VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui

School of Information Management

INFO 520: INFORMATION AND SOCIETY

Trimester One 2008

Dan Dorner

Welcome to INFO 520, Information and Society. This course examines the social, political and economic forces that combine to create today's dynamic information environment. As a foundation, information managers, must be cognisant of a diverse range of concepts, issues, policies and legislation relating to the production, dissemination, and use of information in all aspects of society, including both the workplace and the home. This course aims to provide you with that foundation.

If you wish to talk about particular aspects of the course, you can contact me as follows:

Email: `Dan.Dorner@vuw.ac.nz`

Telephone: (04) 463 5781 (for calls within the Wellington free calling area). Alternatively, call the Administration Office on (04) 463 5103.

Room: EA 213, Easterfield Building, southwest end of the second floor. If I'm not in my room, send an email message, leave a note, or a phone message to arrange a time to see me.

Freephone: 0800 11 62 99 (for students calling from outside Wellington; ask to be transferred, or dial 5781 at the recorded message to talk to Dan). Alternatively, the SIM Administrator can relay a message.

Fax: (04) 463 5446

During teaching time, I endeavour to respond to phone messages, email, or faxes within one working day. If you wish to send something to me by **post**, my address is:

Dr. Dan Dorner
School of Information Management
Victoria University of Wellington
PO Box 600, Wellington

Assignments should *not* be sent to this address; see the details under 'Assessment' below. Non-assignment material being delivered by courier or in person should go to the SIM Administration Office, EA 121, Easterfield Building, Kelburn Campus, Victoria University of Wellington.

MLIS Administrator:	Lori Parker
Room:	121 Easterfield Bldg, Kelburn Pde, Wellington
Telephone:	463 5309
Email:	lori.parker@vuw.ac.nz

This may be the first course, or one of the first courses, you are studying in the Master of Library and Information Studies programme, or in the Postgraduate Certificate or Diploma in Archives and Records Management (Cert/Dip ArcRec), so you may be feeling a little nervous about what lies ahead, and concerned about what is expected of you. All of the SIM faculty members will have gone through the same gamut of emotions when we first started our postgraduate studies, so we can sympathise.

My background is in librarianship and I have worked in a range of positions in public, academic, and national libraries in both New Zealand and Canada. I have also taught in professional programmes in both countries, completing a PhD at the University of Western Ontario on the information policy development process, and taught in professional development workshops in locations such as Vietnam and Thailand. My experience and studies, and indeed my current role as an academic, have made me think carefully about the nature and value of information, the users (and non-users) of information, the enablers and barriers, and the part that information plays in our society. This course examines the social, political and economic forces that combine to create today's dynamic information environment. As a foundation, information managers must be cognisant of a diverse range of concepts, issues, policies and legislation relating to the production, dissemination, and use of information in all aspects of society, including both the workplace and the home. This course aims to provide you with that foundation.

INFO 520 is fascinating course, both for teachers and students, because it goes right to the fundamentals of our discipline. Information is created for people in a social context and goes through a cycle of dissemination and use in which history, economy, and politics all play a part. It is important that everybody involved with information management should have a good understanding of the raw material with which we work. This understanding goes beyond merely discussing the merits of various books and websites, to analysing the very nature of information and how it is communicated.

The impacts of the rapid advances in information and communication technologies on culture, economics and politics within our society means that for the information management professions there never has been a more interesting time than *now*! We need to re-examine basic questions related to what we do. What is information? Who uses it? What are the issues that arise in providing access to it? What social changes result from its presence or absence? What are our roles as librarians, archivists and record managers in information services? What can we do to improve the effectiveness of the information services we provide? What can we do to influence the impacts of technology on information, and society's access to it?

These questions need to be asked, and you should ask them while studying INFO 520. Of course, you will not be able to study all of the concepts in great depth, for we touch on some huge subjects that can't be dealt with comprehensively in anything less than a full degree. What I ask of you is that you set aside all prejudices and start afresh at this point. The most important thing of all is that you *think critically* while studying INFO 520 and that you *contribute your point of view* to the weekly discussions. The success of this course will depend largely are your participation.

Course materials

The course material for INFO 520 includes: this course information section (in which the contents of the INFO 520 course are discussed along with course-specific administrative information and Internet conference or internal session details) and a CD-ROM containing readings and course notes associated with each of the modules. This material is augmented by the Blackboard website for INFO 520, available at

> http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz

See 'Online information' for more on this.

Learning outcomes are specified for each study module. Students should note that some modules include exercises and discussion points; it is important that you complete or prepare these before the weekly session. As the sessions are meant to be interactive, you should be prepared to answer questions, contribute comments, and ask for clarification of issues pertaining to the material under discussion. In some sessions you may be asked to talk about a specific topic, or to share your experience in exploring the resources we are discussing with the rest of your seminar group. You should always be prepared for this.

The study notes for each module include a section giving work to prepare for the weekly session. **You should make sure that you complete the work listed in this section, including all the practical exercises, before the weekly session for that module.** Reading '[material] to prepare for the weekly session' **before** starting work on the module will help you to use your study time effectively.

Using or quoting course notes

The course notes used in the LIM programmes have been developed over a period of time. As a result, they are likely to include new material contributed by the coordinator and staff involved in the current offering of the course, as well as material contributed by staff involved in earlier offerings. Every effort has been made by our academic and editorial staff to ensure that all material is correctly attributed and complies with the University's copyright license obligations.

If quoting or referring to material written for this course, you should treat it as being contributed anonymously rather than being attributable to the person delivering the particular module in which it appears, unless the authorship is clearly indicated.

Course description

INFO 520, Information and Society, deals with theories used to delineate the relationships between data, information, and knowledge, theories of communication, the role of libraries, archives and records management operations as stores of printed material, and their emerging roles in the electronic era. The course continues with a consideration of the ways in which various groups in society are dealing with information, including the economics of information, the development of national and international plans and policies, and legal issues concerned with copyright and intellectual property rights.

The course also considers wider public policy issues related to censorship, intellectual freedom, access to government information, and personal privacy. It concludes with a consideration of issues of professionalism, and the future role of librarians and information specialists in a rapidly changing environment.

Remember that this course deals with concepts and ideas. Some of these are drawn from the social sciences, philosophy, history and philosophy of science, economics, law, and many other areas that may be new to you. Do not be concerned if some of the ideas, theories, and concepts are difficult to understand. Some of the issues we deal with are indeed extremely complex and may represent idiosyncratic points of view that, although they are of interest to some of us, may not always commend themselves to our particular orientation and way of thinking. You should aim for a relatively deep understanding of some of the ideas and issues -- particularly those that attract you - rather than a superficial overview of all the issues that are introduced in the weekly modules, the assignment readings, the focus questions and classroom discussions.

In assessing your written work, I shall look particularly for an understanding of the issues and concepts that you would like to raise, rather than for a superficial breadth of knowledge. If there are concepts, issues, and theories that you do not understand (or indeed, ones that you do not like), then say so, and give your reasons. The issues discussed in this course also provide rich territory for possible topics for your INFO 580 research project. It is always worth noting down references to books or journal articles about political, social, or economic issues relevant to specific aspects of information management that you find particularly interesting -- because they may contain the seeds for an INFO 580 research project.

Each week during the second half of the course, I will want you to identify researchable problems or phenomena related to the key issues in the readings and discussions so that we can spend 5 to 10 minutes talking about possible topics for your INFO 580 projects.

Learning objectives

By the end of the INFO 520 course, students should be able to:

1. Identify and critically assess the key social, economic and political issues and trends that impact upon information in modern society with special reference to New Zealand and its people.

2. Discuss the role played by information organisations such as libraries and archives in the provision of access to information to specific client groups.

3. Critically evaluate government policy in New Zealand on issues related to the individual's rights with respect to access to government information, to personal privacy, to intellectual property, and to intellectual freedom.

4. Describe how librarianship, information science, archival science, and records management have developed as professions; in particular, the goals, characteristics, and functions shared by these information professions.

5. Explain the importance of research to the information professions, and think critically about researchable aspects of issues that are important to information professionals.

Time commitment

To achieve satisfactory grades, you should expect to spend around twelve hours per week on INFO 520 (including time spent in the weekly session). Up to two hours per week will be spent in the weekly session. The balance of your time should be spent reading the material in the CD-ROM, on Blackboard and on the Internet, and doing your preparation work for the weekly session and assignments.

Course schedule

INFO 520 will be held in the first trimester (February-June) of the 2008 academic year. There will be no sessions for two weeks during the mid-trimester break (14-27 April).

Internal students
There will be a seminar on Mondays (from 2.10-4.00 p.m.) in the Easterfield Building, EA 206.

Open learning students
The weekly conference sessions will be held on Mondays from 6.45-8.15 p.m.

Open learning students (within Auckland)
Sessions for Auckland students will be delivered by a mixture of audioconferencing and face-to-face teaching. Auckland students should refer to the separate 'Auckland mode' timetable for details.

Week	Begins	Topic
1	25 Feb.	The Information Society
2	3 March	The nature of knowledge
3	10 March	Social information
4/5*	17 March 24 March	Scholarly communication (See "Easter Arrangements" to determine when classes will be held).
6	31 March	Economics of information
7	7 April	Information Policy
Mid-term break		
8	28 April	Freedom of information
9	5 May	Protection of personal privacy
10	12 May	Intellectual property
11	19 May	Censorship
12	26 May	Ethics of information professionals; the future of the information professions

*Easter arrangements

The Wellington and Open Learning classes for Module 4/5 will be held on Monday 17 March. **Note**: there will be no Wellington and Open Learning classes on Monday 24 March.

The Auckland class for Module 4/5 will be held on Thursday 27 March. **Note**: there will be no Auckland class on Thursday 20 March.

Assessment

None of the LIM courses has a final examination. This course will be internally assessed. **Full details, including explanatory notes and criteria, are available under "Assignments" on Blackboard**.

Assignment	Date due	Value	Length
1. Essay (including topic selection and topic discussion board contributions)	See Blackboard; essay due 11 April 2008	45%	2200 words max.
2. Report (including scenario selection and blog participation)	See Blackboard; report due 6 June 2008	45%	2200 words max.
3. Participation	See Blackboard	10%	See Blackboard

Late assignments

Assignments that are not received by the due date will receive a 10% penalty up to one week after the due date. Assignments will not be accepted after this date unless an exemption has been granted by the course coordinator. Exemptions are only granted in the case of severe illness or bereavement.

Word count

All work submitted MUST contain a word count, easily available from your word-processing program, and will include endnotes and footnotes. Bibliographic references are not counted. The word count should appear under your name. (**Note**: your name should appear only on the back of the last page of the assignment.) The penalty for not including your word count or going over the word count will be 5%.

Presentation

Details of the LIM Group's assignment policy, including presentation, will be found in the *Administration Handbook*.

Plagiarism

You should read and take heed of the statement on collaboration and plagiarism in the "General University information" section; you *must* acknowledge all sources you use. You are expected to present information in your own words, based on your understanding of the background material you read. ***Any assignment which is extensively plagiarised will receive an automatic fail grade***.

Submission

Remember to keep a copy of each assignment you send, just in case the original goes astray. All work will be submitted electronically; see submission details on Blackboard. Note that student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine http://www.turnitin.com.

Online information

In addition to the course material on CD-ROM, you will be required to use the resources for this course which are available in the School's Blackboard online learning environment:

> http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz/

The Blackboard Web-based learning environment will be used to post course information notices, and enable ongoing electronic discussion forums on topics or issues introduced in or out of class. Students are also encouraged to use Blackboard for information sharing, and to post questions for electronic and in-class discussion. You should also read the appropriate module Web pages in conjunction with the module readings and course notes. Details on how to access Blackboard are in the *Administration Handbook*, but if you have any difficulties logging on please contact the Help Desk, at:

> its-service@vuw.ac.nz

All LIM students will be automatically enrolled in 'LIM Programmes Information' on Blackboard. General announcements and information will be posted here, and students should check this site regularly.

Internet conferencing

Distance sessions are now being conducted via the Internet using the Chatterbox application; in order to participate students will need an Internet-connected PC running Windows Vista, XP or Windows 2000, microphone, and headphones/speakers. To connect, go to the Internet conferencing page (and read the "Getting Started" information) at

> https://conferencing.sim.vuw.ac.nz/

There is also an 'Internet Conferencing' button linking to this page in Blackboard.

Some days before your first session, and at least 15 minutes before each subsequent session, you should test your system by going to the Echo Room. Regular classes will be held in the LIS Room; additional Discussion Rooms are available for breakout groups, and as a "waiting room" if a class is proceeding in the main LIS room. Study groups can use the discussion rooms out of regular class times. For further information, follow the help links on the Internet Conferencing page; details, including screen name conventions, are also available on Blackboard under LIM Programmes Information.

LIM Students email list

Staff of the LIM programmes use the `lim-students` email discussion list to make important announcements, and to share news and ideas relating to the LIM programmes. **It is very important that you are subscribed to this list**. Please make sure that a current email address which you check regularly is subscribed. We suggest that you remain a member of this list until **after you graduate,** because the list is used as the main channel to communicate important administration messages (including those about arrangements for graduation).

Emails are sent to `lim-students` regularly, so if you have not received any list messages for a few weeks it is a good idea to make sure you are still subscribed. If a list message is rejected by your email account you will automatically be unsubscribed from the list. **To subscribe, unsubscribe, and change your email address or options, go to**

http://lists.vuw.ac.nz/mailman/listinfo/lim-students

Confirmation: When you subscribe or unsubscribe to `lim-students`, you will receive a confirmation message. To confirm the action, click reply and send. You will then receive a welcome or goodbye message.

General University information

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

Railway West Wing (RWW) - FCA Student and Academic Services Office
The Faculty's Student and Academic Services Office is located on the ground and first floors of the Railway West Wing. The ground floor counter is the first point of contact for general enquiries and FCA forms. Student Administration Advisers are available to

discuss course status and give further advice about FCA qualifications. To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

<u>Easterfield (EA) - FCA/Education/Law Kelburn Office</u>
The Kelburn Campus Office for the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, Education and Law is situated in the Easterfield Building on the ground floor (EA005). This counter is the first point of contact for :
- Duty tutors for student contact and advice.
- Information concerning administrative and academic matters.
- Forms for FCA Student and Academic Services (e.g. application for academic transcripts, requests for degree audit, COP requests).
- Examinations-related information during the examination period.

To check for opening hours call the Student and Academic Services Office on (04) 463 5376.

Notice of Turnitin Use

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. *At the discretion of the School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin.* You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

General University Policies and Statutes
Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar or go to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx. For information on the following topics, go to the Faculty's website www.victoria.ac.nz/fca under Important Information for Students:
- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

> *The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.*

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:
- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

Manaaki Pihipihinga is an academic mentoring programme for undergraduate Māori and Pacific students in the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Humanities and Social Sciences. Sessions are held at the Kelburn and Pipitea Campuses in the Mentoring Rooms, 14 Kelburn Parade (back courtyard), Room 109D, and Room 210, Level 2, Railway West Wing. There is also a Pacific Support Coordinator who assists Pacific students by linking them to the services and support they need while studying at Victoria. Another feature of the programme is a support network for Postgraduate students with links to Postgraduate workshops and activities around Campus.

For further information, or to register with the programme, email manaaki-pihipihinga-programme@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04) 463 6015. To contact the Pacific Support Coordinator, email pacific-support-coord@vuw.ac.nz or phone (04)