Information Science

Undergraduate students majoring in information science will explore the intersection of human values and the information technologies that influence everyday life. Students will synthesize knowledge and skills integrating design, computation, and data analysis. Students will investigate, understand, and engage contemporary issues around our increasingly digitized life. Topics include communicating with data, design, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, how culture and history shape technology, ethics, and technology for social good. This project-centered major prepares students with a professional portfolio and project experience for in-demand careers.

Course code for this program is INFO.

Bachelor's Degree

• Information Science - Bachelor of Science (BS) (https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/media-communication-information/programs-study/information-science/information-science-bachelor-science-bs/)

Minors

• Data Science - Minor (https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/media-communication-information/programs-study/information-science/data-science-minor/)
• Information Science - Minor (https://catalog.colorado.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/media-communication-information/programs-study/information-science/information-science-minor/)

Faculty

While many faculty teach both undergraduate and graduate students, some instruct students at the undergraduate level only. For more information, contact the faculty member’s home department.

Anderson, Kenneth M. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_113566/)
Professor; PhD, University of California, Irvine

Barker, Lecia Jane (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_101367/)
Associate Professor, Associate Chair; PhD, University of Colorado Boulder

Brubaker, Jed Richards (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_156193/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of California, Irvine

Burke, Robin D. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_165005/)
Chair; Professor; PhD, Northwestern University

Carruth, Christopher (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_153706/)
Lecturer; MS, University of Colorado Boulder

Cool, Alison Collier (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_154599/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, New York University

Devendorf, Laura (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_158564/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of California, Berkeley

Eargle, David (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_159053/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Pittsburgh

Fiesler, Casey Lynn (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_155950/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, Georgia Institute of Technology

Handler, Abram (https://experts.colorado.edu/individual/fisid_167411/)
Instructor; PhD, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Kane, Shaun Kevin (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_154603/)
Associate Professor; PhD, University of Washington

Karimzadeh, Morteza (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_166081/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, Pennsylvania State University

Keegan, Brian (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_158122/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, Northwestern University

Martin, James H. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_100495/)
Professor; PhD, University of California, Berkeley

Palen, Leysia A. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_114604/)
Professor; PhD, University of California, Irvine

Palmer, Martha (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_138162/)
Professor; PhD, University of Edinburgh (Scotland)

Roque, Ricarose (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_158315/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Siegel, Alexandra (https://experts.colorado.edu/individual/fisid_167158/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, New York University

Spielman, Seth Edward (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_148271/)
Associate Professor; PhD, SUNY at Buffalo

Striphas, Theodore G. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_156205/)
Associate Professor; PhD, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Szafr, Danielle N. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_156317/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Wisconsin–Madison

Voida, Amy Kathryn Mitchell (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_155855/)
Associate Professor; PhD, Georgia Institute of Technology

Voida, Stephen A. (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_155856/)
Assistant Professor; PhD, Georgia Institute of Technology

Zietz, Jason (https://experts.colorado.edu/display/fisid_163649/)
Instructor; PhD, University of Colorado Boulder

Courses

INFO 1101 (3) Computation in Society
Introduces students to modern information and communication technology, the basic principles of software and programming, the fundamental role of algorithms in modern society, computational reasoning, the major organizations in the information sector and fundamental interactions between humans and information technology. Appropriate for students with limited prior experience with computing. Fulfills the CMCI computing requirement.

Grading Basis: Letter Grade
INFO 1111  (4) Introduction to Information Science: Understanding the World Through Data
Provides a hands-on survey of key concepts and theories in Information Science, including the nature of information, everyday experience of data, technologies that generate data, and how data are conveyed and represented. Students will critically examine texts, systems, and interpretations of data from multidisciplinary perspectives. Through design explorations, activities, and group projects, students will develop facility representing and transforming information.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 1201  (4) Computational Reasoning 1: Information Transformation
Introduces principles of computational thinking through the manipulation, transformation, and creation of media artifacts, such as images, sounds, and web pages. Students will be exposed to a high-level overview of algorithms, functions, data structures, recursion, and object-oriented computer programming through a series of assignments that emphasize the use of computation as a means of creative expression.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 1301  (3) Statistics for Information Science
Introduces concepts and techniques for characterizing and quantifying data. Students will learn to summarize, visualize, and interpret data with descriptive statistics and will learn the foundations of statistical inference and modeling. Topics include statistical distributions and the normal distribution, hypothesis testing and statistical significance, and linear regression.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 1701  (4) Programming for Information Science 1
Introduces principles of programming for information and data science using the Python programming language. Students will learn to understand, modify and create Python programs and will learn about programmatic techniques for exploring, discovering, and communicating information contained within various data sources.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: LING 1200 or CSCI 1200

INFO 2001  (1) Information Science Portfolio and Professional Development
Facilitates career development through the disciplined reflection about and presentation of one’s work using a variety of modalities across a variety of media. Students will be introduced to individuals and organizations representing a diversity of career paths in information science.
Requisites: Restricted to Information Science (INFO) majors and minors.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 2131  (3) Information Ecosystems
Introduces students to techniques for working with communities, organizations, and institutions in the transformative use of information. Develops students’ ability to listen for (and mediate among) diverse, discordant voices and values. Employs qualitative research, design explorations, activities, and small group projects as students examine, navigate, and design for complex interactions across ecosystems.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 2201  (4) Programming for Information Science 2
Surveys techniques for accessing, exploring, and analyzing real-world data in various formats. Students will acquire, process, and visualize this data in order to communicate their findings to a general audience. Requires demonstrated proficiency with introductory computer programming.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of INFO 1701 or CSCI 1300 or CSCI 1200 or LING 1200 or ATLS 1300 (minimum grade C-).

INFO 2301  (3) Quantitative Reasoning for Information Science
Introduces methods for quantifying and analyzing different types of data, covering foundational concepts in discrete mathematics, probability, and predictive modeling, along with complementary computational skills to apply these concepts to real problems. Covers counting and combinatorics, logic, set theory, introductory probability, common probability distributions, regression, and model validation. Requires demonstrated proficiency with introductory computer programming.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of INFO 1701 or CSCI 1200 or CSCI 1300 or LING 1200 or ATLS 1300 (all minimum grade C-).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3101  (3) History of Computing and Information
Surveys techniques for accessing, exploring, and analyzing real-world data in various formats. Students will acquire, process, and visualize this data in order to communicate their findings to a general audience. Requires demonstrated proficiency with introductory computer programming.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of INFO 1701 or CSCI 1300 or CSCI 1200 or LING 1200 or ATLS 1300 (all minimum grade C-).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3401  (3) Information Exploration
Teaches students to use information to identify interesting real world problems and to generate insight. Students will learn to find, collect, assemble and organize data in order to discover new questions, make predictions, generate deliverables, and work towards solutions. They will learn to appropriately apply different methods (including computational, statistical and qualitative) for exploratory data analysis in a variety of domains.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of INFO 2201 and any one of INFO 2301, GEOG 4023, PSCI 3075, PSYC 3111 or SOCY 3201 (all minimum grade C-). Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3402  (3) Information Exposition
Surveys techniques for accessing, exploring, and analyzing real-world data in various formats. Students will acquire, process, and visualize this data in order to communicate their findings to a general audience. Requires demonstrated proficiency with introductory computer programming.
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of INFO 2201 and any one of INFO 2301, GEOG 4023, PSCI 3075, PSYC 3111 or SOCY 3201 (all minimum grade C-). Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3501  (3) Open Collaboration
Analyzes the mechanisms of peer production and crowdsourcing systems like Wikipedia and OpenStreetMap. Students will investigate how these crowdsourced platforms work socially and technically, develop skills using tools for their analysis and critically evaluate platform and community limitations.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5501
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
INFO 3502 (3) Online Communities
Explores practical and theoretical topics in online communities through inquiry into one or more particular online communities. Student projects will explore online communities as social and technical systems, including their alignment with conceptualizations of community, expressed and apparent interests, nature of membership and participation, history, participants' motivations for involvement, and explicit, implicit, and infrastructural features that enable and constrain behaviors.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5502
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3503 (3) Everyday Information Behavior
Familiarizes students with practical and theoretical topics in the discipline of information behavior and its application to everyday events, activities and environments. Explores the information dimension of various everyday activities such as buying a car, playing a game or looking up health information online. Students learn to analyze the informational dimensions that occur in their everyday lives.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5503
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3504 (3) Digital Identity
Explores and analyzes identity in a digital era. Through applied research, students investigate both social and technical aspects of how identity is captured, represented and experienced through technology using theoretical, empirical and design-based inquiry. Methods and platforms studied vary by semester.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5504
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3505 (3) Designing for Creativity and Learning
Analyzes learning technologies, discusses learning theories and develops prototypes to investigate strategies for engaging people in creative and inclusive learning experiences. Students explore design, learning and technology by examining sociotechnical systems like construction kits, online communities and makerspaces with a critical lens on equity and inclusion. Studio format enables students to apply constructionist ideas into the design of technology-enabled environments.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5505
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3506 (3) Online Fandom
Explores and analyzes fan communities in a digital context. Through applied research, students will investigate online spaces devoted to participatory and remix culture, media fandom, and fan creation. This class will draw concepts and methods from fan studies, social computing, ethnography, data science, and sociology to drive project-based inquiry.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5506
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3507 (3) Data and the Humanities
Introduces students to foundational computing and statistical concepts for analyzing humanities data. This course discusses the influence of digitization and data on humanist inquiry and exposes students to techniques for working with data in different areas of the humanities, including literature, history, and art. The course emphasizes technical practices involved in humanist data analysis. Comfort with programming is strongly encouraged.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5507
Requisites: Restricted to students with 55-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3508 (3) Personal Information Management
Explores and analyzes personal information management: the organization of our digital "stuff," including course assignments, internship documents, files shared with others via the cloud, social media posts, step counts captured by smartwatches, and location traces collected by phones. In this course, students will participate in a semester-long design research project exploring ways to reimagine how technology handles our digital stuff.
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3509 (3) Personal Health Informatics
Surveys the theoretical and practical foundations for the design of patient-centered health and wellness technologies. Students will conduct an in-depth exploration of the multidisciplinary research literature informing the design of these systems, participate in discussions about the practical information management and interaction design challenges that must be addressed in their implementation, and demonstrate their learning through a variety of research study- and system-design activities. Formerly offered as a special topics course.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5509
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 3702 (3) Cognitive Science
This course examines the ways in which our current understanding of human thinking is both illuminated and challenged by the evolving techniques and ideas of artificial intelligence and computer science. Our collective understanding of minds has both biological and computational roots that have been revolutionized over the past half century by themes originating in fields like cognitive psychology, machine learning, neuroscience, evolutionary psychology, and game theory, among others. This course will focus on both the larger, historical arc of these changes, as well as current research directions and controversies.
Requisites: Restricted to INFO majors with 57-180 credits.

INFO 4001 (1) Information Science Portfolio and Professional Development
Facilitates career development through the disciplined reflection about and presentation of one's work using a variety of modalities across a variety of media. Students will be introduced to individuals and organizations representing a diversity of career paths in information science.
Requisites: Restricted to Information Science (INFO) majors and minors.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
INFO 4601 (3) Ethical and Policy Dimensions of Information and Technology
Explores ethical and legal complexities of information and communication technology. By combining real-world inquiry with creative speculation, students will probe everyday ethical dilemmas they face as digital consumers, creators, and coders, as well as relevant policy. Explores themes such as privacy, intellectual property, social justice, free speech, artificial intelligence, social media and ethical lessons from science fiction.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5601
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4602 (3) Information Visualization
Explores the design, development, and evaluation of information visualizations. Covers visual representations of data and provides hands-on experience with using and building exploratory tools and data narratives. Students create visualizations for a variety of domains and applications, working with stakeholders and their data. Covers interactive systems, user-centered and graphic design, perception, data storytelling and analysis, and insight generation. Programming knowledge is strongly encouraged.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5602
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4603 (3) Survey Research Design
Familiarizes students with practical and theoretical topics in using survey methods for conducting information science research. Through discussion and real world assignments, students will learn when and why to use surveys for collecting data; effective, efficient and ethical approaches to maximizing response; sampling issues; development of valid items and scales; and how to implement, analyze and report on survey data collection.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5603
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4604 (3) Applied Machine Learning
Introduces algorithms and tools for building intelligent computational systems. Methods will be surveyed for classification, regression and clustering in the context of applications such as document filtering and image recognition. Students will learn the theoretical underpinnings of common algorithms (drawing from mathematical disciplines including statistics and optimization) as well as the skills to apply machine learning in practice.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5604
Requisites: Requires prerequisite courses of INFO 2201 or INFO 2301 or CSCI 2270 (all minimum grade C). Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Junior or Senior).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4605 (3) Ethnographic Research in Applied Settings
 Demonstrates the power of ethnography as an investigative approach that is useful in design, evaluation and question formation for information scientists across all workforce sectors. Teaches students how to be keen observers of the unusual as well as the everyday to reveal meaningful insights that elaborate information science projects.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5605
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4606 (3) Critical Technical Practice
Surveys design theory and methods that can be used to question relationships between technology, culture, and the environment. Students will discuss readings and synthesize those readings through design exercises. The course will equip students with resources for thinking more critically and creatively about design and possible future human-technology relationships.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5606, ATLS 4606, and ATLS 5606
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4607 (3) Software Engineering for Data-Centered Systems
Explores design and engineering of systems for data storage and analysis. Introduces fundamental development concepts used in real-world data systems. By combining software engineering with knowledge from data science and human-centered computing, prepares students to develop systems, interpret and modify codebases, understand modern concepts for managing data at scale, and work in teams to create cutting-edge applications for consumer use.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5607
Requisites: Requires prerequisites of INFO 2201 or CSCI 2270 (all minimum grade C). Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Junior or Senior)
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4608 (3) Community-Based Design
Surveys techniques in cooperative design with community members as collaborators rather than subjects. Students will explore approaches such as participatory design and co-design. Students will work in teams in partnership with community stakeholders to create tools, experiences, or systems that meet the needs of communities, contribute to social change, and/or lead to advancing academic knowledge.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5608
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4609 (3) User-Centered Design
Surveys the theoretical and practical foundations of human-computer interaction and user-centered design. Students learn theories of interaction (including cognitive, organizational, collaborative, and task-based approaches), user interface design techniques, design guidelines, and usability testing in the context of developing technology. Course content is explored through a variety of interfaces (desktop, mobile, touch, vision, audio, etc.) and contexts (personal, organizational, cross-cultural, etc.).
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5609
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade
INFO 4611 (3) Ubiquitous Computing Experience Design
Introduces the field of ubiquitous computing, including sensors, ambient displays, tangibles, mobility, location awareness and context awareness. These topics are explored from a user-centered design perspectives, focusing on how a situated models of computing affect requirements gathering, interaction design, prototyping and evaluation. Students gain mastery with contemporary "UbiComp" technologies and learn to incorporate them into a user-centered design process.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5611
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4613 (3) Network Science
Introduces theories and methods for analyzing relational data in social, information, and other complex networks. Students will understand the processes and theories explaining network structure and dynamics as well as develop skills analyzing and visualizing real-world network data. No math or statistics training required, but course will assume familiarity with Python.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5613
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of INFO 3402 (minimum grade C-). Restricted to students with 55-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4620 (3) Race and Technology
This course is designed with the understanding that race and racial inequality have been central to how societies and societal systems of power have been shaped and reshaped over time. Students will critically examine how race is created by and through sociotechnical systems. Students will explore how the design, implementation, and use of digital platforms and their data continue to perpetuate and embody white, cisgender, heteronormative systems of power. This course will cover a wide range of foundational and emergent scholarship, giving voice to Scholars of Color, providing students with a foundation through which they can continue to critique and explore sociotechnical and other societal arrangements more broadly.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5620
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).

INFO 4651 (3) Fundamental Concepts in Data Science
This intensive course provides a general understanding of the mathematical concepts required for success in data science. This course will cover a wide range of mathematical tools in data science including an overview of calculus and linear algebra along with selected topics from numerical analysis. The course will also explore computational implementations of these ideas. This course provides a bridge for students without these advanced math concepts to learn to apply them within a data science career or within a graduate program in data science.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5651
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of INFO 1301 or ANTH 4000 or GEOG 3023 or PSCI 2075 or PSYC 2111 or SOCY 2061 (minimum grade D-). Restricted to juniors and seniors.

INFO 4652 (3) Statistical Programming in R
This intensive course covers foundational data science tools and techniques in the R programming language, including acquiring, cleaning, exploring, and analyzing data, programming, and conducting reproducible research. The course will emphasize the use of data management best practices such as the tidyverse toolkit in R.
Equivalent - Duplicate Degree Credit Not Granted: INFO 5652
Requisites: Requires prerequisite course of INFO 1301 or ANTH 4000 or GEOG 3023 or PSCI 2075 or PSYC 2111 or SOCY 2061 (minimum grade D-). Restricted to juniors and seniors.

INFO 4700 (3) Senior Capstone
Provides senior level INFO students an opportunity to demonstrate the culmination of their learning in the major by designing and implementing a significant information system or developing a research question, typically in response to a problem of personal interest related to or informed by their secondary area of specialization. Reinforces project planning, public presentation and ethic skills.
Requisites: Restricted to Information Science (INFO) majors only with a minimum of 90 hours.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4800 (1-3) Leadership Practicum in Information Science
Equips students for taking on leadership roles in the interdisciplinary context of information science. Students will learn to facilitate learning among students with diverse backgrounds and expertise, developing communication and mentoring skills and gaining exposure to a variety of learner-centered design strategies and pedagogical approaches. Enrollment is by invitation and at the discretion of the instructor.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 12.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to Information Science (INFO) majors only.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4841 (1-4) Undergraduate Independent Study
Undergraduate independent study.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 6.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to Information Science (INFO) majors only.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4871 (3) Special Topics
Special topics.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 15.00 total credit hours. Allows multiple enrollment in term.
Requisites: Restricted to students with 57-180 credits (Juniors or Seniors).
Grading Basis: Letter Grade

INFO 4900 (1-6) Research Experience in Information Science
Provides research experience in information science. Students will contribute to the construction of new knowledge, helping to answer current research questions or to solve contemporary problems in the domain. Enrollment is by invitation and discretion of the advising faculty member.
Repeatable: Repeatable for up to 12.00 total credit hours.
Grading Basis: Letter Grade