

INFO4203 Information Indexing and Organization

Syllabus Fall 2026

Instructor

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Photograph of the instructor, Dr.
Daniel Alemneh

Course Description

This course introduces students to the principles and practices of indexing and abstracting for the organization and retrieval of information. Students will examine both theoretical foundations and practical applications through readings, demonstrations, discussions, and hands-on assignments. Emphasis is placed on developing the knowledge and technical skills necessary to create effective indexes, abstracts, and controlled vocabularies for a variety of information resources and environments.

Students will gain experience using contemporary indexing and abstracting techniques, controlled vocabularies, thesauri, and software tools used in library and information science. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be prepared to apply these skills in libraries, archives, digital repositories, publishing, and other information organizations.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the fundamental concepts and principles of indexing, vocabulary control, and abstracting.
- Demonstrate familiarity with the terminology, standards, and professional practices associated with indexing and related information organization activities.
- Create indexes and abstracts for a variety of information resources and formats.
- Apply thesauri and controlled vocabularies and explain the principles of thesaurus design and construction.
- Evaluate and use different types of indexes to improve information retrieval and search effectiveness.
- Use software tools and technologies to support indexing and abstracting in multiple information formats.

Major Course Components

- Assigned readings and optional textbook
- Supplemental web-based readings and resources
- Weekly instructional modules and mini-lectures
- Weekly indexing and abstracting exercises
- Online discussion board participation
- Synchronous or asynchronous class discussions, as scheduled
- Midterm examination
- Final examination

Course Grading

- Assignments and Exercises..... 40%
- Reading Discussions and Class Participation..... 35%
- Midterm Examination..... 10%
- Final Examination..... 15%

Grading Scale

The University of North Texas grading scale is as follows:

- A = 90 – 100
- B = 80 – 89
- C = 70 – 79
- D = 60 – 69
- F = 59 and below

Canvas and Course Communication

Canvas serves as the official learning management system for this course. Students are expected to check Canvas and their official UNT email regularly for course announcements, assignment updates, schedule changes, and instructor communications.

Course announcements posted in Canvas are considered official communication. Students should:

- Check Canvas at least three times each week.
- Read announcements promptly.
- Submit assignments through Canvas unless otherwise instructed.
- Monitor their grades and instructor feedback throughout the semester.

Questions about course content should be posted in the designated Course Questions discussion forum whenever appropriate so that all students may benefit from the response. For personal questions, grading concerns, or confidential matters, students should contact the instructor using Canvas Inbox or UNT email. The instructor will normally respond to messages within 24–48 business hours, excluding weekends and university holidays.

Online Participation Expectations

Because this course is delivered online, active participation is essential.

Students are expected to:

- Complete weekly readings before participating in discussions.
- Contribute thoughtful, professional, and substantive discussion posts.
- Respond respectfully to classmates while supporting ideas with evidence and course concepts.
- Complete assignments by published deadlines.
- Participate consistently throughout the semester rather than completing multiple weeks of work at one time.

Professional communication (including respectful language, constructive feedback, and academic professionalism) is expected in all online interactions.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to scholarship and professional practice. Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and professional conduct. Academic misconduct, including cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and facilitating academic dishonesty, is governed by the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

Professional and respectful engagement is expected throughout the course. While thoughtful discussion and the exchange of diverse perspectives are encouraged, disruptive or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will be addressed in accordance with university policy.

Additional information is available through the UNT Academic Integrity Office and the Office of the Provost:

- UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>
- Academic Integrity: <https://vpaa.unt.edu/ss/integrity>

Questions regarding academic integrity may be directed to academic.integrity@unt.edu.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Artificial intelligence tools (such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, Grammarly AI, and similar technologies) are becoming common tools in professional information environments. This course encourages students to develop AI literacy while maintaining academic integrity and demonstrating independent learning. Unless otherwise specified for a particular assignment:

Permitted Uses

Students may use generative AI to:

- Brainstorm ideas
- Generate outlines
- Clarify difficult concepts
- Improve grammar and writing mechanics
- Develop study guides
- Explore alternative approaches to solving problems

Required Student Responsibility

Students remain fully responsible for:

- The accuracy of all submitted work
- Verifying facts, citations, and references
- Demonstrating understanding of course concepts
- Ensuring that submitted work reflects their own learning

AI-generated content may contain factual inaccuracies, fabricated citations, or biased information. Students are expected to review and verify all information before submission.

Not Permitted

Unless explicitly authorized by the instructor, students may not:

- Submit AI-generated work as their own original work.
- Use AI during quizzes or examinations.
- Use AI when an assignment specifically requires independent work.
- Fabricate references, quotations, or sources using AI.

The instructor may require students to describe or document how AI tools were used in completing an assignment. Failure to appropriately acknowledge AI use when required may constitute academic misconduct.

Accessibility and Disability Accommodations

The University of North Texas is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities for all students. Students seeking accommodations should first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify eligibility.

Students requesting academic accommodations should register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA). After eligibility has been established, students should provide their accommodation letter to the instructor as early as possible so accommodations may be implemented in a timely manner.

Reasonable accommodations are provided in accordance with federal and university guidelines..

For additional information, visit the Office of Disability Access website:

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>

Phone: (940) 565-4323

Students experiencing temporary medical conditions or barriers to participation are encouraged to communicate with the instructor as soon as possible.

Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE)

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is administered at the end of each semester for all organized courses at UNT. Student feedback is valued and plays an important role in improving course design, instruction, and the overall learning experience. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the evaluation.

Important Notice for F-1 Students

To comply with U.S. immigration regulations, F-1 students studying within the United States may be required to complete an approved on-campus experiential component for this course. Such activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Taking an on-campus examination
- Participating in an on-campus class session or workshop
- Completing another instructor-approved activity that is integral to the course

If an on-campus component is required, students must:

1. Submit a written request to the instructor within one week of the beginning of the semester.
2. Complete the approved activity and ensure appropriate documentation is provided to the UNT International Advising Office.

Students who are uncertain whether this requirement applies to them should contact the UNT International Advising Office before the one-week deadline.

Phone: (940) 565-2195 Email: international@unt.edu

Required Technology

Students are expected to have:

- Reliable high-speed internet access
- A current web browser
- Microsoft Office or equivalent productivity software
- PDF reader
- Audio capability (speakers or headphones)
- Webcam and microphone for any required virtual meetings or presentations
- Regular access to Canvas

Technical assistance is available through the UNT Help Desk.

Readings

Weekly readings and supplemental learning resources will be provided within each course module in Canvas. Students are responsible for reviewing the assigned materials before completing weekly activities and discussions.

Optional Textbook:

Cleveland, D. B., & Cleveland, A. D. (2013). Introduction to Indexing and Abstracting (4th ed.). Libraries Unlimited.

The optional textbook is also available through the UNT

Libraries: <https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b4520768>).

Course Success Tips

Students who are most successful in this course typically:

- Begin assignments early.
- Participate in weekly discussions.
- Ask questions promptly.
- Read instructor's feedback carefully.
- Practice indexing regularly rather than waiting until major assignments.
- Use AI tools responsibly as learning aids rather than substitutes for their own work.



Calendar Fall 2026

Due Date	Module	Readings	Assignments
August 17	Log into the Course Via Canvas	Read Course Instructions carefully	Post a short biography of yourself on the Discussion Forum Start to work on assignments due August 24 th
August 24	Module 1: Introduction to Indexing and Abstracting: Background and Nature of Information	Supplementary: Set 1	1. Indexing Exercise 1 due <i>Part-I: The resulting SkyIndex practice index</i> <i>Part-II: A comparison of indexing software</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond as appropriate
August 31	Module 2: The Relationship of Information Organization, Access, and Retrieval	Supplementary: Set 2	1. Indexing Exercise 2 due - <i>Part-I: Index an article</i> - <i>Part II: Comment on the indexing process</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond as appropriate
September 8	Work on group project (Group Meeting via Zoom)	None	1. Work on group project 2. Chat with instructor and group members

Due Date	Module	Readings	Assignments
September 14	Module 3: Types of Indexes and Abstracts	None	1. Indexing Exercise 3 due - <i>Group paper</i>
September 21	Module 4: The Indexing and Abstracting Process	Supplementary: Set 4	1. Indexing Exercise 4 due - <i>Comments on group works</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond as appropriate
September 28	Module 5: Indexing and Abstracting a Document	Supplementary: Set 5	1. Indexing Exercise 5 due - <i>Part I: Index academic articles</i> - <i>Part II: Write abstracts</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond as appropriate
October 5	Module 6. Book Indexing	Supplementary: Set 6	1. Indexing Exercise 6 - <i>Create Back of the book index</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond as appropriate

Due Date	Module	Readings	Assignments
October 12	Midterm Exam	None	1. Midterm Exam
October 19	Module 7: Indexing Special Formats	Supplementary: Set 7	1. Indexing Exercise 7 - <i>Part I: Index the painting</i> - <i>Index II: Index Newspaper story</i> - <i>Part III: Index music</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond as appropriate
October 26	Module 8: Indexing and the Internet	Supplementary: Set 8	1. Indexing Exercise 8 - <i>Review and evaluate search engines</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond as appropriate
November 2	Module 9: Evaluation, Indexing/ Abstracting Services	Supplementary: Set 9	1. Indexing Exercise 9 - <i>Part I: Evaluate indexing resources and services</i> - <i>Part II: Evaluate abstracting resources and services</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond as appropriate

Due Date	Module	Readings	Assignments
November 9	Module 10: Thesaurus Construction and Evaluation (Meeting via Zoom)	Supplementary: Set 10	1. Indexing Exercise 10 - <i>Evaluate thesauri</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond 4. Join the guest lecture via Zoom
November 16	Module 11: Professional Aspects	Supplementary: Set 11	1. Indexing Exercise 11 - <i>Review indexing sites and resources</i> 2. Post reading discussions 3. Read classmates' postings and respond as appropriate
November 23	Fall Break	None	None
November 30	Work on Final Project	None	None
December 7	Final Exam	Final Exam	Final Exam

