

Syllabus

Department: Division of Library and Information Science

Course Number and Title: LIS 302: Genealogical Sources & Services

Bulletin Description

This course will enable students to conduct and assist researchers in family history research using a wide variety of genealogical resources.

Credit: 3 semester hours.

Course Description *(from the instructor's format syllabus)*

The objective of this course is to learn how to guide researchers in genealogical research. Students will accomplish this through doing their own genealogical research and reflecting on the experience in writing. Additionally, students will cultivate an in-depth knowledge of resources available to and about a specific country, community, and ethnic group.

Prerequisite(s): None

Co-requisite(s): None

Course Objectives

As outcomes of the course, students will/will be able to:

1. Demonstrate their gained understanding of the genealogical research process by presenting their own genealogy research findings through a family tree and family history narrative.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in retrieving and analyzing information from genealogy resources in both print and electronic formats through the creation of a family tree, family group sheets, and a family history narrative.
3. Gain confidence and experience in conducting a reference interview specific to genealogy research and resources.
4. Demonstrate effective written communication skills and be able to apply appropriate communication during one-on-one reference interview and instruction.
5. Discuss and apply the ethics and principles relevant to genealogy reference service.
6. Apply standard evaluative criteria to print and electronic resources in order to determine the fitness of sources to meet the particular user's needs.
7. Become familiar with significant genealogy resources and organizations as well as with local history collections.
8. Conduct in-depth research of the available genealogical resources about a specific individual or ethnic group of their choice.

Program Goals and Outcomes

Revised July 1, 2021

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

1A. Demonstrate knowledge of the ethics, values, and foundational principles and the role of library and information professionals in the promotion of democratic and legal principles and intellectual freedom.

1D. Demonstrate effective communication techniques (verbal and written) used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.

3A. Understand the principles involved and the developmental, descriptive, and evaluative skills needed in the organization, representation and retrieval of recorded knowledge and information resources.

4A. Acquire, apply, analyze and assess information, communication, assistive, and other technological skills related to resources, service delivery, professionalism, efficacy, and cost efficiency of current technologies and relevant technological improvements.

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.

5B. Understand and demonstrate ability to interact successfully with individuals of all ages and groups to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance in their use of recorded knowledge and information, including information literacy techniques and methods.

5C. Understand and apply the principles of assessment towards communities, user preferences, and services and resources, as well as promoting methods of advocacy through development and services.

Units of Instruction

Unit	Title
1	Pedigree Charts
2	Defining Genealogy Verses Family History
3	Beginning Your Research
4	Keeping it all Organized
5	Etiquette & Ethics
6	The Family History Interview
7	Genealogical Proof Standard

8	Census Records
9	Vital Records
10	Government Created Records
11	Community Created Resources
12	Ethnicities and Cultural Identities
13	DNA Testing & Genetic Genealogy
14	Final Project, Evaluation and Conclusion

Learning Activities

Students interact with the instructor and peers through the course web site in Canvas. Assignments consist of posts to the discussion board, an individual research/reflection journal, individual exercises focused on genealogical forms and the U.S. Census, and a final project called The Ancestor's Biography. The Ancestor's Biography is an individually written, 1000-2000 word, well-documented biography on a relative of the student's choice with approval by the professor. The paper incorporates facts gleaned from a wide variety of genealogical resources and local history information sources and requires Chicago style footnotes.

Aside from discussion boards which require peer interaction, students work independently using genealogical utilities such as FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com to expand their personal family trees beyond knowledge acquired from family oral histories. Once settled on a subject for their ancestor's biography, the student's research becomes focused on the life and times of a relative who died before they were born. During the research process, the students communicate their findings to the professor through the research/reflection journal. They present their final projects for peer review through a discussion board.

The purpose of the course project is to provide a practical experience in genealogical research. Genealogical research requires continual learning. This type of research is specific to a vast array of time periods and places. Every family is different, every community and culture maintains records to varying degrees of quality, and not everything is available digitally online. Thus one must learn as they research about what records were created, why they were created, what records are available, and how to access those records. By conducting one's own family history research, the student will become familiar with how to use the most common types of genealogy resources. The student can then apply that knowledge when assisting other genealogy researchers.

Assessment

1. Course-Level Assessment
 - a) The discussions, research/reflection journal, individual exercises, and a final project are designed to reinforce one or more of the course objectives.

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 302 Genealogical Sources & Services, the semester's Ancestor's Biography Project is used as a representative measure of student learning of the related program goal.

- 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 goals of the MS LIS program. 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 302 Genealogical Sources & Services, the semester's Ancestor's Biography Project is suggested as the course artifact if students decide to use their work in this course as evidence of satisfying the related program goal. This is because of the comprehensive nature of the project.

Grading Scheme

The course grade will be determined from the following activities. The percent in parentheses is activities percent of the overall course grade.

- a) Discussion (25%)
- b) Research/Reflection Journal (25%)
- c) Family Tree & Group Sheets (5%)
- d) Census Exercise (5%)
- e) Final Project: The Ancestor's Biography (40%)

Bibliography

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- Board for Certification of Genealogists. (2000). *The BCG genealogical standards manual* (Millennium ed.). Orem, Utah: Ancestry Pub.
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- FamilySearch.org (n.d.). www.familysearch.org
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- Mills, E. S., & Mills, G. B. (1984). The Genealogist's Assessment of Alex Haley's Roots. *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*, 72(1). Retrieved from <https://www.historicpathways.com/download/rootsngsq.pdf>
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- Smolenyak, M. (2009). *Who do you think you are?: The essential guide to tracing your family history*. New York: Viking.
- Szucs, L. D., & Luebking, S. H. (2006). *The Source: A guidebook to American genealogy* (3rd ed.). Provo, UT: Ancestry.

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)