Assignment 2: i203 – Social and Organizational Issues of Information

Overview Notes:

- Assignment 2 is due at the beginning of class on Thursday, March 20th, 2008.
- Bring **two** stapled copies of your assignment to class.
- Email your assignment as an attachment to each member of your study group before class on March 20th, 2008.
- You will return your feedback to other group members (and us) on Thursday, April 3rd.
- Papers should be double-spaced, 12-point font, double-sided (if possible)

The assignment below requires that you choose a topic for your final paper. You may well change your mind about your topic after this assignment – we will not hold you to the one you choose here. However, this is your opportunity to develop a specific idea and get feedback on it. You will not be graded on whether your arguments are 'right' or 'wrong' by any standard, or based on whether we agree with you. Rather, an excellent assignment will be clear, complete, specific, and will demonstrate that you have done the thinking and preliminary research necessary to flesh out your topic and investigate related literature.

Part I (25%)

Write several paragraphs (approximately 250 words) that clearly and specifically summarize the following: (1) your topic area; (2) the research problem and questions you will address; (3) the justification(s) for your research problem/question(s), and; (4) the arguments you will ultimately make about them. Put an emphasis on being detailed, specific, and narrowing the scope of your ideas as much as possible. We do not expect you to have finalized justifications and arguments to the degree you will have when you write your final paper, and we understand they will likely evolve. However you should, in as much detail as you can, address the 'So What?' question – why is your chosen research problem an important and interesting one (justification), and what will you say about it that adds to our understanding of the issues (arguments)?

Part II (25%)

Complete a first-pass literature search in your topic area(s) to identify research that you will draw upon to explain, justify, and support your arguments. Choose at least 5 key papers (*not on the class syllabus*). For each paper provide its citation, and in a few sentences explain why you expect the paper to be relevant to your topic, and how you may use it in your arguments. We do not expect you to have fully read each of the papers, but you should have skimmed through them enough to evaluate in some detail why they may be relevant and how you may use them. You response should be approximately 1.5 – 2 pages.

Part III (25%)

Write a rough outline of your paper. Be as specific as you can be in formulating your justifications and arguments in outline form. Again, we expect that your ideas will change. The focus of your outline should be not so much what you will ultimately conclude in your paper, but what issues you will address, and what sections will need to be in your paper to accomplish your goal. Your outline should be approximately 1 page, and take the following general form (of course, any similar outline format is acceptable):

    I.   Major Topic Area / Justification / Argument 1
         a. Sub-topic 1
                i. Explanation(s) of justification or argument within sub topic
         b. Sub-topic 2
                i. …
    II.   Major Topic Area / Justification / Argument 2
         a. …

Part IV (25%)

When you turn in your assignment on March 20th, bring **two** copies to turn in. You will exchange assignments with your fellow study group members via email (again, due before class on March 20th).

For Part IV, you will provide comments and feedback on the other papers from your group. Type up your comments (separately) for each group member. Bring two copies of your comments for each paper on Thursday, April 3rd. You will give one copy to the author and one copy to us. As long as you have made an effort to provide substantive, detailed feedback to your fellow students, you will do well on this part of the assignment.