ASSIGNMENT 5
EVALUATING AN INFORMATION SYSTEM
Due Thursday, December 8, 30 grade points

OVERVIEW
    This is a research paper in which you do a comprehensive study of an information system. You will apply all the material we've learned in class to describe, analyze, and evaluate the system. Consider the data structure and organization, the authority of data, and the success in meeting user information requirements. To substantiate your evaluation, you will perform a simple user test and a compare to a similar system.

Licensed database

        These consist of information aggregators such as ProQuest, WilsonWeb, LexisNexis, or specific databases such as Historical Newspapers or In the First Person. These databases license content (usually) from other publishers and charge a subscription fee to the library. You can see a contents page for King Library's databases at http://library.calstate.edu/sanjose/. Databases are increasingly full-text, so users can go directly to the information instead of being pointed to it as in a traditional library catalog. License agreements are customized to each library, for example, Occidental College (small private college) will have a different license than UCLA (large public university) and will receive different content, a different interface, different user permissions, and of course, a different price tag. *If you choose this option, be sure to state what library you are viewing it through, for example, "The Lexis/Nexis viewed through the SJSU King Library interface."*

        I highly recommend you to check your topic with me before you begin. I may be able to steer you in the right direction and offer special topics to consider for your choice.

DETAILS
Your paper should include the following:

€ *Description:* purpose, user group, description of content (size, intellectual level, authority), search engine

€ *Analysis:* your own analysis as well as scholarly literature or personal interviews.

€ *Comparison:* Compare system with a similar information retrieval system. You can make your paper a comparative study and describe/compare/test two systems equally, or you can concentrate on one single system and describe the second system in less detail as a point of reference.

€ *User Test:* Create a user test for your system. Find three people willing to be your testers. Try to find testers who represent a variety of potential users, for example, for a public library OPAC you might pick a teenager, an elder, and a librarian. For a medical database,

you might pick a physician or nurse, a person with urgent medical needs, and a high school student doing a report.

Formulate 3-4 questions that would be appropriate for your database, and that represent a variety of information needs. Be sure to perform the test yourself before you give it to your testers. Sample questions for PubMed, http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/ might be:

- What is the generic name for Fosamax?

- What clinical studies have been undertaken on Tamoxifen in the United States since 2005?

- How many articles can you find on H1N1 published before 2010?

Give questions to each tester, have them write down on paper the initial search terms (or take screen shots), and ask them to continue searching till they get results they are satisfied with. Ask them about their experience based in the criteria for evaluation above. Describe the results of your test strategy, including both the success of their searching and their personal satisfaction with the search experience.

€ *Evaluation.* Include efficiency, effectiveness, authority of information, completeness of information, up to dateness if relevant, search engine, user friendliness, and appropriateness to designated user group. Include the results of the test and comparison in your evaluation.

PRODUCT AND DUE DATE
Suggested length is 3000-5000 words. Use APA style, concise writing, and clear presentation. Subheadings, tables and screen shots are encouraged. If you'd like to embed video or audio tools as illustrations, that is fine.

Due the last day of class, December 8, at 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time. Absolutely no late papers accepted, but early submissions are welcome. 30 grade points.

Submission Guidelines

This is a graduate level research paper and the only assignment where I require a formal writing style. Here is the suggested format, and my requirements for APA compliance.

Document format
Title page, Running head, margins, spacing – follow APA.
Type font, type size, format for headings – your choice
Required non APA: footer must include your full name, course number, section, and semester, e.g. [your name], 202-16, Spring 2011

Sites for finding database reviews

Charleston Advisor

Choice Reviews Online

Google Scholar user studies

Google : use site:.edu for compression

JSTOR vs. Project MUSE

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Abstract

Abstract. A summary of the entire paper in a single paragraph. Follow APA Body of the paper should include the following sections. Though this is a common way to organize your paper into sections, it is not the only way. Include all the information below, but organize it in the way that best presents your research.

JSTOR vs. Project MUSE

Introduction - Introduce the topic and describe why it is important and/or why you chose it.

In this paper, I will describe, analyze and evaluate the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's JSTOR digital journal database as well as the similar digital journal database, Project MUSE, viewed through the SJSU King Library interface. I decided to compare and contrast two digital journal databases for this database evaluation assignment for a few reasons. My undergraduate educational background is in English and History. I have used both of these databases before on several papers.

The user group, as described by the JSTOR website, are scholars, researchers and students. The user population includes people from 156 countries in 7,027 institutions.   The bulk of institutions are in the United States and International countries, not including African countries and developing nations which make up fourteen percent.

I Examined JSTOR as viewed from San Jose State University's King Library. The first thing I noted was the main page has an alphabetical list of disciplines like Asian studies, and folklore. Executing a search for "catacombs" I received a large number of page its, most of I have access to all of the content. Selecting one, I am confronted by a pop-up requesting that I accept JSTOR's terms and conditions. The article opens in a different window. The page it opens to is a citation page that gives a stable URL with other information. It is a confusing presentation since it's not immediately obvious to even an experienced user like myself that I am to scroll down to see the PDF of the article. I see the stable URL and click on it. It takes me to a particle section of the article I want. The pop out window does not have a back button, so I am forced to close it and click it to open again. I modify the search, to see how upto date the information is. My original search results were 1730. When I chose articles from the current year going back ten, I got 178 results. You can choose to look at a page scan, a PDF or a summary of each result. The result page shows each entry with it's title, author, journal, volume, year and pages. Some of them also have a "quick view" which shows a section of the article. You can search within your results, change how the results are sorted and displayed. You can show all results or only results with images, all content or only content you can access. You can select articles to save, email, export, or track citations but you must register for a MyJSTOR account in order to do so.

- o Evaluate the database for presentation, accuracy, up-to-dateness, and authority of content.

- o Explain licensing for this system. Access to JSTOR varies depending the type of material being accessed and whether there is an affiliation with an institution that participates in JSTOR. JSTOR's terms and conditions of service and

content-specific terms and conditions of use elaborate further. Institutional Licensee, which include: educational non-profit and for-profit such as colleges, universities, secondary schools. These institutions maintain a valid Institutional Participation Agreement with JSTOR. The Institutional Licensee also includes currently enrolled students (including distance education students); on an ad hoc basis, researchers affiliated and /or visiting under the terms of an agreement with the Institutional Licensee; full and part-time staff; an on-site users physically present on the Institutional Licensee's premises. In other words, all license agreements from JSTOR allow for walk-in use of the resource. Individual members of scholarly societies can enter into an agreement with JSTOR for access to specific Content via the JSTOR Platform. This is also know as Individual Access. Other users of specific content agreed in writing by or on behalf of JSTOR include users of: data for research, the publisher sales service where JSTOR facilitates users' purchase of content from publishers, and individual researchers not affiliated with a JSTOR participating institution, publication, or scholarly soceiity, individual users of Early Journal Content. The type of content varies as does the permitted use of said content.

o   Evaluate the search interface for user friendliness.

o   Find out how content is selected, how comprehensive it is, how scholarly. JSTOR has licensed scholarly publications, print artifacts, and digital files in their archive. The participating publishers are over 700 from more than 25 countries and include university presses, commercial publishers, scholarly and professional societies, university departments, independent organizations, museums, and libraries. Archival journal titles are selected by examining several points: the historical significance of the title, recommendations from scholars and librarians, citation analysis, number of institutions subscribers around the world, relevance to a scholarly audience. JSTOR also applies this approach to other content types and special collections.

o   Find out if there are any user studies on the database.

   Find out what instructional materials the library offers and how effective they are.
   Description – Describe the two information systems
   Analysis
   Comparison
   User test
   Evaluation
   Summary
Appendix (optional) – if you want to include user test, statistics, etc.
References – Follow APA

Notes
   Cite sources within the text following APA

Use screenshots to illustrate points. Include them in the text as figures. Tables can be handy to illustrate comparative data. Students use them to summarize results from user tests and demographic statistics of a user population.