Z501—Reference ('User Services and Tools')

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(This syllabus is subject to changes with appropriate notice)

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This course focuses on reference and other user services and tools. Compared to previous terms for the reference services class, for this term I have restructured the course to focus upon five aspects (and corresponding class modules) of user services and tools: 1) searching, 2) reference services, 3) education, 4) user tools, 5) special issues (special needs, information ethics, privacy, etc.). The course has also been pedagogically reorganized for greater focus upon project-based learning within groups. The thematic restructuring of the course is done in order to give more emphasis to user (rather than librarian) based searching, social media, and documentary ('bibliographic') instruction, which are all emerging as foci for reference and other user services in libraries. Further iterations of this class may in the SLIS/ILS curriculum may well be oriented in these directions, as well.

The general format of the class will be five modules, made up of 1) lecture, 2) student work, and 3) presentation. Hours that are not completed in class must be made up outside of class, and time left over in the presentation class may be used to prepare for the following session.

**Classes and readings:**

**Module 1: Searching. Topics:** The organization of knowledge—vocabularies—indexes—thesauri—library catalogues—subject headings—MARC records—information retrieval

Readings:


Furrie, Betty, in conjunction with the Data Base Development Department of The Follett Software Company. *What is a MARC Record and Why is it Important?* Seventh edition reviewed and edited by the Network Development and MARC Standards Office, Library of Congress. 2003

[http://www.loc.gov/standards/](http://www.loc.gov/standards/)

[www.oclc.org/research/presentations/childress/fedlink_20031118.ppt](http://www.oclc.org/research/presentations/childress/fedlink_20031118.ppt)

[https://www.lib.umn.edu/datamanagement/metadata#ont](https://www.lib.umn.edu/datamanagement/metadata#ont)

**Assignments:**

1) Do resource searching worksheets (to be turned in on the third class) and for the third class bring for class presentation and discussion an example of several of the more difficult searches that you had to do and several strategies for answering it. *The assignments that you don’t finish in this three class module can be done during the rest of the semester and turned in during the semester. Please turn in the whole packet when you are done with the assignments all together.*

2) Also, for the third class, go through the IUB databases through the “Resources by subject” ([http://www.libraries.iub.edu/index.php?pageld=1697](http://www.libraries.iub.edu/index.php?pageld=1697) ) page, and find four or five examples of interesting topics and searches that you found and did that surprised you. Come to class, prepared to discuss these.

**Module 2: Reference services and user needs— the future of**
reference services—the reference interview—types of reference services in different types of libraries (e.g., special libraries, academic libraries, special libraries, school libraries)

Readings:


Assignment:

1) Go to a library of your choice where you aren’t known and ask the reference librarian for help. Observe what he or she does and write a paper of two to three pages on it. Be prepared to discuss this in the second and third class of module 2. Observe whether the librarian turns the monitor toward you so that you can be instructed as you are being helped. Observe whether the librarian uses keywords or subject headings. Is the librarian doing a reference interview with you? If so, are you being asked ‘closed questions’ (yes and no questions), open questions (‘what would you like?’ etc.), or neutral questions (‘would you like a journal that discusses xyz?’) Does the librarian ask you to return? How is the interview closed?

2) Do an online chat reference interview. Observe how it differs from your live interview. Write a two to three page paper on this and be prepared to discuss this on the second and third class of module 2.

3) Do research consultation assignment.
Module 3: documentary/bibliographic instruction—different types of instruction (large class, individual, different user groups—live instruction and online instruction—information literacy.

Readings:


Palmer, C. (2011). This I believe...all libraries should be teaching libraries. portal: Libraries and the Academy, 11(1), 575-582

Assignment: Create instruction pages using Wiki (e.g. PBWorks http://pbworks.com/) and be prepared to discuss what you did in class on the third day of the module.
Module 4: User Tools: Search engine algorithms—digitalization—visualization tools—social media—images and video retrieval—digital humanities

Readings:

Gillespie, T. “The Relevance of Algorithms”:  


Look at: http://miriamposner.com/blog/?page_id=1033

Bamboo Digital Research Tools (DiRT): <http://dirt.projectbamboo.org>. An earlier version of this resource is included in Posner’s bibliography.

Digital Humanities Questions & Answers: http://digitalhumanities.org/answers/


**Assignment:** Create an information technology project plan for a library type of your choice (academic, public, school, special libraries, etc.) for newer media technologies. Type it up as a five pages project statement, justifying why you need it, what users it will serve, what human and material (and financial, if you know that) resources it will need. Be prepared to present this in class on the third day of the module, or if we need to, at the end of the term.


**Guest professor for classes 1 and 2 of module 5:** Professor Debora Shaw, Professor and Chair, ILS-SolIC
Assignments: Watch: James L. Mullins (Purdue), Riding the data wave: research libraries’ role and response, James Mullin (Purdue) (26 minutes)  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZJODT3pJPw

Readings:


Publishing and Vendors:


http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002158/215863e.pdf

Collection Development Policies and Selection Practices:


http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics
Final Class: Presentation of information technology project plan and/or special issues.

Grading:

Module 1, 2, 3, and 4 assignments: 25% each.

Grading Rubric:

Assignment, module 1:

Exceeds expectations: Correct answers to exact answer questions; thoughtful, compete essays within the word limits that take into account types of libraries and any published literature (e.g., book reviews), if applicable. Grade=A to A+

Meets expectations: Correct and/or a few in the ballpark answers on exact answer questions; essays that are general and not specific regarding types of libraries, published literature (e.g., book reviews), if applicable. Grade=B+ to A-

Below expectations: incorrect or not even in the ballpark answers on exact answer questions, minimal essays not meeting work limits, not answering questions or reading the questions completely. Grade=B to below.

Projects, modules 2, 3, 4:

Exceeds Expectations: Original, thought provoking, projects, which make use of online literatures and take into account the needs of users in whatever type of environment is being addressed. Address likely real-world problems. Good presentation of materials. Could be used to demonstrate to your future employers. If group work is done, all members participate and show during the presentations knowledge and leadership in some area of the project, at least. Grade=A to A+

Meets Expectations: Fulfills the requirements of the assignment. If group work is done, all members participate and show this. Grade= B+ to A-

Below Expectations: Unclear user groups or types of institutions or problems that are being addressed. If group work, it is clear that some members have not participated in the project. Grade= B to below.
Points will be deducted for non-attendance/non-group participation, save for illness, etc., up to 21% of total class grade.

Final note: the lectures in Z501 are abbreviated in order to provide more time for activities. Please pay attention to the lectures and participate actively and well with your colleagues.