Z553 Spring 2014
Public Library Management
Tuesdays 5:45 - 8:30 pm
LI030
Instructor: Krista Ledbetter (kristaq@mail.morg.lib.in.us, quigleyk@indiana.edu)
Office hours: By appointment, or before or after class.
Phone: 765-342-3451x22

Description
This course is designed to be an overarching introduction to a wide variety of issues facing public libraries. This includes but is not limited to history, philosophy of service, budgeting, programming, facilities, technology, the library’s role in society, outreach, planning, and local issues. These topics will be discussed from a managerial perspective.

Goals/objectives
It is the objective of this class to give its participants a functioning understanding of the way public libraries work, in a very broad sense. At the end of this course, students should have a basic understanding of the major topics of discussion in public librarianship and feel comfortable speaking with other library professionals about them.

Expectations

• Each member of the class should be treated with respect. This course will involve student discussion and participation. This necessitates attendance, completion of assignments prior to class, and civility.
• If you cannot attend class, you must notify the instructor in advance. Attendance will factor into your final grade. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated; numerous absences are frowned upon, and if you foresee yourself missing multiple classes, be sure to see the instructor the first day after class. Make-up work may be negotiated only in cases of documented, excused absences.
• Students are expected and encouraged to ask questions about the assignments, readings, and lectures in this course. If you feel that readings or assignments are unclear, you should ask for clarification before work is due. I am happy to help in any way that I can in order to help you do your best and get the most from the course.
• Incompletes will not be awarded except under extraordinary circumstances. Any request for an extension for either an individual assignment or the course must be made prior to the due date or the last class meeting respectively.
• Students requiring accommodation due to medical conditions should see the instructor at the end of the first class meeting.
• The instructor reserves the right to make, with notice, adjustments to the calendar and content of this course syllabus.
Assignments

All works cited should be in MLA or APA format. I strongly encourage you to include references to your readings from this or other classes. If you have any questions or difficulties with these assignments, I would be happy to discuss them with you before they are due. The School of Library and Information Science, in accord with Indiana University, deals with academic and personal misconduct such as plagiarism according to the procedures in the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct, available on the university website at: http://www.iu.edu/~code/code/index.shtml.

INDIANA PUBLIC LIBRARIES Listserv – Students are required to subscribe to the InPubLib listserv for the duration of the semester. This listserv is used by public library professionals to discuss issues and ask questions of each other. It is a good way to become informed about the issues facing public library managers. Subscribe by visiting: http://lists.in.gov/mailman/listinfo/inpublib. While there is no assignment related to the listserv, you are encouraged to use information you gain there in your papers, readings journal and class discussions.

BUDGET ASSIGNMENT: Due February 18th - 20%
The purpose of this assignment is to give you a brief introduction to actual public library budget management. For this assignment you will have to cut a specific amount of money from Morgan County Public Library’s 2013 budget. This assignment will consist of two parts: Part one will be an in-class small group discussion where you will try to reach a consensus with your classmates on which parts of the budget should be cut. The groups will then present their decisions to the rest of the class. Part two will be a paper (no more than 5 pages) that you will write individually describing the choices you made and the reasons you made them.

PATRON LETTER: Due February 4th – 5%
Dealing with unhappy patrons is never fun. In this assignment, you will practice responding to a patron complaint.

BOARD MEETING ASSIGNMENT: Due March 4th - 15%
The purpose of this assignment is to observe a library board in action and their interaction with the library director. You are required to attend a board meeting of a public library of your choosing in person. You will then write a paper about your observations not to exceed three pages. (Board meetings are only held once per month, so please plan ahead! – Board meeting dates are available on the Indiana State Library’s website under the Public Library Directory http://www.in.gov/library/pldirectory.htm)

STATE PRESENTATION: Due April 22nd or 29th - 15%
Much of our class discussions focus on Indiana libraries but it would be helpful to know about libraries in other U.S. States. For this assignment, students will pair up and choose a different State to give a 15 minute presentation on. We will discuss possible
topics to discuss in your presentation throughout the semester, but you should be thinking of things like: How are the library systems organized and governed? How do they receive funding? What role do consortia play? What are the major issues facing libraries in that State? Are libraries doing anything unique or innovative?

PLANNING SCENARIO ASSIGNMENT  Due March 25th – 20%
This assignment will give you a glimpse of how issues and problems are addressed by library management. Based on planning methods we discuss in class, you will create and respond to a management scenario. This assignment should not exceed six pages in length.

INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT  Due April 8th – 20%
This assignment will give you the opportunity to talk to practicing library managers and summarize your experience.

PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE:  – 5%
Students in this class will be expected to actively engage in classroom discussions. The amount of participation in discussions will be directly proportional not only to your grade, but to your overall experience in this class. I encourage you to speak up whenever you have something to say.

Please, for all assignments, respect the page limits! Let this be your first lesson in public librarianship: It is one thing to do a good job, but quite another to do one within a set of limitations, be they spatial, financial, or any other kind.

Statement on Grading:
To earn a B in this course your work must consistently demonstrate and/or include:

- a base line level of competence
- an understanding of lecture content and reading assignments
- correct answers and complete answers

Your work must also meet all of the requirements of the assignment. To earn a higher grade you must surpass the criteria and expectations for a B; to do so your work should consistently demonstrate and include:

- **Enthusiasm** - exhibited both in class and in assigned course work
- **Synthesis** - demonstrated by identifying connections between and crossover in the various topics relevant to public librarianship
- **Investigation** - exploring readings and experiences relevant to the class beyond those which are assigned

Late assignments will be docked 10% for each day.

Your work should also demonstrate the ability to see the relationship between coursework and the larger issues which public librarians encounter.
Each assignment is designed so you will have opportunities to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the course materials, demonstrate originality and creativity, and exceed the basic course expectations. Your class participation is also an important factor in determining your grade for the course. With regard to participation, it should be noted that there is no fool-proof "fill in the blank" method for calculating participation points and this portion of your grade will be determined by synthesizing a tally of your attendance and my own subjective impressions of your enthusiasm for the course material and participation in the discussion of readings and lecture topics in the classroom.

The following definitions of letter grades have been defined by student and faculty members of the Curriculum Steering Committee and have been approved by the faculty as an aid in evaluation of academic performance and to assist students by giving them an understanding of the grading standards of the School of Library and Information Science.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Outstanding achievement. Student performance demonstrates full command of the course materials and evinces a high level of originality and/or creativity that far surpasses course expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Excellent achievement. Student performance demonstrates thorough knowledge of the course materials and exceeds course expectations by completing all requirements in a superior manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Very good work. Student performance demonstrates above-average comprehension of the course materials and exceeds course expectations on all tasks as defined in the course syllabus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Student performance meets designated course expectations and demonstrates understanding of the course materials at an acceptable level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Marginal work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete understanding of course materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory work. Student performance demonstrates incomplete and inadequate understanding of course materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Unacceptable work. Coursework performed at this level will not count toward the MLS or MIS degree. For the course to count toward the degree, the student must repeat the course with a passing grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>Failing. Student may continue in program only with permission of the Dean.</td>
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Please note that the syllabus may be changed by the instructor, but any changes will be preceded by as much advanced notice as possible. Guest speakers on specific topics may be added as the semester progresses.
Week 1 (January 14) – Introduction. The first week of class will be the standard first week fare. We’ll discuss the syllabus, talk about assignments, introduce ourselves, and talk about libraries.

  - Discussion questions – How does this article on library history relate or parallel public libraries today? Give examples. According to this article, what three things led to the creation of our modern libraries?

Week 2 (January 21) - Public Library Philosophy and the Future. What should the library collect? Who should use the collection? Should you let the homeless sleep in your chairs? This week we’re going to have the archetypal library school discussion: What is a public library?


Week 3 (January 28) - Problem Patrons & Unhappy Patrons. Sooner or later, every public librarian meets their first problem patron. How do you balance the requirements of a difficult patron with the needs of the next five people in line? How can you write a “Patron Behavior” policy that outlines unacceptable behavior without turning your library into a police state? How do you respond to the angry patron?


Week 4 (February 4) – PATRON LETTER DUE. Budgeting. The word alone raises the blood pressure of any public librarian. This week’s discussion will delve into some specifics of how exactly libraries get their hands on precious funding. At the end of class we’ll begin work on the budget assignment.

- Department of Local Government Finance (2010). Library budget manual: A guide through the process of local government budgeting. Chapters 1-4 only. Available at:
Week 5 (February 11) – The Library Board and eGovernment. As a director, you are answerable to the Board of Trustees. What is their role? What should their involvement be? Most library boards are either appointed or elected by local government. What is the library’s role in regards to government, and what should the library provide in terms of government services?


Week 6 (February 18) – BUDGET PAPER DUE. Rural Libraries & Social Media. Rural libraries often face a unique set of challenges. Their service populations are scattered, their budgets are small, and they are often forced to do more with less. This week we’ll examine some of the issues specific to rural libraries. We’ll also talk about effective uses of social media, and some of the pitfalls.


Week 7 (February 25) – Technology. This week will be a look at some of the emerging technologies that are changing the way libraries operate: open-source ILS software, ebooks and maker spaces.


**Week 8 (March 4)** – BOARD MEETING ASSIGNMENT DUE. Planning. Simultaneously the least fun and most important aspect of public library management is good planning. This week’s discussion will concern how to make sure your library is healthy for the long term and give you a framework for tackling problems.

- **Take the Shaping Outcomes Course found at [http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/index.htm](http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/index.htm)**

**Week 9 (March 11)** – Library Staff. Libraries don’t run on autopilot. As a manager, you must constantly confront the need to train staff, resolve conflict between staff members, satisfy scheduling requests, and perform myriad other staff-related functions.

- Take the Myers-Briggs assessment found at [http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp](http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp) Bring your results to class to discuss.

**Week 10 (March 18)** – SPRING BREAK. No class

**Week 11 (March 25)** – SCENARIO ASSIGNMENT DUE. Facilities Planning and Maintenance. At some point you will be involved in either renovation of an existing space, or building a new building. What are the considerations when planning library spaces? How can you make the most of what you have? How will construction affect your patrons? Even if you never take part in construction, you need to consider maintaining the facilities you have. Who cleans the library? Who makes repairs?


**Week 12 (April 1)** - The Internet & Intellectual Freedom - Should public libraries filter their internet for minors? For the federal discount? For anyone?


**Week 13 (April 8) – INTERVIEW ASSIGNMENT DUE. – Philanthropy and Partnerships.** This week we'll look at other ways of stretching your dollars and extending your community reach through philanthropy, fundraising, partnerships and grant writing.


**Week 14 (April 15) - Local Issues & Current Legislation.** This week we'll discuss issues that are affecting public libraries, including but not limited to the new property tax laws, the effort to consolidate libraries statewide, political pressure and public librarian certification.


**Week 15 (April 22) - First Round of State Presentations.**
Week 16 (April 29) - Second Round of State Presentations
Course wrap up, job seeking & negotiation, middle management tips and advice.