks/kevin_slavin_how_algorithms_shape_our_world</p> <p>Cook, P., & Heilmann, C. (2013). Two Types of Self-Censorship: Public and Private. <i>Political Studies</i>, 61(1), 178-196. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2012.00957.x</p> <p>Manjoo, F. (2016). Facebook's bias is built-in and bears watching. <i>The New York Times</i>. http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/12/technology/facebooks-bias-is-built-in-and-bears-watching.html?_r=1</p> <p>Suggested: Antell, K. k., Strothmann, M. m., & Downey, J. (2013). Self-Censorship in Selection of LGBT-Themed Materials. <i>Reference & User Services Quarterly</i>, 53(2), 104-107.</p> <p>Page, B. (2008). Books, terrorism, and self-censorship..." <i>The Bookseller</i>, .5333: 20</p> <p>Bu, Z., Tao, S., & Newhagen, J. (2005). Optimistic Biasing and the Perception of</p>	Final Paper Due

		Self-Censorship in U.S. Newsrooms. <i>Conference Papers -- International Communication Association</i> , 1-22.	
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Grading Chart

Score	Grade
96-100	A
91-95	A-
86-90	B+
81-85	B
76-80	B-
71-75	C+
66-70	C
61-65	C-
Below 60	F

Meaning of Grades

B grade means that the work meets the requirements of the assignment. **B+** means that you have done more than meet the minimum requirements. An **A** grade means that the assignment means that there were problems with the assignment meeting the minimum requirements. To view to:

handed in is satisfactory and assignment. **B+** means that you minimum requirements. An **A** is excellent. Anything below a **B** with the assignment meeting the the grading system at GSLIS, go

<http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/forms/policies/shtml#grades>

ASSIGNMENTS

Please note that written presentation will have an impact of the grade for the written papers. It is imperative that all papers be well written.

Participation

15 points

This is a seminar-style course, meaning the bulk of the course will consist of in-class discussions and activities. In order for such a course to work properly and for you to get the most out of the course, everyone needs to participate actively in every class. Complete all assigned readings and come to class ready to discuss them. Questions and debate (civil, of course) are highly encouraged.

Discussion Leader

10 points

Throughout the semester, students will take turns leading the discussion on ONE of that day's readings. You will sign up in advance for the day you wish to lead a discussion. Discussion leaders should offer a brief review of the reading, can offer their own reflections, and then should use open-ended questions to facilitate a conversation with the rest of the class. Before the class meeting on the day you lead the discussion, you will submit a very brief (one page) overview of the chosen reading with a list of discussion questions.

Online Discussion

10 points

I will be traveling for the July 7th class. Our class will not meet face to face that week, but the class session will take place asynchronously online. This week's session is focused on hate speech and comedy as two "special" forms of free speech. Your assignment is to choose ONE of these special cases and create a "point/counterpoint" argument for and against protecting that form of speech. You can view these two SNL clips as funny examples of how to do a point/counterpoint ([Example 1](#), [Example 2](#)). You can use any format you are comfortable with to create your arguments—a brief video, text/discussion post, infographic, etc.

However presented, these arguments will be brief—a 5-7 minute video (2-3 minutes for each argument), 1 infographic for each argument, etc. If you present your argument in text, you can feel free to use bullet points to present points to support your argument rather than a narrative.

For your point/counterpoint argument, be sure to:

Include an argument **both** for and against **either** comedy or hate speech as a special/protected class of speech. Make a case for each stance by identifying specific reasons why that form of speech should and should not be protected, drawing on any relevant professional ethics and values. Also consider arguments from other fields such as law, education, technology, etc. You might also include specific examples of such use from the media or current news stories to illustrate your argument.

Post your arguments to the discussion board. Before the following week's class read/listen to/watch your peers' arguments and respond to at least two of them—what did you think of their arguments? Was one side stronger or more convincing? How so? Did the argument challenge you, make you question, or change your mind in any way? Do you have any responses to the arguments they posed?

Policy Review (3-5 pages double-spaced)

10 points

Review the list of BPL Policies on exhibits, privacy, appropriate behavior, collections, internet use, etc. and choose ONE to respond to [If you would like to choose a similar policy from a different library, that is fine—just provide the text of the policy, or a link to it online]. Read the policy carefully and analyze it from an intellectual freedom/censorship perspective. Does this policy adhere to professional values of intellectual freedom and resistance of censorship? Are there any ways in which this policy as written might inhibit intellectual freedom or promote censorship? Do you feel like this policy can be implemented equitably? Why or why not? Are there any individuals/groups that might be specially impacted by this policy? How so? Are there any changes/revisions that you might suggest to the wording of this policy? Are there any recommendations you might make as to how this policy should be implemented in practice?

Case Study (5-7 pages double spaced)

10 points

You will be presented with four or five prompts taken or adapted from Buchanan, E. A., & Henderson, K. A. (2009). *Case Studies in Library and Information Science Ethics*. Jefforson, N.C.: McFarland & Co. Choose one of these prompts and respond to the accompanying questions. Come to class prepared to discuss your responses.

Current News Discussion (3-5 pages double spaced)

10 points

Find a current news story that relates in some way to intellectual freedom or censorship. It does not have to be directly related to library/archives, but should address the broad areas of intellectual freedom and/or censorship. Briefly summarize the story, with attention to the intellectual freedom/censorship aspects of it. Then, briefly describe how this story might be interpreted in light of any of the intellectual freedom/censorship/human rights documents and standards we've discussed in class, or others that you have found. What would be the professional stance on this situation? What could a librarian or other

information professional be expected to do in relation to this situation? What are your own personal responses to the situation, and why? Come to class prepared to share your story and reflections.

Final Paper

25 points

Choose an issue or aspect of intellectual freedom or censorship for a deep examination.

- First, clearly introduce and define the issue, including why it is important/significant to the field. You might include some current and historical examples of the issue in action
- Next, explain all sides of the issue, drawing on course and outside readings, position papers, standards, etc. Who is for and who is against this issue, and why? What are the ethical stances and implications of each side? Are there any legal precedents for this issue?
- In the third section, take an informed stance on the issue, and argue your side. Give your opinion on the issues raised, and support your argument.
- In the last section, make some recommendations. Choose an information or cultural setting that could be impacted by this issue and offer some advice on policies and/or procedures that they should have in place to handle the issue. If possible, give outside examples from other institutions that have such policies and procedures.

For Doctoral Students

In addition to the assignments and course work described above, doctoral students enrolled in LIS 408 must complete a research paper on a library instruction or information literacy-related topic, or another related project decided in consultation with the instructor. Roughly 5,000-7,000 words, the paper should be a well-research and well-synthesized compilation of the literature on the topic. The paper should outline the issue, present the various sides or opinions, propose a response or solution to the issue, and consider what the future impact of the issue might be.

Late Policy

All assignments are to be turned in on time. Late submissions are strongly discouraged. If late submission is unavoidable, arrangements should be made with me **in advance**. Without prior arrangement, late assignments will lose one point per day.

Honor Code and Academic Support

Simmons GSLIS expects each of its students to uphold the Honor System (<http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/student-info/honor-code.shtml>) and does not tolerate academic or scholastic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, cheating, or academic fraud. Penalties range from failure on the assignment, failure in the course, or dismissal from the program.

Definition of plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information from print sources or websites; buying completed papers from others to use as one's own work.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability and anticipate that you will need a

reasonable accommodation in this class, it is important that you contact the Disability Services Office located in the Main College Building Room E108, or via phone at (617)521-2474, early in the semester. See also the web page at <http://my.simmons.edu/academics/caa/> for a list of contacts. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact their instructors.

Readings

Additional Resources:

ALA, *Intellectual Freedom Manual* 8th Edition (2010); see <http://ifmanual.org/> for additional materials.

Teresa Chmara, *Privacy and Confidentiality Issues: A Guide for Libraries and Their Lawyers* (2009)

Banned Books

<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/banned/bannedbooksweek>

National Coalition Against Censorship

<http://www.ncac.org/>

Banned Books Week

<http://www.bannedbooksweek.org/>

Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom

<http://nif.metapress.com/content/r5675u6nj6r1/?p=19228f41e94c44159d49f14b2b7e48b6&pi=0>

Ohio Library Council Intellectual Freedom

<http://www.olc.org/pdf/IFFundamentals.pdf>

Journal of Information Ethics

Available through Simmons College