

WHAT IS INFORMATION? WHAT IS INFORMATICS? (NO, this is not an optical illusion.)

INFO 300 Intellectual Foundations of Informatics

PREPARATION FOR MINI-PANEL: WHAT IS INFORMATION? (for lecture Tuesday, October 8)

On Tuesday, several faculty members from the Information School will be joining us to form a mini-panel to discuss “What is Information?” Each panelist will present a brief definition of information. Then we will open the floor for discussion.

Please WRITE at least one question you would like to ask the panelists. You will turn in your question at the end of class on Tuesday.

BACKGROUND READINGS ON INFORMATICS, BROADLY CONSTRUED

As we have time on Tuesday, we’ll also discuss the various perspectives (coming under the names of information science, information design and so forth) that contribute to the field on informatics. To prepare for this discussion, please read/skim the following articles (most of these are short or quick reading pieces). You do not need to take detailed note here, though feel free to jot down any ideas you find provocative and bring them with you to class.

What Will Be, Preface (pp. xv – xvi), and The five pillars of information (pp. 51-54).

AAAS. (1989, June/July). Educational foundations for tomorrow’s information scientists: A report from the American Association for the Advancement of Science. *Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science*, 21.

What Will Be, Vision (pp. 3-24).

Diener, R. A. V. (1989, June/July). Information science: What is it?... What should it be? *Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science*, 17.

Skovira, R. J. (1989, June/July). Pluralism in information science. *Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science*, 18-19.

Horn, R. E. (1999). Information design: Emergence of a new profession. In R. Jacobson (Ed.) *Information design* (pp. 15-33). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

PREPARATION FOR LAB 2: WHAT IS INFORMATION? (for lab Friday, October 11)

In this lab, we’ll examine our own personal information experiences from the perspective of Buckland (and others). To prepare for this lab, keep a journal of one or two “information” experiences you encounter over the next week. At a minimum, you should record your initial “information” goal, how you sought to reach that goal, sub-goals along the way (e.g., other information you needed to acquire in order to achieve your original goal), how you attempted to satisfy each sub-goal, what worked, what didn’t, what sources you drew on (e.g., people, directories, maps), and so forth. For our purposes, the more detailed your “information journal” the better. *Please bring a copy of your information journal to lab on Friday, along with the Buckland article and the Meadow and Yuan article, and your notes on those articles.* You’ll use your information journal as “raw data” for the lab. Please turn in a copy of your “information journal” with your lab write-up.