Description: Course provides overview of resources on genealogy and techniques for providing library service to genealogists. The course allows students to acquire practical knowledge of genealogical materials and to explore related topics for providing library service to genealogists.

Learning Outcomes:

- Describe the goals of genealogical research
- Describe the characteristics, needs and values of genealogists
- Describe standard techniques and tools used in genealogical research
- Conduct an effective genealogy reference interview
- Access key genealogical resources in a variety of formats
- Discuss issues related to service levels and external resources

Required Textbook (Materials):


Recommended Texts (Purchases are not required):


MLIS policy prohibits the use of VSU’s Interlibrary Loan service for obtaining textbooks: http://www.valdosta.edu/mlis/student_resources/documents/ILL_Textbooks.pdf

**ALA-RUSA Information:**
- Guidelines for a Unit or Course of Instruction in Genealogical Research at Schools of Library and Information Science [http://www.alanet.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesunit.cfm](http://www.alanet.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesunit.cfm)
- Guidelines for Developing Beginning Genealogical Collections and Services [http://www.lita.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesdeveloping.cfm](http://www.lita.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesdeveloping.cfm)
- Guidelines for Establishing Local History Collections [http://www.lita.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesestablishing.cfm](http://www.lita.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesestablishing.cfm)

**Ethics, Conduct, Standards, Guidelines:**

**Attendance:** This is an asynchronous, web-based course with no face-to-face meetings.

**Requirements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-Knowledge Checks/Reflections on Weekly Readings posted to Discussion Board</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Dialogue</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media Observation</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Research Part 1</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Research Part 2</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site Visitation</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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**Grading Scale:**
There are 100 points possible in the course. Grades will be assigned as follows:
- 100-91 points = A; 90-81 points = B; 80-71 points = C; 70-61 points = D; 60 = F
- Late assignments (including all discussion boards) will not be accepted without prior approval of instructor.
- **Students are responsible for locating all assigned readings that are not on electronic reserve. (This is encouraged by the MLIS department faculty members).**
- Topics for E-knowledge checks and discussion board postings will be posted on the course website.
Structure and Formatting Requirements for All Papers:

According to the American Library Association, librarians are expected to have:

- The ability to communicate both orally and in writing
- Accuracy and skill in typing
- The ability to prepare comprehensive reports and present ideas clearly and concisely in written and oral form

(http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/careers/librarycareerssite/whatyouneedlibrarian)

As such, for this course:

- Points will be deducted for spelling, grammar, syntax errors, particularly if those errors obscure the content delivery.

- A title page or bibliography page is not required for the written assignments. The power point presentation does require a title slide and acknowledgements slide.

- Use a 12-point font, one-inch margins, and double spacing. (1.5 line spacing, smaller fonts, etc. will lead to point deductions).

- Use the header function in MS Word to insert your name and page number in the upper right-hand corner of each page. Ask for assistance, if this function is unfamiliar.

- If you quote or paraphrase from sources outside your original thought/expression, MLA citation style is preferred, but not required. Chicago or Turabian are acceptable. Be consistent throughout the paper. Err on the side of citing the source. The hint of plagiarism can result in zero points and a failing grade in the course.

- Adhere to page limits for all assignments.

- Submit assignments as MS Word documents.
Week One: What is Genealogy?  

Wed, June 06 to Sun, June 10

**Primary Readings:**

Greenwood, Chapter 1: Understanding Genealogical Research – pp. 1-20 (E-reserve)

Moore, Section 1. Brief Introduction to Genealogy & Family History- pp. 1-6. (E-reserve)


Wright, Raymond S. Chapter 2: Getting Started. pp. 12-24. (E-reserve)

**Articles:**


Riddell, Iain. “To Alleviate or Elevate the Euroamerican Genealogy Fever.” *Genealogy* 2018 2, 12. (E-reserve)


Week Two: First Steps  

Textbook Readings:

Croom, Chapter 1: In the Beginning – pp. 3-9. (E-reserve)

Croom, Chapter 2: Charting Your Course – pp. 10-22. (E-reserve)

Pennavaria, Katherine. Chapter 4: The Best First Steps for a New Researcher - pp. 57-86. (E-reserve)


Swan, Chapter 8: Start an Organized Search – pp. 147-172. (E-reserve)

Articles:


Assignment I: Media Observation (15 points)  Due: Mon, 18 June at 6am

Analyze *African American Lives*, the first of series of multi-episodic documentaries tracing the genealogy of several notable African Americans. View each of the four episodes. Compose approximately one page each for the following areas:

I. Describe the role of history in connection with genealogical research. Provide examples.

II. What themes or concepts emerged throughout the participants’ narratives? Are there shared themes; are there themes specific to a particular guest?

III. Identify the research experts and their specializations or areas of concentration.

IV. Identify the primary and secondary documents found and/or utilized?

V. Describe reinforced narratives and/or new discoveries about the guests’ family narratives.

VI. Describe (with examples) your response to both the research processes utilized and the narratives explored.
Week 3 The Reference Interaction

Mon, June 18 to Sun, June 24

Textbook Readings:

Moore, Section 2: Library Reference Service pp. 7-14 (E-reserve)

Moore, Section 3. Checklist of Genealogical Sources & Abbreviations Used in Genealogy - pp. 15-18. (E-reserve)


Swan, Chapter 1: Starting Research – pp. 3-12. (E-reserve)

Articles:


Billeter, Anne. “Reference Hasn't Changed at All, but Reference Has Changed a Lot.” Oregon Library Association Quarterly, 16(2), pp. 34-37.


Fraser, Shanna. “Genealogists and the Archives: How to Better Serve this User Group,” ARST 540 class essay, MAS program, University of British Columbia, 2005. (E-reserve)


Week 4: Census Reports and Vital Records  

Mon, June 25 to Sun, July 01

Textbook Readings:


Moore, Section 5. Other Genealogical Records, pp. 23-29. (E-reserve)

Simpson, Chapter 2: Census Basics, pp. 7-20.


Simpson, Chapter 4: Researching Vital Records, pp. 29-42

Simpson, Chapter 9: Using the Internet, pp. 101-114

Articles:

Adam, Michelle and Helen Kelly "For Every Soul There is a Trace." World of Hibernia 5.1 (1999): 46.


Assignment II: Personal Research Pt. 1 (15 points)  
Due: Mon, July 02 at 6am
To better empathize with future patrons and clientele, students will explore their own genealogy and family history. Document conversations with relatives; explore local and national government records; vital records and more. Examples of the process and the charts are discussed in the readings.

1. Complete an ahnentafel chart that lists up to (no more than) five generations. Do not list more than five generations. Type the information on one 8.5” by 11” page. (1 page)

2. Complete a pedigree chart on one page with at least three and no more than five generations. Typed is preferred, but if handwritten, write legibly. (1 page)

3. Complete a family group sheet for an individual on your pedigree chart. Handwritten is acceptable, but write legibly. (1 page)

4. Essay on the process:
   a. Provide a brief history of your family. What did you know about your ancestors before creating these charts?
   b. How did you come to learn the information? If you knew nothing or little information before, who/what did you consult for answers?
   c. Identify four sources or research sites that you used to verify the information. Census reports are the easiest to find, so at least two sources should be something other than census reports.
   d. Provide a brief analysis of the major problems/issues/concerns that you encountered in this research.
   e. Explain the next steps to be taken in researching your family.

Remember to cite your sources
Week 5: Published Resources and Information Services  
Mon, July 02 to Sun, July 08

Textbook Readings:

Simpson, Chapter 5: “Basic Published Resources” pp. 43-56.

Simpson, Chapter 6: “Basic Archival Sources” pp. 57-68.

Simpson, Chapter 7: “Immigration Records.” pp. 69-78


Articles:


Week 6: Advanced Resources and Professional Tools  

Textbook Readings:


Simpson, Chapter 11: The National Archives & Other Repositories – pp. 125-134.


Swan, Chapter 10: Identifying Databases and Indexes – pp. 205-224 (E-reserve)

Swan, Chapter 11: Facilitating Research with Computers – pp. 225-252 (E-reserve)

Articles:


**Assignment III: Personal Research Part 2 (20 points)**

Due: Mon., July 16 at 6am

Family histories emerge as we engage in genealogical research & conversation with relatives.

- Describe two stories that emerged from your research. From whom or from what sources did you learn about the stories?

- How did these stories facilitate or guide your research? Did they help you fill in knowledge gaps, did they trigger additional questions, or did they lead you into one or more brick walls?

- How do these two stories fit into American history or by extension, the history of the places from which your ancestors originated?

- What are some unique/particular components related to your family research project? (e.g. African American/slavery, European immigration, Asian forced encampment, military service, religious affiliation).
Week 7   Collection Development, Outreach   Mon July 16 to Sun, July 22

Textbook Readings

Guidelines for Developing Beginning Genealogical Collections and Services
http://www.lita.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesdeveloping.cfm

Guidelines for Establishing Local History Collections
http://www.lita.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesestablishing.cfm

Swan, Chapter 6: Providing Instruction for Genealogists. pp. 129-135. (E-reserve)

Articles


Week 8

Mon July 22 to Fri, July 27

The discussion for week eight is posted on the course website.

Assignment IV: Site Visitation (15 points) Due: Friday, 27 July at 5pm

Visit a genealogical or history-based institution of your choice which provides access to primary documents. The facility could be a library, a local history center, a LDS History Center, a national archives facility, a regional archives or one of several other kinds of institutions who provide access to primary documents and sources. Interview one of the staff persons working in the facility. Create a Microsoft power point presentation about the institution containing a minimum of 15 slides and a maximum of twenty slides. The presentation must contain at least one slide for each of the following elements:

- the mission of the library or information center
- the patrons who regularly utilize the facility
- description of the collection
- description of the kind of services provided
- the education, experience and background of the staff member or staff members
- the relationship of the institution with other institutions or organizations
- common obstacles assisting researchers
- ethical considerations that are important in this library or information center
- advice for you and your classmates as you prepare for your careers
- one title slide
- one acknowledgement slide

View the assignment rubric on course website.
A group of students can attend the same site, but each person’s images and text should be different/unique and specific to the student. The presentations are not duplicated, group projects.
Technical Requirements
All assignments must be submitted using computer programs that are compatible with VSU-supported formats. For word processing documents, MS Word is preferred (2003 or 2007). If you are using a lower version of WordPerfect or some other word processing software, save your documents as Rich Text Format (rtf).

Distance Learning Support
A VSU reference librarian is responsible for coordinating library services for off-campus VSU students. That librarian’s email and phone contact will be provided to you at the start of this semester. An online guide for distance education students is on the Odum Library Web site at http://www.valdosta.edu/library/services/revised_students.pdf.

Academic Dishonesty
"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 Ethics. Please acquaint yourself with the full policy at http://coefaculty.valdosta.edu/troot/eced4300/Academic_points20Dishonesty.doc.

It is your responsibility to make sure you understand how to avoid breeches of academic integrity. It is not the responsibility of the instructor to post rules for citing, quoting, or ethical exchange of information for every assignment. If you are unsure about the parameters of an assignment, ask for clarification.

Special Needs Statement
Valdosta State University is an equal opportunity educational institution. It is not the intent of our institution to discriminate against any applicant for admission or any student or employee of the institution based on the sex, race, religion, color, national origin, or the handicap of the individual. It is the intent of the institution to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent executive orders as well as the Title IX section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students requiring classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability should discuss this need with the professor at the beginning of the semester. 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 245-2498 (V/VP) and 219-1348 (TTY).

Student Agreement
Enrollment in this class signifies that the student has 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.