

## Syllabus

**Department:** Division of Library and Information Science

**Course Number and Title:** LIS 205: Introduction to Information Sources and Services

### Bulletin Description

Introduction to the terminology, concepts, and practices used in information service with emphasis on the content, use, and evaluation of print and electronic resources.

**Credit:** 3 semester hours

### Course Description

Introduction to the terminology, concepts, and practices used in the provision of information services that effectively meet user needs in a variety of settings. Special emphasis will be placed on the reference process as well as the content, organization, use, and evaluation of print and electronic resources. Additionally, the sources, policies, technologies, and systems that support access to and retrieval of information central to reference services will be discussed.

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Co-requisite(s):** None

### Course Objectives

As outcomes of the course, students will be able to facilitate the articulation of a philosophy of reference service that includes a discussion of ethical and other issues relevant to the provision of reference/information services. Specifically, students will:

- a. gain an understanding of the philosophy of reference service, traditional and virtual, which are grounded in the ethics and principles relevant to the provision of information services.
- b. gain an understanding of the policies and procedures that underpin the provision of reference service, the role reference service, as well as those that guide information professionals.
- c. be able to demonstrate effective written communication skills and be able to apply appropriate communication skills in one-on-one reference interviews and instructional settings.
- d. gain an understanding of the sources, policies, technologies, and systems that support access, retrieval, evaluation, and management of information central to reference services.
- e. be able to apply standard evaluative criteria to electronic reference sources and technologies in order to determine the fitness of sources to meet particular institutional and user information needs.

Updated 5/10/22

- f. gain an understanding of the role of information technology in facilitating reference services and providing access to information sources, as well as how to utilize new knowledge to improve information systems and services for the user.
- g. be able to demonstrate proficiency in retrieving and analyzing information from general reference sources (print/digital), including designing basic search strategies for users.
- h. gain an understanding of learning and information behavior theories, the instructional development process, including lesson planning and delivery, evaluation methods as well as their application in libraries.
- i. gain an understanding of effective human resource management as it applies to the provision of reference service.

**Program Goals and Outcomes**

The course contributes towards satisfying the following MS LIS program goal/s:

- 5A) Demonstrate knowledge and usage of the concepts, principles, and techniques of reference and user services, as well as retrieval techniques and evaluation methods, that provide access to relevant and accurate recorded knowledge and information from diverse sources to all patrons.

**Units of Instruction**

Unit	Title
1	Preliminaries Group project overview
2	Course overview Intro to Information Services Reference Services Past/Present
3	Information Sources: Part I
4	Information Sources: Part II
5	Philosophy and Ethics of Information Services
6	Communication
7	Introduction to Searching Search Strategy
8	Digital Reference Reference Interview/Interaction
9	Information Sources for Virtual Reference
10	LIS and the Evolution of the Web Internet as a Reference Tool
11	Managing/Evaluating Information Services
12	Instruction: Part I
13	Instruction: Part II
14	Wrap-up:

## Learning Activities

### *Participation: weekly discussion board posts and activities*

This class is designed to be highly interactive; therefore, students are expected to actively participate in weekly discussions and activities. In addition to the readings assigned each week, students will listen to and/or view all other assigned content (i.e., presentations, videos, and/or podcasts). Students will respond to other students as instructed. These responses should also be thoughtful and contribute to the development of robust and respectful discussion.

### *Information Source Analysis*

Students evaluate two similar reference sources by using/applying a well-known framework, which is comprised of eleven factors. The final product is a 6 to 8 page analysis of their evaluation.

### *Search Strategy Analysis*

Students are given eight research questions for which they must identify the source that would be the best starting point when beginning the search process. For one of the questions, they must develop a search strategy, carry out the search, and provide an analysis of their search results.

### *Group Project: LibGuide*

In groups, students create a LibGuide (a compendium of authoritative sources in a variety of formats) on a subject of interest to their group. They are required to build their libguides using the *Springshare Platform for Library Schools*, a "clone" of the *Springshare SaaS* platform that is made available to LIS programs. It provides students the opportunity to experiment with all the bells and whistles the *Springshare LibApps* platform has to offer. Referred to as a "librarian-first platform for a digital-first world," the *Springshare* platform is comprised of several products (i.e., software services), including *LibWizard*, *LibCal*, and *LibAnswers*. You will be using LibGuides for this project. Students are provided a *Springshare* account.

## Assessment

### 1. Course-Level Assessment

The assigned weekly readings and activities are designed to reinforce course objectives through discussion board posts/responses (i.e., active discussion); students are expected to consistently contribute to this shared pool of knowledge. Discussion board posts/responses are assessed based demonstrated knowledge and/or understanding of the topics, identification of key points, and ability to present these coherently.

- a) One of the keys to success in finding the information you need is knowledge of the most appropriate (i.e., best) resources – both print and digital – to utilize.

The *Information Source Analysis* provides an opportunity for students to explore concepts discussed in the course and to apply these using/applying the evaluation framework to which they were previously introduced.

- b) The *Search Strategy Analysis* provides an opportunity for students to develop familiarity with web-based digital information sources - and to apply the concepts covered in the course in a practical way. They are required to explore the search capabilities of the source they select as they each execute the search strategy they developed. Students are required to analyze the results and present their findings in a presentation. They are encouraged to look beyond PowerPoint and try Prezi or similar presentation software.
- c) The group project, *The LibGuide*, provides an opportunity for students to explore the key concepts presented in the course; thus, it supports all course objectives. For example, students must evaluate each source selected in order to determine whether or not it is authoritative and appropriate for the selected audience. In addition determining the viability and authority of sources for inclusion in the libguide, students are required to include an annotation for each source that includes: a very brief description of the source; its primary use; its strengths; its unique features; and its weaknesses. For databases, students also include recommended search strategies as well as any tips and tricks users of the libguide will find useful. Proofreading, attention to grammar spelling, consistent application APA citation style/formatting count. The assignment is also flexible, allowing students to choose a topic of interest on which to focus.

## 2. Program-Level Assessment

The MS LIS program is reviewed every seven years for continued accreditation by the American Library Association's (ALA) Committee on Accreditation. The program's most recent accreditation was in the Fall 2018 term. As part of this accreditation process, all students, faculty, alumni, and employers participate in periodic assessments, providing feedback for improving the MS LIS program. The two assessments below apply to every course in the program.

### a) Faculty-Selected Assessment

Over a four-year period each course in the MS LIS program is assessed by the instructor to determine how well students are learning the program goal/s related to the course. For each course, faculty select one or more artifacts (e.g. assignment, exam, or semester project) as a representative measure of student learning of the related program goal/s. At the end of the course, the faculty member completes a course artifact assessment form describing the class' performance on the artifact, and any course revisions prescribed as a result. Sample artifacts with their respective reviews are included as well.

In LIS 205, The Libguide project is used as a representative measure of student learning of the related program goal/s.

b) Student-Selected Assessment

The end-of-program assessment is an e-portfolio consisting of student-selected artifacts (assignments, discussion posts, projects, etc.) from their courses as evidence of satisfying each of the eight program goals. For each program goal, students write a reflection, which describes the relationship of the artifact to the respective goal and their learning from the artifact.

In LIS 205, the LibGuide project is suggested as the course artifact should students decide to use their work in this course as evidence of satisfying the related program goal/s. This is because of the comprehensive nature of the project.

### **Grading Scheme**

The course grade is determined from the following activities. The percentage in parenthesis is that of the overall course grade.

- a) Participation/Discussion (30%)
- b) Information Source Analysis (20%)
- c) Search Strategy Analysis (20%)
- d) LibGuide/Group Project (30%)

### **Bibliography**

- Bibel, B., & Yukso, S. (2010). Encyclopedia update: 2010. *Booklist*, 82-86.
- Bulson, C. (2010). Online dictionaries. *Booklist*.
- Cowgill, A. A., Feldmann, L., & Bowles, A. R. (2008). Virtual reference interviewing and neutral questioning. *Technology in Libraries: Essays in Honor of Anne Grodzins Lipow*.
- Dervin, B., & Dewdney, P. (1986). Neutral questioning: A new approach to the reference interview. *Research Quarterly*, 25(4), 506-513.
- Dewdney, P., & Michell, G. (1996). Oranges and peaches: Understanding communication accidents in the reference interview. *RQ*, 35(4), 1-11.
- Dougan, K. (2014). "YouTube Has Changed Everything"? Music Faculty, Librarians, and Their Use and Perceptions of YouTube. *College & Research Libraries*, 75(4), 575-589.
- Francoeur, S. (2013). Reference back talk: Testing, testing: Virtual reference UX. *Library Journal*, 138(10), 142.
- Janes, J. (2005). Internet librarian. *American Libraries*, 76.
- Kirkwood, H. P., Jr, & Kirkwood, M. C. (2011). EconLit and Google Scholar go head-to-head. *Online*, 38-41.
- Kumasi, K. (2007). Critical Inquiry: Library Media Specialists as Change Agents. *School Library Media Activities Monthly*, 23(9).

Updated 5/10/22

- Laverty, C., Reed, B., & Lee, E. (2008). The "I'm feeling lucky syndrome": Teacher-candidates' knowledge of web searching strategies. *Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*.
- Lupien, P. (2006). Virtual reference in the age of pop-up blockers, firewalls, and service pack 2. *Online*, 30(4).
- Pack, T. (2004). Specialized encyclopedias for in-depth information. *Information Today*, 21(5), 29.
- Smith, L. C. (2009). Reference services. *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences*, 4485-4491.
- Tucker, J. C., & Torrence, M. (2004). Collection development for new librarians: Advice from the trenches. *Library Collections, Acquisitions, & Technical Services*, 28, 397-409.
- Vinyard, M., Mullally, C., & Colvin, J. (2017). Why do students seek help in an age of DIY? Using a qualitative approach to look beyond statistics. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 56(4), 257-267.
- Young, C. L. (n.d.). To be discontinued: A virtual reference cautionary tale. *The Reference Librarian*, 54(2), 175-176.
- Zhuo, F., Love, M., Norwood, S., & Massia, K. (2006). Applying RUSA guidelines in the analysis of chat reference transcripts. *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 13(1), 75-88.
- Zino, E. (2009). Let's fix virtual reference. *Library Journal*, 134(2), 94.
- Zhitomirsky-Geffet, M., & Blau, M. (2017). Cross-generational analysis of information seeking behavior of smartphone users, *ASLIB Journal of Information Management*, 69(6), 721-739.

**Instructional Time Requirements: 150 hours for 3 credits (10 hours per week for our 15 week semester)**

- Asynchronous or synchronous Lecture
- Assigned weekly reading
- Weekly assignments (individual and group)
- Active participation in online discussions
- Research for semester-long projects (term papers, projects)
- Presentations (online or face to face)
- Academic Service-Learning projects (where appropriate)

Revised 9/6/2021

Updated 5/10/22