

IS 590: Information Entrepreneurship

Course Overview

This course provides an opportunity to explore the exciting field of information entrepreneurship with a focus on independent research businesses, also called information brokerages. We'll also cover and investigate other independent information professional (IIP) careers of particular interest to students.

Purpose of Course and Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Identify and learn about diverse career paths.
- Evaluate whether an independent information business is a career path of interest.
- Become aware of how librarians and IIPs work together in outsourcing relationships.
- Learn about the wide-ranging products and services offered by independent information professionals.

Outline of Course Content

Topics include education, skills, and traits for becoming an IIP; how to establish a business infrastructure; the critical aspects of marketing and sales; product development and deliverables; legal and ethical issues; tools of the trade. In addition, we'll cover the types of services that can be offered such as:

- Online, telephone and manual library research
- Legal and public records research
- Market research (secondary and primary)
- Competitive intelligence
- Industry and company research.
- Library and information consulting and training
- Other areas that may include patents, medical information retrieval, prospect research, or due diligence depending on interests.

Sample Assignment Topics

- Conduct a SWOT (strengths weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis to identify strengths and additional skills needed for a career in information entrepreneurship; post for class discussion.
- Develop a list of ideas for products and services; post for class discussion. This is a form of R&D for information entrepreneurs.
- Prepare a business plan and present it towards the end of the semester for class discussion.

- **Note:** A substitute for a business plan is a research paper on a topic of interest to information entrepreneurs or an alternative information career of interest.

Books

Required

1. Bates, Mary Ellen. Research Business: A Guide for the Independent Professional, 2003, CyberAge Books, Information Today, Inc. ISBN: 0-910965-62-5
2. Gordon, Rachel Singer. What's the Alternative? Career Options for Librarians and Info Pros, 2008 ,Information Today, Inc. ISBN: 978-1-57387-333-8
3. Sabroski, Suzanne. Super Searchers Make It On Their Own, 2002, CyberAge Books, Information Today, Inc. ISBN: 0-910965-59-5

Recommended

Dority, G. Kim Rethinking Information Work: A Career Guide for Librarians and Other Information Professionals, 2006, Libraries Unlimited. ISBN: 1-59158-180-X

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