

Valdosta State University  
Master of Library and Information Science Program  
Summer 2012

**Syllabus: MLIS 7100 Information Sources and Services**

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**Catalog Description:** An introduction to concepts and processes in reference and information science and to fundamental information sources and services provided by libraries and information organizations. This overview of the reference function includes the history and future of reference service, question negotiation, information needs analysis, effective research strategies, evaluation of information sources in various formats, and ethics of information services.

**Draft MLIS Program Objectives (PO)**

(Submitted to Graduate Executive Committee Fall 2011)

Graduates of the MLIS Program will:

- PO 1. Perform administrative, service, and technical functions of professional practice in libraries and information centers.
- PO 2. Use existing and emerging technologies to meet needs in libraries and information centers.
- PO 3. Integrate relevant research to enhance their work in libraries and information centers.
- PO 4. Demonstrate professionalism in their work in libraries and information centers.

**Course Learning Outcomes**

Students will:

- LO 1. Apply the principles identified with competent question negotiation as outlined in the most current *Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers* (PO 1, PO 4).
- LO 2. Describe the physical environments for both in-person and virtual reference transactions conducive to delivering effective information services (PO 2, PO 2).
- LO 3. Classify information resources by their distinguishing characteristics (PO 1).
- LO 4. Consult the sources most relevant for keeping reference collections up to date (PO 3).
- LO 5. Retrieve information based on the needs of the user and on availability of resources (PO 1).
- LO 6. Devise search strategies consistent with how a resource organizes information (PO 3).
- LO 7. Evaluate both print and online resources based on criteria used in professional reviews (PO 3).
- LO 8. Apply the central research findings and research literature related to reference services (PO 3).
- LO 9. Produce a user aid for a targeted audience (PO 1).

### **Course Format**

This is an online course. All course meetings and activities will be conducted through BlazeView, Valdosta State University's electronic course management system. There are no required face to face meetings.

### **Required course texts and resources**

Cassell, Kay Ann, and Uma Hiremath (2011). *Reference and Information Services in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: An Introduction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, revised edition. ISBN: 978-1-55570-740-8

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* [APA Style Manual], 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (2009). If you have the first printing of the 6<sup>th</sup> edition, be sure to get the corrections from the APA website.

- Basics of APA style are available at the Purdue University Online Writing Lab [OWL] website: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/> and at <http://www.apastyle.org> but students will be held to the standards given in the actual APA Style Manual.

Weekly readings from the LIS professional and academic literature as indicated in the detailed reading list. Articles will be available via GALILEO Scholar, the Odum Library's e-journals collection or on Odum Library e-reserve, or links will be provided in the course website.

**Note:** Please be aware of the VSU MLIS policy that prohibits use of VSU's Interlibrary Loan Service for obtaining textbooks at [http://www.valdosta.edu/mlis/student\\_resources/documents/ILL\\_Textbooks.pdf](http://www.valdosta.edu/mlis/student_resources/documents/ILL_Textbooks.pdf)

### **Learning Outcome Measures:**

Brief overviews. Full details and grading criteria are available in the Assignments folder in the course website.

#### Discussion board –10 points

You will participate in a series of threaded discussions related to course readings.

#### Reference Department Tour (LO 1, LO 2, LO 8) – 10 points

You will visit the reference department of a library or information center other than the one where you work to examine the print and electronic collections, talk with a reference staff member who holds an MLIS degree and who is NOT a personal friend or work colleague of yours, and observe reference transactions. In your paper you will describe what you observed and what you learned from the reference librarian.

#### Search Strategies Exercise (LO 3, LO 5, LO 6) – 15 points

Using the tools and techniques presented in class you will plan a series of online searches and document your strategies according to the guidelines provided.

#### Reference Interviews Report (LO 1, LO 2, LO 8) – 20 points

You will conduct two reference interviews, one face-to-face with someone who is not in this class in which you are the interviewer; and one via an online reference service in which you are the client (the interviewee) and you ask a question. You will finish the assignment by writing a reflective essay.

#### Question Answering Exercises (LO 5, LO 6, LO 7) – 30 points

You will find answers to assigned questions using relevant resources and techniques and confirm the reliability of your sources. You will present the answers following the specified format.

Question Set 1 – Ready Reference, Encyclopedias, and Dictionaries– 10 points

Question Set 2 – Biography, Genealogy, and Geography – 10 points

Question Set 3 – Business, Government, Law and Medicine – 10 points

#### Pathfinder (LO 4, LO 7, LO 9) – 15 points

Create a pathfinder on a specific topic aimed at a specific user group. You must select your topic from the list provided in the course website.

### **Course Grades**

Students in this course are expected to

- 1) Read or view all assigned materials;
- 2) Participate in class activities;
- 3) Visit a library to observe its reference services and examine reference sources;
- 4) Submit all projects on time and according to the format designated by the instructor;
- 5) Conduct all research and composition according to the VSU Academic Honesty Policy linked below.

Students can earn a maximum of 100 points in this course as indicated above. Course grades will be awarded as follows:

- A: 90 – 100 points
- B: 80 – 89 points
- C: 70 – 79 points
- D: 60 – 69 points
- F: fewer than 60 points.

No grad below a C will be credited toward a VSU graduate degree. Because this is a core course in the MLIS program any student who earns 79 points or fewer must repeat the course.

To receive an A in this course a student must complete every assignment.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

**General Assumptions:** The course is designed for the online learning environment and all course activities will take place inside the course website in BlazeView or on your own in the environment indicated in the assignment descriptions. Distance learning support is available from VSU. Please see: <http://www.valdosta.edu/vista/students.shtml>

All required readings are summarized on the course calendar and listed in full on the reading list and in the weekly folders. All readings other than the textbook chapters are accessible through GALILEO or Valdosta State University's Odum Library online journal access or through public access websites or through Odum Library course e-reserves or will be provided inside the course website in pdf format.

Students are expected to be able to obtain materials from GALILEO and the Odum Library's electronic collections and resources or their equivalents as part of their successful participation in this course. An online services guide for distance education students is on the Odum Library web site at <http://www.valdosta.edu/library/services/distancededucation.shtml> Students should feel free to ask a local librarian for help learning to navigate GALILEO.

**Attendance:** Course content is delivered asynchronously according to the course calendar. It is the student's responsibility to follow the course calendar and participate via BlazeView as indicated at the appropriate times. The instructor reserves the right to schedule real-time delivery of instruction using tools available inside BlazeView. It is in the student's best interest to log into the BlazeView course delivery system daily to check for announcements and e-mail messages related to the course.

**Communication:** The course Faculty Office discussion board will be available for the duration of the semester. Please post course-related questions that may be relevant to your classmates on the discussion board. Please read the Faculty Office discussion board regularly. If you have a personal question please send it to the instructor via BlazeView course e-mail. If you would like to speak with the instructor by telephone please ask for an appointment via e-mail so a mutually appropriate time can be determined. If you are in Valdosta and would like to meet face to face please send a message via e-mail to arrange a time. If the instructor's office door is open please feel free to come in.

**Submitting written assignments:** All written work must be submitted as attachments to the assignment modules in the BlazeView course website using Word or rtf formats. If you use any word processing program other than Microsoft Word, please save your document in Rich Text Format (rtf). **All written work file names should begin with your last name and first initial and include the assignment name as the file name, for example: MostL\_tour.docx** Naming conventions for each assignment submission will be provided.

The university's Information Technology department provides step-by-step guides on how to use VSU's e-mail system and other resources. The IT Help Desk is at <http://www.valdosta.edu/helpdesk/guides/> Their telephone hotline is 229-245-4357.

**Late work:** All course work is due inside BlazeView on the date and time indicated on the course calendar. Any exceptions without penalties must be negotiated in advance. Technological crises are not an acceptable excuse for submitting work late unless BlazeView is down.

There is no grace period for any tests that may be included in this course. Tests must be taken during the test window. The assessment tool will close at the date and time given in the course calendar.

A grace period of 24 hours is offered without penalty for written work and projects. After 24 hours 20% of the maximum possible grade will be deducted from the student's score for every additional 24 hours or increment thereof that the work is late up until the day the BlazeView assignment submission window closes. If you need additional time to work on an assignment or if you have a scheduling conflict please contact your instructor BEFORE the assignment is due to discuss your situation. The instructor WILL NOT accept work after the assignment submission window closes without prior consent.

Completely skipping an assignment is not acceptable in graduate school. To receive an A in this course a student must complete every assignment.

### **University Policies**

**Academic Honesty at Valdosta State University:** "Valdosta State University expects that graduate students will pursue their academic endeavors and conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. All work that a student presents to satisfy course requirements should represent his or her own efforts, including appropriate use and acknowledgement of external sources. Specific regulations related to student conduct and behaviors are contained in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct." See also:

<http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/AcademicHonestyPoliciesandProcedures.shtml>

It is each student's responsibility to make sure he or she understand how to avoid breeches of academic integrity. If a student is unsure about the parameters of an assignment, ask for clarification. If a student needs help with citations and research resources and techniques, the university provides extensive resources for students. For help please start at the Odum Library's "how to" page: <http://www.valdosta.edu/library/learn/howto.shtml>

By taking this course, you agree that all required course work may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to SafeAssign, a tool within BlazeVIEW. For more information on the use of SafeAssign at VSU see [SafeAssign for Students](http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/SafeAssignforStudents.shtml) (<http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/SafeAssignforStudents.shtml>).

**Accommodations statement:** From VSU's Access Office: Students requesting classroom accommodations or modifications due to a documented disability must contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in room 1115 Nevins Hall. The phone numbers are 229-245-2498 (V/VP) and 229-219-1348 (TTY).

If you have a documented disability please contact the Access Office. Once your request for accommodation is submitted please contact the instructor to discuss accommodations or modifications of course content and delivery.

**Student Conduct:** All interactions related to this class are to be conducted respectfully and professionally whether during face to face meetings, online interactions, small group work, e-mail or telephone communication according to the Student Code of Conduct as presented in the Valdosta State University Student Handbook, beginning on page 60:

[http://www.valdosta.edu/studentaffairs/documents/Student\\_Handbook\\_2009-10v1.pdf](http://www.valdosta.edu/studentaffairs/documents/Student_Handbook_2009-10v1.pdf)

**Student Success Center:** <http://www.valdosta.edu/ssc/> provides free tutoring and support for distance learning students at <http://valdosta.askonline.net/>

**Student Agreement:** Enrollment in this class signifies that you have agreed to abide by and adhere to the policies and regulations specified above. It is understood that the instructor may adapt or change this syllabus and the assignments contained within it according to circumstances that may arise during the course of the semester.