**IST 560/INF724**  
(Call numbers 7504 / 9735)  
Information and Public Policy  
Spring 2013—Husted 014—Mondays

**Instructor**  
Deborah Lines Andersen  
Draper 140C; (O) 442-5122 (H) 439-6153  
E-mail: dla@albany.edu  
Office Hours: Monday 1:30 to 3:30; Tuesdays 12:30 to 3:30 (if no faculty meeting); by appointment, telephone or email  
Class Hours: Mondays 4:15 to 7:05 in Husted 014  
Syllabus: on IS web site and class’s ERes site  
ERes password is [deleted]  
Course listserv is IST560INF724@listserv.albany.edu; sign up for this immediately  
Course TA: Grading will be done by Andersen; no course TA

**Course Catalog Text:** “This course is designed to provide an overview of important topics in the area of information policy. During the last two decades, the growing importance of information as a societal, management and economic tool has strained our previous laws and regulations governing the proper use and role of information in national and international society. During the semester, we will study some key information policies at the state, national and international level, in order to better understand their rationale, effectiveness, and appropriateness with regard to their intended role in society. This understanding will help us, as professionals, to anticipate and reflect on changes information policies can be expected to undergo in the future.”

**Class Meetings:** The course will meet 14 times. Check the class calendar for meeting dates. In the event of inclement weather, check 442-SNOW or the university website (landing page, right-hand side) for an announcement on university closings. If class is cancelled we will use the class listserv and ERes to keep up with weekly topics.

**Class Attendance:** Attendance will be taken each week. This is a discussion class. Students need to attend to get full benefits. In the unavoidable event of an absence, students should make arrangements with other students to pick up class notes and assignments. The instructor will allow time the first meeting of class to find study partners. Students who miss more than two classes will have their final grade dropped by 3 points per additional absence. Please email the instructor if you are going to miss class.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Readings:** There is one required text available either paperback or ebook:


Readings in the attached calendar—according to code from the readings section—should be read for the date listed.

**Bookstores:** I contacted everyone the second week in January about the book. I did not order Braman from bookstores since you could purchase paperback or an ebook.
**ERes:** On the University Library homepage there is a tab for **Electronic Reserves.** You can use your netid and university password to access course materials (mainly readings) here. The password for this class is [deleted].

**Mailboxes:** Students will have their graded papers returned in class. There is a file cabinet in the Draper student lounge that contains mail folders for each student in IS. Andersen’s mailbox is in Draper 116.

**Student Performance Evaluation:** Students are evaluated based upon the following percent weightings:

**Students in INF724 (two credit class)**

- Stakeholder Analysis FERPA: 5
- Decision Memo—Handgun Registry: 15
- Policy White Paper #1: 20
- Policy White Paper #2: 20
- Group Overview Briefing on Information Policy Topic: 10
- Comps-Style Final Information Policy Paper: 25
- Participation in Class: 5

**Students in IST560 (three credit class) if PhD student**

- Stakeholder Analysis FERPA: 5
- Decision Memo—Handgun Registry: 5
- Policy White Paper #1: 10
- Policy White Paper #2: 15
- Policy White Paper #3: 15
- Group Overview Briefing on Information Policy Topic: 10
- Workgroup Briefing Document during BLOCK 3: 10
- Comps-Style Final Information Policy Paper (#4): 25
- Participation in Class: 5

**Students in IST560 (three credit class) if master’s, CAS, or nondegree student**

- Stakeholder Analysis FERPA: 5
- Decision Memo—Handgun Registry: 15
- Policy White Paper #1: 15
- Policy White Paper #2: 15
- Policy White Paper #3: 15
- Workgroup Briefing Document during BLOCK 3: 10
- Policy White Paper #4 (or Comps-Style if desired): 20
- Participation in Class: 5

**Homework Formats:** All work is due at the time assigned on each project and will have the grade reduced by 5 points if no previous permission for lateness was obtained from the instructor.

The **decision memos** should be handed in word processed, single-spaced, single-sided with headings, and double space between paragraphs—one page maximum.

The **policy white papers** will be word processed, double-spaced, single sided, and will be an individual effort (no group projects)—page numbers will vary (~5).
The comprehensive-examination-style paper (for INF PhD students) will be word processed, double-spaced, single sided, and individual effort, and approximately 15 pages long plus references. This paper will be signed off on by at least one other PhD student as part of the assignment.

Appropriate footnoting and citation format should be followed. (Use google.com to check “MLA style”; “APA style”; or “Chicago Manual of Style” for specific bibliographic instructions—your choice as to which one.)

Objectives for Students: It is expected that students who finish this course will be able to:

Information Studies Goals:

Goal 3. Students will create, select, acquire, organize, manage, preserve, retrieve, evaluate, and disseminate information using relevant theories and practices.

Goal 4. Students will assess the information needs of diverse and underserved populations and provide resources and instruction to meet those needs.

Goal 6. Students will be able to formulate, interpret, and implement information policy, and promote ethical standards in the production, management, and use of information.

Goal 7. Students will understand the importance of information access issues, including privacy, equity, intellectual property, and intellectual freedom.

Additional assessment: decision memos and policy white papers:

1. Students will demonstrate their ability to succinctly state and evaluate information policy positions in written form.

2. Students will demonstrate their ability to evaluate the points of view of stakeholder groups in information policy debates.

3. Students will demonstrate their grasp of the decision memo and policy white paper as communication formats in information policy debates.

Additional assessment: comprehensive-examination-style papers:

1. Students will demonstrate their ability to formulate an original information policy problem through the problem definition of this paper.

2. Students will demonstrate their ability to synthesize appropriate literature to underpin their discussion and identify literature gaps as they occur through the literature review section of this paper.

3. Students will demonstrate their grasp of the policy problem’s dimensions through the discussion section of this paper.

Time Required: This class meets for approximately three class contact hours each week. Homework should take two to three hours per each contact hour. This implies that you will need to devote up to 12 hours per week to this class (3 hours in class; 6 to 9 hours at home). If you find yourself spending substantially more than 12 hours on average per week on this class, please see the instructor. Three credit students meet the entire semester. Two credit students meet the first 10 weeks of the semester but may select to remain in class throughout.
E-mail: The instructor assumes that students use their UAlbany email account. If this is not the case, please forward email from this account to the one that you do use. Email is also the best method for communicating with the instructor.

Writing: This is a writing-intensive class. The professor grades based upon content as well as format, grammar, punctuation, spelling, syntax, and usage. Proofread your papers, please. Have someone else proofread them and show you their suggested edits. At the graduate level you should be engaged in error-free, professional writing.

Incompletes and late work: No incompletes will be given in this class without the express permission of the instructor in advance of the end of the semester.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Due to the intensive nature of this course, students are encouraged to form study groups and to work together on assignments. Learn by interacting with one another—support and help one another. However, papers will clearly be expected to reflect individual effort. As a policy for this course, plagiarism, self-plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing grade for the course. In addition, the instructor will pursue further disciplinary action at the University level. If you have questions about crediting the work of others in your writing, please see the instructor.

Trees: Please feel free to use the back of whatever paper you have at home that has something else on the front side. This policy includes all submissions for the course. Please pen correct small errors on papers rather than reprinting or rewriting the whole thing. Think ecologically, please.

Food, Phones, and Comfort: Please feel free to bring a snack to class. Please turn off your cell phone. If absolutely necessary leave it on, but exit the room as quietly as possible (hard to do with the phone ringing somewhere in your backpack!) The classroom rule is that all computers are closed and all cell phones are out of use. Talk with the professor if you use your computer for taking notes or referring to materials. Doing email during class is not an appropriate reason to leave your device on 😊

Reasonable academic accommodations are provided in this class. If you have any condition that would make different presentation of materials (e.g., size of type), placement in the room, special seating, or different teaching style (where possible) beneficial to you, please see the professor. Some students have chosen to tape record lectures for future reference. Fine with me. If you have a disability (e.g., physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning, psychiatric), please do register with the Disability Resource Center. This center will provide letters verifying disability status and will suggest appropriate academic accommodations. Please notify me and the center enough in advance so that we can be of help to you.

Helping speed up grading: Please make sure to paginate your multipage papers. Put your name in a header at the top of each page. Date your paper and be sure to include a version number if this is a rewrite. Please put the assignment number and title on the top of the first page. Please do not include a cover sheet—waste of paper 😊
**Weekly Course Outline:** (Readings, Assignments to Hand In)—subject to change based upon speakers, weather, and time overruns in class discussions and presentations.

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<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Read for Class</th>
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<td>Materials are to be presented to the class in the form of a one-page briefing document</td>
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<td>Each student in the class will receive a copy of the document.</td>
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<td>“Informal” means no standing up, no PowerPoint</td>
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<td>Paper #4 due</td>
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B – Braman text chapter
BE – The bibliographic essay associated with the chapter, located toward the end of the book
**– This is the last day of class for the INF724—2 credit group although they may choose to stay for the remaining four classes.
**Paper Parameters**

**Stakeholder Analysis**
Read Bryson and review the FERPA case. Create a two page document, single spaced with double spaced between that lists (underline) each of the stakeholders you have identified and then gives a two or three sentence statement on their position in relation to the information policy/policies contained in FERPA. Be sure to read the actual law.

**Decision Memo Assignment**
Use the template on the back of the case study to create a decision memo that is written to an individual who might be involved in making gun control information policy (you choose—fiction fine), and that is written by you, a stakeholder with a particular agenda. No literature review but you will have to read a lot of materials to get points to support your position.

**Overview Documents (PhD students)**
See the class calendar for due dates. Each PhD student will work with at least one other member of the class to create one of these during the semester. The document should be ONE PAGE long, single spaced with double between, underline or bold headings, with references (not to many) as pertinent, that lays out the basic issue and information policy concerns for the topic you have assigned yourself. Bring copies (n = 27) for everyone in the class.

**560 Briefing Document for the Last Four Weeks of Class**
Each of you in the 560 (14 week) class will select a date to give a briefing to the rest of the class on your final paper topic. We will know the topics in advance and might group individuals according to topic if appropriate. See the overview assignment above for general parameters. ONE PAGE.

**Policy White Paper Format.** Each student will complete policy papers as requirements for the class. The format will vary for 560 students versus 724 students, and PhD students as opposed to master’s students. 560 master’s students will complete papers in the format of policy white papers, whereas PhD students will complete both white papers and comprehensive-examination-style papers.

**Policy Paper Topics.** The topic for your policy papers will be of your own definition. You will turn in your paper areas (see Appendix B of this syllabus) on February 18 for a quick review by the professor. A good topic consists of

1. **A well-focused information policy sub-domain.** The appendix to this syllabus contains a variety of information policy domains that you could select from for your policy sub-domain. During other class activities and homework assignments, you will be asked to work with these policy domains, so be alert to a possible sub-domain that is of interest to you. For example, if you were interested in the broad domain of “Regulation and Provision of Broadband Access (aka the Digital Divide)” then an interesting sub-domain might be government attempts to structure competition between landline phone companies (such as Verizon FIOS landlines that have traditionally been regulated by state and local utility commissions) and wireless providers such as T-Mobile who do not have a history of state and local regulation.

2. **A Primary Stakeholder.** What often makes information policy issues so interesting is that they can have such distinct impacts on different stakeholders. For example, in attempts to structure competition between landline and wireless phone providers you see quite different policy issues if you are looking at the policy primarily from the point of view of a low income rural farmer (outside of current wireless coverage) versus a high income white collar worker in a major metropolitan area versus one of the
provider companies versus the supervisor of a rural town seeking economic development versus... you get the point.

3. **Secondary Stakeholders to be considered in the policy paper.** The primary actor in your policy paper may be in conflict with (or cooperating with) other stakeholders who may differ in terms of their interest in the policy sub-domain as well as their power to affect the domain.

4. **One or More Broadly Focused Information Policy Areas.** During the course of the semester the class will be focusing on the major information policy areas, such as copyright, privacy, provision of public goods, and so one. A well posed policy topic will have a clear focus on one or more of the broad topics that we have covered in class.

5. **A Well-Posed Information Policy Problem or Dilemma.** Published newspaper accounts of information often do a great job of crafting interesting and well-posed information problems. A well-posed problem has a problem owner (your primary stakeholder), has impacts on secondary stakeholders, is relevant to a specific information policy sub-domain and evokes one or more of the public policy problems that we have discussed and worked on in class. For your policy papers, you may introduce fictional characters in order to create a well-posed policy problem, however, the final topic should always be realistic, interesting, and not forced.

6. **A Literature Review.** Literature reviews vary for this class. There is no requirement for the decision memo. Policy white papers should have at least 5 references that back up your arguments. The comprehensive-examination-style paper needs supporting references as appropriate for the topic.

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**Readings (on ER es, with the journals directly below as possible info sources):**

**Journals**


*I/S: Journal of Law and Policy for the Information Society.* (at [http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/students/groups/is/](http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/students/groups/is/) accessed 1/7/2013)

**Articles (by topic)—Topic Key**

- [EC] Environment/Constitution
- [G] Government
- [I] International
- [IP] Intellectual Property
- [P] Privacy
- [S] Stakeholders


[IP] Boyle, James. 2008. *The Public Domain: Enclosing the Commons of the Mind*. Yale University Press. (NOTE: ERes has a review of this book but not the book itself. This might be something that some members of the class wish to read but it is not required of the whole.)


**Documents and Cases (all on ERes—accessed on line 1/23/2013)**

[IE] FERPA case materials

[IE] Handgun Ownership Information Case Materials—FOIL


[IE] US Constitution and Bill of Rights


**WHITE PAPERS**

Michael A. Stelzner’s Writing White Papers. At www.writingwhitepapers.com/resources.html . This is a good, corporate overview of white papers. There are many sites if you google “white papers” or “policy white papers” although the boxed materials in this syllabus give you a lot of information on writing these documents.

**URLs to Specific Online Sources** that you may wish to consult

**Overview Links**

Open CRS network https://opencrs.com/

Foundation for Information Policy Research http://fipr.org/

Yale Law School Information Society Project http://yaleisp.org/


American Civil Liberties Union www.aclu.org/

Center for the Study of the Public Domain http://www.law.duke.edu/cspd/
Copyright, Fair Use and Idea/Expression
The Register: Digital Rights for the World http://www.theregister.co.uk/music_media/

??Sound??* “7 Ways to Ruin a technological Revolution,” YouTube video
www.youtube.com/watch?v=DlfsXgNGe10

??Sound??*“A Fair(y) Use Tale,” YouTube Video http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJn_jC4FND0

US Copyright Office http://www.copyright.gov/

Patents and Trademarks

Privacy
Electronic Privacy Info Center http://epic.org/

”Ordering a Pizza in 2010” ACLU video: http://www.aclu.org/ordering-pizza

Privacilla is a unique Web-based project that seeks to capture “privacy” as a public policy issue
http://www.privacilla.org/index.html

Data Privacy Day Webcasts: Google this for various sites

Information Access
Brechner Center for Freedom of Information at the University of Florida http://brechner.org/

Digital Divide Network http://www.digitaldividenetwork.org/

Judicial Watch Special Projects http://www.judicialwatch.org/; look at this for a variety of topics

Government & Information
Center for the study of intelligence https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/index.html

Policy Laundering Project http://www.policylaundrying.org/

International Information Policy

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development http://www.oecd.org/

Programme in Comparative Media Law and Policy http://pcmlp.socleg.ox.ac.uk/

Mobiles, The Digital Divide, and Google www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8SfM28ur5Q

Privacy International https://www.privacyinternational.org/

APPENDIX I: Information Policy Domains for IST 560 and INF 724

An information policy domain can be thought of as a playing field where key stakeholders are working out their intersecting policy agendas to meet (often conflicting) public or private ends. Stakeholders may be in conflict in a given domain, and one or more policy topics (privacy versus access versus ownership of information) may be at play in any given domain. You are always free to work on a policy domain of your own choosing. But you may find the following list of broadly-defined policy domains to be a good starting point for your work. These information policy domains have been selected because each of them has lots of intersecting stakeholders and issues. So if you are working in a self-selected information policy domain for one of the assignments, be sure to get it reviewed in advance to make sure that it has enough “umph” to make an interesting assignment.

**Creation of a National Digital Library.** While many European nations (such as France) have already launched their own national digital library projects with public funds, in the United States it was Google’s library book scanning project at several major research libraries that really got this idea going. Google’s initial notion for making all books available online with at least one terminal available in every public library got shot down in the courts in a tangled set of lawsuits. A sophisticated team of librarians, lawyers, and technology experts have now picked up this project and plan to have a national digital library up and running in the United States in the next several years. This topic is replete with many information policy issues.

**Note that this is the case study for the third week of class—writ large**

**National Firearms Background Check Data Base.** The recent and tragic shootings of school children in Newtown, CT have focused national attention on a need to curtail gun violence in our schools. However, existing efforts to regulate the sale of assault weapons have become ensnarled in a number of tricky information policy issues. For example, only 12 states currently contribute information on mentally ill persons to the database used to perform background checks, and the National Association of Sheriffs has lamented the fact that the information system fails to capture data about felons from many states. Powerful stakeholders are ready to lobby both sides of these information policy issues before Congress.

**Pricing, Regulation, and Access to E-Books.** E-Books’ arrival on the market has put traditional publishers under severe competition—many observers look forward to drastic restructuring of the publishing industry. The delivery of E-Books is being bundled with the hardware delivery platform (e.g., Nooks versus I-Pads versus Kindles) and new large players in the market have already been taken to court for price collusion. One point of view asks, But where does all of this leave public libraries? As book publishing moves toward these new modalities can libraries still own and lend such books? There are numerous stakeholders here.

**Regulating Content on the Internet (for Children in the US; for citizens in China; for …).** Many observers decry the lack of regulation of content around children’s access to information on the internet. At the very least, stronger controls should be in place to prohibit children’s access to pornography and sexually explicit material. Yet these same observers may also decry government censorship of internet content by governments who do not share US values about free access to information. So where should these lines be drawn? Should the internet police itself? Does technology have an answer? And what role, if any should government play in governing access to online resources?

**National Security Agency (NSA) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Counter-Terrorism Activities.** In the post 911 world, providing for security of US citizens and institutions against terrorist attacks has become a critical priority for our government. To promote these efforts, DHS has created massive databases to collect information at the US borders, to identify and protect critical infra-structure, and to monitor travel into and out of the US. NSA has implemented massive information systems that
allow the government to monitor phone and e-mail traffic around the world. Government monitoring of communications into and out of the US by US citizens as well as aliens has already had its day in federal courts, with some systems being deemed unconstitutional. What are appropriate boundaries between security and personal privacy when it comes to information policies? The answers to many of these questions may remain unclear for a long time since the government maintains so much security information in a classified status. So how much information is classified anyway? Who does the classification? What if classification is actually just a cover up for questionable practices?

Social Media and Privacy (aka, who gets to see your Facebook page?) Several states have recently enacted legislation prohibiting prospective employers from demanding access to the Facebook pages of potential job applicants. But how much privacy do we all give up already with our day-to-day information-related activities? Mash ups of existing online information sources can already give startlingly revealing profiles of most US Citizens. When information that we have contributed to various online sources is combined and made public, many of us are surprised at the extent of public online profiles that can be created from information that we might have thought of as our private information. As we give some access to our personal information, how do we preserve our privacy from the many?

Smart Disclosure of Government (and Private Sector) Information to Promote More Efficient (some seek more green) Consumer Markets. The US government collects tons of information about the products that we eat, drink, and consume every day. But if a product fails a safety test or a hospital has too high death rates and consumers never learn about it, what good are all those government regulatory data anyway? The Obama White House is looking to launch “Smart Disclosure” on all consumer-related data held by the government to promote more efficient markets or even expanded green markets. Do we want the private sector to match this unprecedented release of consumer product information? Should the release of private product certification and inspection data be regulated by the government or otherwise regulated? Why type of governance makes sense? The idea with the most substantial backing these days is to have the WalMart corporation take over the definition and dissemination of information about “sustainable” products. Is WalMart the best stakeholder to be at the center of this unprecedented disclosure of information about consumer products?

Intellectual Property Rights and Global Free Trade Policies. What happens when piracy of videos or CDs becomes common? Are these really just victimless crimes with royalties a sham to pump corporate profits for the media giants? Or is the internet about to drive artists and authors out of business? Should we worry about the loss of revenues to onshore US corporations when different intellectual property rights in foreign markets lead to the loss of royalties to US-based authors and artists? Is the World Trade Organization (WTO) about to come to the rescue of artists and authors, or is it just protecting the rights of global media giants? Why are we paying for stuff that we can get free on the internet anyway?

Various Activities of Google. Google was recently censured by the EU because during a routine sweep to provide street-level images to populate Google Maps and Google Earth, the Google vehicle also collected information about both open and secure WiFi connections on all the streets. Google alleged that the corporation did not have a systematic plan for making use of this information. A smart engineer thought that since Google was paying for the information sweeps anyway, this might be another good piece of information to have for some future possible purpose. Should there be limits to how much information a private corporation can collect for some future possible purchase (the EU did think so as did the US Courts in the case of the Google Books project)? Do you personally worry about what may be happening with the information that Google is keeping for you in the g-mail account in the cloud? Why do so many of us so quickly abrogate our legal rights to privacy by our online disclosures to Google? And hey, did you know that you were abrogating your legal rights to privacy?
APPENDIX II: Grading Checklists for Members of INF724 and INF560 Class

Since we have three different groups of individuals taking this class, the following checklist should guide students through the assignments that they need to hand in and/or be graded on. This is also the document to hand in on Week 3 of this class. Print out a copy and fill in your topics, please. (ERes version is .doc)

____ All Students

____ Stakeholder Analysis.  TOPIC: FERPA
____ Decision Memo.  TOPIC: Handgun Registry
____ Policy White Paper #1.  TOPIC: ______________________
____ Policy White Paper #2.  TOPIC: ______________________
____ Class Participation (5% of grade)

____ INF724 (2 credit class) additions

____ Group Overview Briefing on Information Policy Topic. TOPIC: ______________________
____ Comps-Style Final Information Policy Paper #3.
   TOPIC: ______________________

____ IST560 (3 credit class if a PhD student) additions

____ Policy White Paper #3.  TOPIC: ______________________
____ Group Overview Briefing on Information Policy Topic. TOPIC: ______________________
____ Workgroup Briefing Document during BLOCK 3 (for Paper #4)
____ Comps-Style Final Information Policy Paper (#4).
   TOPIC: ______________________

____ IST 560 (3 credit class if master’s, CAS, or non-degree student) additions

____ Policy White Paper #3.  TOPIC: ______________________
____ Workgroup Briefing Document during BLOCK 3 (for Paper #4)
____ Policy White Paper #4 (or Comps-Style if desired)
   TOPIC: ______________________