The Catholic University of America,
School of Library and Information Science
LSC 551 Organization of Information
3 Credit Hours: No Prerequisites
Online course with 4 in person meetings
Saturday 12:30 to 3:00 pm.

Dr. Judith Bateman
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Course Description:
This course introduces students to the theory, principles, standards, and methods of information organization. Through lectures, discussions and hands-on practice students learn to provide intellectual and physical access to information objects. Topics covered include information architecture, user information needs and behaviors, tools for information access, principles of information representation, metadata schemas, controlled vocabulary, folksonomy, classification, taxonomy, encoding standards, bibliographic networks, applications of technologies in information organization, and design of information systems to facilitate access and retrieval.

Instructional Methods
The course will have 4 in person meetings on Saturdays. The rest of the course will be conducted asynchronously on Blackboard and synchronously on Adobe Connect. All lectures, lecture notes and PowerPoint presentations will be posted on Blackboard. Adobe Connect classes will focus on terminology, current issues and concepts.

Required Text

Course Goals:
The course goals are to
1. Introduce the theory, principles, standards, and methods for information organization.
2. Discuss approaches for understanding users and organizing information to meet their information needs.
3. Examine the relationship between information organization and retrieval and access to information.
4. Demonstrate how technologies can be used to support information organization and facilitate access to information.
5. Promote critical thinking and problem solving abilities for addressing challenges of organizing information in the digital age.

Course Objectives
At the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of principles of information organization, standards, methods and important concepts related to information organization, including cataloging, authority control, controlled vocabularies, indexing and abstracting, and classification.
2. Articulate the importance of information organization and the roles of metadata in information organization and understand terminology often used to discuss metadata, such as metadata schemas, encoding standards, crosswalks, and interoperability.
3. Understand how information on users’ information needs and information seeking behavior is used in organizing information for those users.
4. Create metadata records for information resources.
5. Have the ability to track and assess relevant innovations and interpret and apply research findings for better information organization.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles and applications of controlled vocabularies for information access and retrieval by developing a mini-thesaurus.
7. Demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving abilities in relation to information organization.

Course Information
All course materials including lectures and exercises discussed in class will be posted on Blackboard. The Blackboard site and server are maintained by The Catholic University Computing Center. Students will need access to a computer with an Internet connection and a current version of a web browser (Internet Explorer, Safari etc.). Students are expected to access the course several times a week.

Lectures will be provided on the course with PowerPoint slides and an outline with extensive notes that can be printed for reading offline. The Blackboard course also has a copy of this syllabus in its most recent version (it can and will change), a glossary, a section with models of different organization tools, readings, email, discussions and assignments.
Students are required to contribute to course discussion questions. Students should be clear and brief in discussions and considerate of other students and their opinions. Discussions will be based on course projects or readings, and current issues and challenges in organizing and retrieving information.

The course will have several group and individual exercises and case studies that will be graded pass/fail. The purpose of most of these projects will be to illustrate a concept or the practical use of organization concepts. The article review, thesaurus project and the organization project will be graded. The article review and the organization project are discussed later in this syllabus. More extensive instructions and guidelines will be discussed in the in person classes and will be posted on Blackboard.

**Course expectations**

**Expectations for students**

1. Each week you should complete the assigned readings and lecture for the course. Discussions will depend on the completion of this material in a timely manner. You should set aside a regular block of time each week to complete this material. Major projects in this course will come at the end of the course so it is important to keep up on the readings early in the course.

2. The course has an asynchronous component with no set time for you to be on the course. I do expect you to check the course Blackboard site daily and I can and will check to see if you are logging on to the course.

3. The course will have 4 in person meetings. Students are expected to attend these meetings. If you cannot come to a meeting please let me know as soon as possible.

4. If you are going to need to be away from Blackboard for several days contact the instructor.

5. Check the course update discussion and the announcements on Blackboard regularly for any changes in due dates, course projects etc.

6. Discussion postings should be well thought out and considerate of others. Some discussions may include controversial issues and thoughtful discussion on all sides of an issue is encouraged.

7. The social area discussion forum on Blackboard has been set up so we can get to know each other and this discussion forum may be used for announcements you wish to make, questions on topics outside of this course and to socialize.

8. Students are encouraged to start their own discussion topics on Blackboard if they wish.

9. I will not tolerate negative comments about other students or faculty on the discussion forums. If you have an issue with another student please email me.
What you can expect from the instructor

1. Prompt responses to your questions. I will try to get back to you in a day, sometimes it may be two days. If I am ill or will be away from the course for several days I will let you know.
2. Reasonably prompt feedback on course projects and assignments.
3. Hopefully an interesting and informative course, if you see ways that I can improve the course please let me know.

Course Requirements

Article Review

You will review 2 articles (if you wish you can use more than 2 articles, but no less than 2). The articles should be from professional or peer reviewed journals and should be substantive, about 8 to 10 pages in length. For some topics several shorter articles may be appropriate, if you think your topic requires this approach please let me know. You can include web sites in your discussion, but you must have 2 journal articles. The articles reviewed should not be course readings, however, you can include course readings in your discussion. You can look for 2 articles that present an overview of an organization of information topic, such as Dublin Core or metadata or you can choose 2 articles that present an argument (Should we stop using Dewey classification in public libraries?) or a specific problem (bias in the Library of Congress subject headings). You should summarize what each article discusses and relate the articles to each other and to class lecture, readings and discussions.

The paper should be a minimum of 3 pages, double spaced, Arial or Tahoma font 12 point. You will not be penalized if your paper is longer than 3 pages. Include a separate page that is a reference list/bibliography citing the articles and any other sources.

You may use any standard style manual for your citations. For example: APA (American Psychological Association) or MLA (Modern Language Association) The following book is the "Turabian style manual" which is often used by high school and undergraduate students and is a abbreviated version of The Chicago Manual of Style.

Organization Project
Assignment

1. Before you start your project you should think about and list the goals for your organization system. How will users access and use the collection and your organization system? What will be the physical organization of the collection? How will users retrieve items from the collection? Will users need a record for each item in the collection to help them decide which items to retrieve and use? What information should be on each record? What will be the access points for the collection?

2. The emphasis of this assignment is on the planning, development, and intellectual preparation for organizing a collection. You may use a collection from your workplace or home or you can organize a collection as a volunteer or for a friend. The collection can be very traditional (books, magazines, printed documents) or non-traditional (a pottery collection, or a collection of digital photographs).

3. The collection should have items that have several different characteristics and organizing it should require some type of classification and categorization, subject analysis and a record that represents the item.

4. The purpose of organizing the collection should be clear and the organization method should aid users in retrieving items and discerning characteristics of items.

5. For most organization projects 20 to 30 items will be adequate. If your collection contains more items select a group of items that is representative of the characteristics of the collection.

6. Please let me know what you plan to organize by the due date on the course calendar.

7. If you have a problem or project where you work that would lend itself to this assignment you are encouraged to use it.

8. You will be responsible for completing a paper that outlines a plan for organizing the items and that answers the questions presented below. Most papers will be about 5 pages long. A longer paper is not a problem since some collections may need to be discussed in more detail.

9. You will also be responsible for a 5-minute presentation on your project.

Project Questions

Read through all questions before beginning the project.

- In your paper you should discuss each question as much as you feel is necessary.
- Any effective system for organizing information requires careful planning. Your project will be evaluated on how well you have planned your system.
• If you have problems you do not have to correct them, just explain what the problem was and how you would correct it in the future.
• These questions are to help guide you to create a system that will enable your user population to access information items or a description of these items.
• You are to adapt these questions to your project, for example if your project does not require a classification system, you do not have to include that element. However, you need to discuss the reasons for excluding the element.
• You will need to create sample metadata records for 5 of your items.
• The following questions should be covered in your paper:
  o **Users.** The characteristics of your users will guide you in how you structure your system and the method or methods you use to organize it. Who are/will be users of this collection? What is their discipline? Does the end user population consist of scholars? Professionals? Students? The general public? Briefly describe the characteristics of the end user population. Will end users retrieve items or information about items? Will intermediaries help these end users? Will end users be free to browse the collection? Are your end users comfortable using computers?
  o **Characteristics of the collection.** Describe the collection and the format(s) of the items in the collection. Is the collection made up of digital information resources? If it is a collection of digital resources do these resources have physical counterparts? Will you need to weed or remove items before you can effectively organize the collection? How old are the items? What is the subject of the collection? Is it broad or specialized? Will you need to acquire additional items? Will items be removed from the collection? Who will select items for the collection? What are the criteria for selecting these items? Will the collection grow and how fast will it grow? Will
  o **Organization method.** Review the various methods of organizing information and determine which ones are most appropriate for your collection and your users. Discuss the method or methods you will use to organize the items. Since your collection may include many different formats you may select several different methods to organize the items, depending on their format. Answer the following questions for each method:
    • **Method.** Give a short summary of your overall method or system. Will your organization method be paper based or computer based? If it is computer based will you use a database or spreadsheet? Will you have a website for the collection?
    • **Physical organization.** What is/will be the approach to the physical organization of this collection? Are
there any special considerations in the physical organization of this collection (items that need special housing or handling etc.)? You may use standard library tools (AACRII, LCSH, Sears, Dewey, existing thesauri, etc.) in creating your system, if you think they would provide the best rules or guidelines for the description, subject headings and classification for your items.

- **Record Format/metadata** What will you use as a record format to record metadata for your collection? Will you create your own format? What characteristics of the collection will be part of the metadata for the record? What will be the elements in your metadata schema? You will need to create 5 sample metadata records for your collection. Use the subsections below to discuss the elements of your metadata record.
  - **Description.** Your decisions about the metadata for the items will determine the structure of the record or surrogate for each item. How will you describe the materials? What elements will be included in the description of these items? Which elements in the description will be access points? If you have selected more than one method to organize the materials will each method have different descriptions and records? How will relationships between items be indicated?
  - **Name authority control.** Reminder: name authority control is control of personal or corporate names; you will have a separate section on subject control (see below). Determine which elements need name authority control. Why do these elements require name authority control? What will be the source of name authority records?
  - **Classification scheme.** Will you use a classification scheme? Research the standard library resources: LCC, DDC. Which of these resources would be best for a classification scheme for your collection? Does your collection require a specialized or different classification scheme? Explain your reasons for these choices.
  - **Subject control.** Will you have a controlled vocabulary for your collection? If not, why and how will end users locate materials on a particular topic? What will you use for your subject authority: LCSH, Sears, a specialized thesaurus, or will you develop your own
thesaurus? Will you develop a taxonomy or thesaurus for the collection?

- **Evaluation, updating, and maintenance.** What aspects of your system will need to be evaluated? What method(s) will you use in this evaluation? How will information from evaluations be used to make changes? How will your collection and organization method evolve? What will be some guidelines for maintaining and updating your records?

- **Summary.** Summarize and analyze the main problems with the organization of this collection. Describe what you might have done differently or might do differently in the future. What were the most difficult tasks in completing this project?

- **Deliverables:**
  - A paper that discusses each point listed above (user populations, collection characteristics, organization method (include a discussion of each subsection under organization method: method, physical organization, metadata, etc.
  - A list of the metadata elements that you will use for your collection metadata records.
  - 5 sample metadata records

**Academic Honesty Policy:**

Please read the policy on “Academic Graduate and Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty. Please review the complete texts of the University policy and procedures regarding Student Academic Dishonesty, including requirements for appeals. This can be found at:

http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad//integrityfull.cfm

The definitions that follow are from this policy:

"A. *Plagiarism* is the act of presenting the work of another as if it were one's own. It includes quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, or utilizing the published work of others without proper acknowledgment, or, where appropriate, quotation marks. Most frequently, it involves the unacknowledged use of published books or articles in periodicals, magazines, newspapers and electronic media. However, any unacknowledged use of another's ideas constitutes plagiarism, including the use of papers written by other students, interviews, radio or TV broadcasts, and any published or unpublished materials (including web-based materials, letters, pamphlets, leaflets, notes or other electronic or print documents).

B. *Improper use of one's own work* is the unauthorized act of submitting work for a course that includes work done for previous courses and/or
projects as though the work in question were newly done for the present course/project.

C. Fabrication is the act of artificially contriving or making up material, data or other information and submitting this as fact.

D. Cheating is the act of deceiving, which includes such acts as receiving or communicating or receiving information from another during an examination, looking at another's examination, (during the exam), using notes when prohibited during examinations, using electronic equipment to receive or communicate information during examinations, using any unauthorized electronic equipment during examinations, obtaining information about the questions or answers for an examination prior to the administering of the examination, or whatever else is deemed contrary to the rules of fairness, including special rules designated by the professor in the course."

Any incidence of plagiarism will result in a grade of F (0 points) on the project or exam in question, and will be reported to the Dean of the School of Library and Information Science for possible further action (including failure in the course). See the policy or discuss the problem with your instructor if you have questions about plagiarism.

For more on what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, see the guide on the Purdue Online Writing Lab web site.

The following sanctions are presented in the University procedures related to Student Academic Dishonesty at: http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityprocedures.cfm

"The presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. There may be circumstances, however, where, perhaps because of an undergraduate student's past record, a more serious sanction, such as suspension or expulsion, would be appropriate.

In the context of graduate studies, the expectations for academic honesty are greater, and therefore the presumed sanction for dishonesty is likely to be more severe, e.g., expulsion. ...

In the more unusual case, mitigating circumstances may exist that would warrant a lesser sanction than the presumed sanction." Source (accessed July 15, 2009):

Student Academic Dishonesty policy:

http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityfull.cfm

Accommodations for students with disabilities
Any student with a disability that will require accommodation under the terms of federal regulations should present a written accommodation request to the instructor by the second week of classes meeting. **The law includes accommodation for learning disabilities, Attention Deficient Disorder and anxiety disorders.** It is also recommended that the student contact the Office of Disability Support Services (202=319-5211) located in suite 207 in the Pryzbyla Center.

To read about the services and policies, please visit the website:
- [http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu](http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu)
- [http://counsel.cua.edu/ADA/publications/disbro/contents.cfm](http://counsel.cua.edu/ADA/publications/disbro/contents.cfm)
- [http://counsel.cua.edu/ADA/clicks/](http://counsel.cua.edu/ADA/clicks/)

**Other useful Campus Resources for CUA students:**
- Academic Tutoring and Learning Assistance Service (ATLAS)
  - [http://counseling.cua.edu/atlas/](http://counseling.cua.edu/atlas/)
  - 101 O'Boyle Hall
  - Phone: (202) 319-5018
- CUA Counseling Center
  - [http://counseling.cua.edu/services/](http://counseling.cua.edu/services/)
  - 127 O'Boyle Hall
  - Phone: (202) 319-5765
- Mullen Library
  - [http://libraries.cua.edu/](http://libraries.cua.edu/)
  - Phone: (202) 319-5070

**Course Outline** - This calendar is subject to change depending on class needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 29 to</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>Taylor Chapter 1&lt;br&gt;Exercise 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 5</td>
<td>Information cycle</td>
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<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td>First in person meeting</td>
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<td>Sept. 12</td>
<td>Purpose and principles of information organization. Bibliographic records/surrogate record Introduction to metadata</td>
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<td>Database and record structure</td>
<td>Instructor essays on Blackboard: Boolean what? How to develop your article review topic Exercise 2</td>
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<td>Introduction to MARC Access points</td>
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<td>Sept. 20 to Sept. 26</td>
<td>Encoding Standards MARC</td>
<td>Chapter 5 Understanding MARC Bibliographic (<a href="http://www.loc.gov/marc/umb/">http://www.loc.gov/marc/umb/</a>) MARC 21 tutorial</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/techserv/marc21_tutorial_ie/">http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/techserv/marc21_tutorial_ie/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 27 to Oct. 3</td>
<td>Controlled vocabularies Thesaurus and descriptors Library subject headings Social tags/folksonomy</td>
<td>Taylor Chapter 10 “What is a controlled vocabulary?” Karl Fast, Fred Liese, and Mike Steckel (2002) <a href="http://www.boxesanarrows.com/view/what_is_a_controlled_vocabulary">http://www.boxesanarrows.com/view/what_is_a_controlled_vocabulary</a></td>
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<td>Look at LSH and Sears models on Blackboard Exercise 3</td>
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<td>Oct. 4 to Oct. 10</td>
<td>Thesaurus design</td>
<td>“Thesaurus principles and practices” <a href="http://www.willpowerinfo.co.uk/th">http://www.willpowerinfo.co.uk/th</a></td>
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<td>Oct. 15</td>
<td>Second in person meeting</td>
<td>Article review due</td>
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<td>Oct. 11 to</td>
<td>Subject analysis</td>
<td>Taylor Chapter 9</td>
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<td>Oct. 17</td>
<td>Subject indexing</td>
<td>Mai (2000). Deconstructing the indexing process. Advances in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Abstracting</td>
<td>Librarianship. 23. 269-298</td>
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<td>Oct. 18 to</td>
<td>Categorization and classification</td>
<td>Taylor Chapter 11</td>
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<td>Oct. 24</td>
<td>Classification: DDC, LCC</td>
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<td>Oct. 25 to</td>
<td>Metadata: Information Resource Description</td>
<td>Chapter 7 Understanding Metadata 2004 NISO Press. Note: I will also</td>
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<td>Oct. 31</td>
<td>Descriptive cataloging</td>
<td>make the above publication available on blackboard</td>
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<td>Mary W. Elings and Günter Waibel. “Metadata for All: Descriptive</td>
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<td>Standards and Metadata Sharing across Libraries, Archives and</td>
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<td>Museums” First Monday, volume 12, number 3, March 2007.</td>
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<td><a href="http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/v">http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/v</a></td>
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<td>Nov. 1 to</td>
<td>Name Authority control</td>
<td>Taylor chapter 8</td>
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<td>Nov. 7</td>
<td>RDA</td>
<td>Understanding MARC Authority Records</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.loc.gov/marc/uma/">http://www.loc.gov/marc/uma/</a></td>
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<td>Nov. 8 to</td>
<td>Taxonomies</td>
<td>Mischo (2005). Digital libraries: Challenges and influential work.</td>
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<td>Digital Libraries</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dlib.org/dlib/july05/mischo/07mischo.html">http://www.dlib.org/dlib/july05/mischo/07mischo.html</a></td>
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<td>Nov. 12</td>
<td>Third in person meeting</td>
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<td>Thesaurus exercise due</td>
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<td>Nov. 15 to</td>
<td>More on RDA</td>
<td>Chapter 6 Markey, Karen (2007). The Online Library Catalog: Paradise</td>
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<td>Nov. 22</td>
<td>OPAC Systems and System design</td>
<td>Lost and Paradise Regained? D-Lib Magazine, 13</td>
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<td>Users and library catalogs and bibliographic systems</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Nov. 22 to Nov. 28</td>
<td>Thanksgiving week FRBR</td>
<td>FRBR chapter 2 and 3 through 3.2.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 10</td>
<td>Organization Project due</td>
<td>Final in person meeting Be prepared to give a brief presentation of your organization project</td>
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**Useful Online Resources**

Online Dictionary for library and information science [http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_t.cfm](http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_t.cfm)

Carlyle, Allyson. *Core Readings in Library Cataloging and Classification*: http://faculty.washington.edu/acarlyle/corereadings.html

*Cataloger's Reference Shelf*: http://www.itsmarc.com/crs/


International Society for Knowledge Organization (ISKO) homepage: http://www.ceit.sk/wwwisis/isko.htm

*LC Cataloging Directorate*: http://lcweb.loc.gov/catdir/catdir.html

**Grading**

- Organization project 35% (35 points)
- Article review 25% (25 points)
- Exercises and activities 10% (Total 10 points)
- Thesaurus project 15% (15 points)
- Online and class discussions and participation 15% (total 15 points)

**Point totals converted to letter grades:**

A: 94 – 100  A-: 90 -93  
B+: 86-89  B: 82-85  B-: 78-81
C: 70-77  F: Below 70

University grades: The University grading system is available at http://policies.cua.edu/academicgrad/gradesfull.cfm#iii

Reports of grades in courses are available at the end of each term on http://cardinalstation.cua.edu

**Syllabus changes**

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus as needed. Nothing in this syllabus may be construed as a contract.