Outline of today’s lecture

- Exam structure
- This week’s lab/tute
- Revision:
  - preparing for the exam
  - broad themes
  - topics week by week

Exam - 3 hours

- PART A: Short answer questions (5% total)
  - Choose 5 from list
  - Each answer is worth 1%
  - Use examples to illustrate your answers

- PART B: Paragraph answers (10% total)
  - Choose 2 from list
  - Each answer is worth 5%
  - Use examples to illustrate your answers

Exam - 3 hours

- Part C: Essays (60% total)
  - Choose 3 from list
  - Each answer is worth 20%
  - Use examples to illustrate your answers

- Part D: Document Analysis (25% total)
  - Answer all questions in this section
  - Think about the document’s elements
  - Think about the document’s context

This week’s tute/lab

- In the lab, attempt last year’s IMS1603/IMS1102 exam
- In the tute, discuss your answers
- Hand in your second assignment

Preparing for the exam

- Summarise your notes from lectures, lab/tutes and readings
- Look for broad themes
- Look for links between topics
- Practice with past exams
Information Management entails things like:

• How and why organisations collect and create information
• Access to information
• How we organise information
• Its timeliness, accuracy and authority
• How we distribute information
• How we store information
• Understanding the context of information
• Managing concerns like these in changing technological environments

Themes of IMS1603: The nature of documents

What are documents?
• Purposes, forms and media, their elements, non-text forms, the impact of changing technologies etc.

Documents intended for publication, compared to records
• i.e. information products/information by-products

The social roles of documents (e.g. promotion)
The ‘web’ of documents
Information management ‘issues’
• Privacy, access & equity, censorship & ‘ownership’

Themes of IMS1603: Seeking information

• How and why do we seek information?
• Using documents critically
• Using information-seeking tools critically
• Identifying and responding to user needs
• Classifying information

Week 1: What is a retrieval-based information system?

Buckland (1991: 35) has a very broad definition in mind:
‘a system is an information system if it is used as an information system, especially if it has been designed to be used as an information system’

Buckland (1991: 62) thus points to the central role of the user in retrieval-based information systems, since
‘it is the user, with or without someone else acting as a mediator, who defines what information should be retrieved and takes action to retrieve it’

Week 2: What is information?

Michael Buckland (1991) suggests we can understand information as
• a thing ie a document
• a process
• knowledge
Week 2: What is information overload?

Jordan (2000: 118) puts this double bind differently, saying we face:

– Excess volume of information
– Information so ‘chaotically organised’ as to be useless

Week 2: More thoughts on information systems

‘delivering information is not in itself sufficient for becoming informed’
(Buckland 1991: 200)

Information management involves much more than the handling of information-as-things

Week 2: Uses sources critically

Critical/critique/criticise:
‘a careful and exact evaluation and judgement’

Evaluation/evaluate:
‘to examine and judge carefully’

Week 2: Searching for information online

• Use search terms that are too broad, and you may receive a large number of documents, many of which are not relevant to your purposes.
• Use terms that are too narrow, and you may receive a small number of relevant documents, but miss out on other vital sources.

Week 3: A crucial lecture on documents

• The purpose of documents
• The nature of documents
• Documents in context

Week 3: Developing a search strategy

• Find the focus
• Identify key concepts
  • ‘You can combine the concepts using Boolean operators’
• Define key concepts
• Find alternative terms
Week 4: The ‘web of documents’

Which of these exist in isolation?
- driver's licence
- library card
- student ID card
- membership cards
- credit card
- receipts
- tickets for a bus/train
- scribbled notes containing phone numbers, mobile 'phone books', SMS messages etc.

Tracing the documentary webs surrounding individuals
- What sorts of documentary evidence exist concerning their lives and activities?
- Which of these are records as opposed to information products?

Week 5: Documentary analysis

- Form
- Format
- Medium
- Context
- Authority
- Content
- Purpose
- Technology(ies)
- Accessibility

Information about a document:
- who created it?
- why was it created?
- under what circumstances?
- in what system?
- for which audience?

Week 5: Searching the web

While their use is widespread, search engines continue to present problems for many users
- Weaknesses of keyword searching
  - Recall and precision
  - The authority of information retrieved
  - The breadth of coverage

Week 6: Documentary form and the impact of ICT

- Are there new kinds of documents in a digital environment?
- ICT capabilities
- ‘Fluid’ documents and the need for ‘fixity’
  - Digital information products versus digital records
- Newspapers as one example
Week 7: User needs and behaviours

- Identifying user needs
  - Depend on context
- Information needs
  - Are ongoing
- Information seeking behaviour
  - Eg known/specific/subject searches

Week 7: How might information systems address user needs?

- ‘Data-centred design focuses on information-as-thing. It considers the recorded messages to be the most important aspect of information systems.’
- ‘User-centred design focuses on information-as-process, particularly on the ways that information systems meet the information needs of users.’
  (Allen 1996: 14)

Week 8: Matching documents to users needs

Content/format/medium/context
- are crucial when designing documents for others to use,
- in an online environment as much as anywhere else.
Are users scanning? Are they evaluating?

Week 8: How dual coding can help

Paivio (cited in Allen 1996) argues that we learn and remember information through:
  > propositions set out in text
  > images
In certain circumstances, using both of these can greatly aid our use of information

Week 8: Information architecture

- Websites commonly draw upon certain distinctive attributes of the electronic medium — starting with hypertext — as a means to organise the documents they make available
- Information architecture asks: what is the most appropriate way to organise documents online, so that users can locate the information that they need?

Week 9: Classification

We classify documents because
- we can’t help ourselves
- it allows us to handle and store documents
- it allows us to retrieve documents when needed
Week 9: Metadata

‘structured data about data’:
- Metadata commonly takes the form of tags that provide information about a document’s structure, content and context
- The tags are easy to identify within the code of electronic documents that use them (e.g. Dublin Core)

Week 10: Promotional documents

DISSEMINATION of information (along with managing creation, capture, storage, retrieval and access) is what information system’s do!
- Getting information out to those who have an interest in it (or a right to see or know about it)
- Promotion does not necessarily mean ‘selling’
- Many organisations have a need to promote their services
- Identifying audiences
- Reaching them in cost-effective ways

Week 11: Records (information byproducts)

‘The critical characteristic is that a record has to be linked to doing something – it is inherently transactional in its nature’

(Reed 2005: 102)

Week 11: Records need to be reliable, to help us to

- ‘understand what has been done previously in the course of completing [certain] actions,
- check if something was done correctly,
- answer questions asked subsequent to the actions that took place,
- justify actions,
- provide precedents for acting consistently,
- provide assurance to people external to the action that those actions were appropriate,
- enable external scrutiny to show what happened in particular instances, and
- enable the information content of the record to be reused as required’

(Reed 2005: 106)

Week 12: Some IM ‘issues’

- What are ethics? Why do they matter?
- Ethics as a component of professional practice and identity
- Some examples of professional codes
- Some views of practitioners
- Some current ethical dilemmas

Week 12: Some IM ‘issues’

Copyright:
- Some facts
- Some myths
- Australian copyright law
- Public domain / Fair use
- On the web