

Syllabus current as of **January 15, 2008**  
This syllabus is subject to change and is not a legal contract.

**SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE  
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY**

**LIS 7002, Information Services  
Spring 2008**

**Class meets in 171 Coates Hall  
Wednesdays, 8:30-11:30  
See "Course Schedule" for details**

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or by appointment**

**Consultation by phone or live online chat - by appointment**

**I. Catalog Description**

...preparation for reference and bibliographic services; selection and use of general, scholarly and specialized reference resources in various subject fields.  
3 credit hours

**II. Course Goal**

This course is intended to prepare students for the professional practice of reference, bibliographic and selected other information services in public, college, school, university and special libraries as well as archives. It is an entry-level required course with no prerequisites.

**III. Course Objectives**

By the end of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Name basic, representative examples of information services provided face-to-face, online or through other synchronous or asynchronous media.
2. Understand and be able to apply ethical principles of professional service as outlined in professional codes of ethics.
3. Understand the use and professional evaluation of a many kinds of information sources in many formats.
4. Demonstrate the basic concepts of source citation and of information retrieval from complex online databases.
5. Recognize and understand current issues and trends in reference and information services for different user communities

#### **IV. Basic Course Expectations**

Previous library experience is not assumed, although such experience does contribute to the practical and theoretical understanding of the course content.

A substantial amount of the work for this course must be done in a physical library. Students should expect to spend significant time working on assignments in LSU Middleton and other libraries.

Basic proficiency accessing web-based sources and using electronic communication media is expected. Ready access to a personal computer with a reliable Internet connection (preferably high-speed) is required.

Students are expected to use web browsers (Firefox, Internet Explorer, etc.), LSU PAWS, email, Adobe Acrobat Reader and word processors (MSWord or an rtf-friendly program like WordPerfect) during the course. Students will use a variety of features of LSU Blackboard. They will find the Blackboard User Manual (under "Tools" in the class site) very helpful during this course.

Occasionally, the student may need access to PowerPoint presentation software. Technical assistance is available through the SLIS computer lab and from the LSU Office of Computer Services Help Desk on its website, by phone at LSU-DESK, and through email to [helpdesk@lsu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@lsu.edu). Free computer tutoring is available from the START program in the basement of Coates Hall.

Every semester some students experience technology problems. Students are responsible for maintaining back-up copies of their work and for planning for web access through multiple Internet connections. Files can be accidentally erased, hard drives can crash, Internet providers may go down and power failures may happen. Students should backup their work on a hard drive, in TigerBytes (through PAWS) and on floppy, USB "thumb", CD-ROM or DVD disks. **Students must plan for alternate Internet access should a primary connection not be available when needed.**

At various times during the semester, libraries the students need to use may close for holidays, sports events or other reasons. Students must plan their work in light of both course and library schedules.

Completion of LIS 7002 early in a library school program develops expertise and knowledge of resources useful in future courses and professional activities.

This course develops abilities to use information resources and provide information services in any career path the student may follow.

#### **V. Required Texts**

In addition to other assigned readings, the students will need the following required texts:

*Reference and Information Services: An Introduction, Third Edition*, Richard E. Bopp and Linda C. Smith, Libraries Unlimited, 2001

*The Oxford Guide to Library Research*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Thomas Mann, Oxford University Press, 2005

*Librarian's Guide to Online Searching*, Suzanne S. Bell, Libraries Unlimited, 2006

#### **VI. Course Topics and Information Sources**

The variety of information services  
Service ethics  
The reference interview  
Synchronous virtual reference services; asynchronous reference services  
Searching for information: bibliographic control, controlled vocabulary, indexes  
and complex databases  
Bibliographic verification  
Library, bibliographic, staff and information literacy Instruction  
Access to services  
Access to documents  
Evaluation of information services  
Managing information services

Use and evaluation of information sources, including:  
encyclopedias, dictionaries, geographical sources, ready reference, directories,  
almanacs, handbooks, bibliographies, indexes, abstracts, bibliographic Indexes,  
government documents, citation indexes, web sites, textbooks, periodicals,  
books, grey literature, unpublished literature and people

## **VII. Learning Methods**

This course is taught both synchronously and asynchronously. Thoughtful interaction with classmates and the instructor is expected both in person in class and online through LSU's Blackboard system.

### **A. SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING**

Classroom opportunities for learning activities including lecture, discussion, role playing, audiovisual presentations, guest speakers and other activities. Some classes may include visits to libraries on campus.

As with any course, homework is an asynchronous activity and only a small part of the course is synchronous class.

### **B. ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING**

Asynchronous learning opportunities include assigned readings, preparation of assignments and participation in discussion through the class Blackboard Discussion Board.

There will be a separate Discussion Board for each course topic and *all* are expected participate in *each* of these asynchronous discussions. All students and the professor will take part in discussions with respect and professionalism. Because of the seminar nature of the class, any work turned in may be discussed in class. The instructor may give attribution for excellent work, but will try to use discretion to protect the identity of the author(s) of work which indicates that the more learning is needed in a particular area.

### **C. THE CLASS BLACKBOARD SITE**

The professor and the students will use extensively the following sections of the class site in Blackboard. *Students should be aware that Blackboard keeps records of the dates and times they use various sections of the class site.*

### *1. Announcements*

These appear first whenever the student logs in to the class site. Important announcements may appear at any time during the course and students should log in to the class Blackboard site at least every other day.

### *2. Course Information*

This syllabus and the course schedule of topics and assignments are here. There may be necessary changes throughout the semester.

### *3. Staff Information*

Dr. McKnight can communicate with students in between classes in several ways.

Most questions about homework and material availability should be posted to the appropriate Discussion Board. This method is encouraged because (1) often more than one student will have the same question and (2) Dr. McKnight wants all students to have equal access to such advice. Students are encouraged to use the discussion board for each assignment both while working on the assignment and after having turned it in.

For private matters, students can communicate asynchronously with Dr.

McKnight through email. They can communicate with her synchronously in her office during office hours. They may make appointments for synchronous conversation by telephone or private online chat through Blackboard.

### *4. Course Material*

This section of the course site will have documents and folders of lecture notes, readings, source lists, web links, PowerPoint presentations and other material students will need for this course.

### *5. Assignments and Examinations*

Question sets, examinations and other assignments will be posted here. When taking an online examination, it is wise for students to write out their answers in a word processing document, “cut and paste” it into the online exam, and save the word processing document in case they do not successfully submit the exam the first time.

### *6. Communication*

This is a very important section of the course site. It includes access to the following:

“Collaboration” includes synchronous “chat”, “virtual classroom” and “office hours” activities of the class. Any of these sessions may be recorded and the transcript posted here. Read the User Manual (Under “Tools”) to learn how to use these before the first live session!

“Discussion Boards” will be created for each course topic and other concerns. Professionals constantly interact and collaborate with each other. Individual “Boards” (much like classified blogs) allow students to ask questions and post comments as they work on the course. This is one place where each

student can share the expertise or experience they have with the rest of the class. Participation in all discussion boards is *required*.

“Send Email” allows the students and the professor to send email to all or selected members of the class without having to look up email addresses.

“Roster” is a list of students enrolled in the course, instructors and any course guests.

#### 7. External Links

These are links to websites and web pages used in the course, but not included in a topic under “Course Material” Hint: These are usually easier to use if you right click on the link and choose “Open Link in New Window”.

#### 8. Tools

The **Digital Dropbox** is where you will deposit all of your assignments. **Your assignments *MUST* have your name in the title of the file and in the document itself (preferably in the header or footer) if you want credit for your work.** For instance, one can see that a file named Smithbibliography.doc is student Smith’s bibliography assignment. One has no idea whose a file labeled McKnight7002.doc is! Save your work to a file with the required name on your computer before you upload it to the Digital Dropbox. If a student deposits the same assignment more than once, only the latest one will be graded. The usual penalties apply to assignments deposited after the deadline.

**My Grades** is where the professor will post your grades. Note that each assignment is weighted. For example, if an assignment is weighted at 10%, it will contribute 10 points to your final grade if you get 100% of it right, and 9 points if you get 90%, etc.

The **User Manual** is very important. Use it!

### VIII. Changes in the Syllabus

The syllabus may have some changes as the course progresses. Such changes will be announced immediately in the “Announcements” section of the class Blackboard site and may be announced by email. The most likely reasons for changes include the addition of guest speakers and short readings.

### IX. Evaluation and Grading

Students are responsible for their performance in meeting their own educational goals and those of the course; the professor is responsible for providing guidance, expertise and support to help students reach those goals. Note that many of the goals of this course are requirements for American Library Association accredited LIS programs.

This is a professional graduate course and graduate level quality and quantity of work is expected. A grade of “A” is evidence of superior organization, content, analysis, thought or a combination thereof. A grade of “B” indicates that the student has fulfilled the requirements of the assignment. The work is complete and well-presented without major flaws in reasoning or content. A “C” grade indicates that work is not acceptable and the student should talk with the professor.

NOTE: It is a program requirement that the student pass this course (and all core courses) with a grade of “A” or “B”. If the student does not earn an “A” or “B” the first time, the student may repeat the course once. For more information on SLIS policy, see <http://slis.lsu.edu/policies/10.pdf>

Assignments will include the following:

1. Eight sets of questions related to categories of information resources
2. An assignment doing subject searching and bibliographic verification using complex bibliographic databases.
3. A group information literacy instruction project.
4. Live Reference Desk - “Shadowing” a professional reference librarian on duty and writing a report about the experience
5. Other assignments in support of course objectives.

Examinations:

There will be a mid-term and a final. The examinations will be open book. Final grades in the course will be weighted thusly:

Question sets @ 5 points each 40%

Group Teaching Assignment 5%

Live Reference Desk assignment 5%

Complex Bibliographic Database Searching Assignment 10%

Participation and discussion (evaluated cumulatively during the semester) 10%

Midterm examination 15%

Final examination 15%

Grading scale:

A 93-100

B 85-92

C 76-84

D 68-75

All assignments and examinations submitted *must* be clearly labeled with the student’s name and the name of the assignment.

Files deposited to the digital drop box *must* have the student’s name in the filename *and* in the documents themselves (using a header works well) or they *will not be accepted*. Explicit directions are on the Blackboard site.

Unannounced quizzes may contribute to the “participation, attendance and discussion” grade. The purpose of such quizzes will be to give both the professor and the students some assessment of learning which has occurred.

Asynchronous discussions in the Blackboard discussion boards also contribute to the “participation and discussion” grade.

Assignments are due by **eight o’clock am on the due date**. Blackboard records the time that documents are submitted through the digital Dropbox. If a student is late to class and there is a Blackboard record of work being submitted during

class by that student, the grade for the assignment will be penalized by 5 points.

## **X. Late Assignments**

SLIS Policy 20 states that:

“Student work submitted late without an excuse acceptable to the instructor for up to seven calendar days after the due date will be downgraded one whole letter grade. Work submitted without an excuse acceptable to the instructor after the expiration of those seven days will be graded as a permanent zero for the assignment.”

For the question sets in this course, the standards are stricter. Because answers will be discussed on the discussion boards within hours of when the set is due (perhaps even during class that afternoon), question sets will be penalized one full letter grade for each day (twenty-four hours) they are late and *no* question set will be accepted 72 hours or more after the time it was due. Note: Blackboard records the time that your work is deposited in the Digital Dropbox. Late question sets deposited within the 24 hours of the time that they are due will be penalized 4 points. Work deposited during class time will be penalized 5 points

Dr. McKnight believes in the pedagogical principle that students learn better if they receive feedback about this kind of work as soon as possible. Therefore, she begins reading student assignments as soon as possible and she will post comments on answers to each question on the appropriate discussion board so students can immediately compare their own work to those answers. (Generally, she reads all answers to one question before proceeding to the next.) Individual assignments usually will not be returned with individual comments. The instructor will email individuals comments on work problems not posted to the discussion board. After they have read the discussion board comments, students are welcome to email the instructor about specific questions.

## **XI. Absences**

In graduate school, all students have experiences and insights relevant to class discussions and many classes are in a seminar rather than lecture format. Information covered in classroom discussions may appear on examinations. Therefore, a student cannot achieve the goals of the course by only reading and turning in assignments. Professional interaction and respect is required both online and in person.

According to the *LSU General Catalog*, “Students are expected to attend all classes regularly and punctually and to observe any special attendance regulations stated by their college, school, division, or the professor.”

Students are expected to **discuss any and all** absences, tardiness or early departure from class with the professor. Excessive absences may result in the student being placed on attendance probation, participation being graded as “F”, or both. The School’s attendance policy is summarized in SLIS Policy Statement 18.

Official LSU ***valid reasons for student absence*** are listed in the document at this URL:

<http://appl003.lsu.edu/ups.nsf/d18275cbffaad4b10625635a006e196c/d45654a11f8ac79686256c250062ae4d?OpenDocument>

Another way to reach this document is to take this menu sequence from [lsu.edu](http://lsu.edu):

Student life

Student handbook

Academic issues, IV, D Student absence from class (PS 22)

See also the SLIS attendance policy at:

<http://slis.lsu.edu/policies/18.pdf>

## **XII. Class Communications and Courtesy**

Neither the teacher nor the students should expect immediate replies to email or voicemail messages, but responses within 48 hours are appropriate.

The Blackboard Discussion Board is a public bulletin board that will be seen by all students. Any questions or comments that should not be made public should go through other media. Many questions (for instance, questions about assignment expectations) that may be of use to other students should be posted to the discussion board or asked in open class everyone's benefit. In the interest of fairness to all, the professor will answer such questions only in media available to all students.

All students and the instructor will insure that all personal wireless telephones, pagers, etc. are turned off during class. Such devices may be used only during a class break.

The instructor will respect the students' right to a class break and deserves the same respect in return. Class break will not be used for individual issues more appropriate to office hours or other personal discussion, nor will it be used to give some students information that could be of use to other students.

Beverages are allowed in class.

## **XIII Academic Integrity**

All students and the professor are responsible for observing the highest standards of intellectual and personal honesty in every aspect of their careers at Louisiana State University. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense.

See:

[http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/judicialaffairs.nsf/\\$Content/Code+of+Student+Conduct?OpenDocument](http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/judicialaffairs.nsf/$Content/Code+of+Student+Conduct?OpenDocument)

The School of Library and Information Science observes a "No tolerance" policy on academic misconduct.

All work should be original. Do not submit rewritten versions of textbooks, web sites, published articles, etc. *This includes unattributed descriptions or evaluations of sources studied in this course.*

It is LSU SLIS policy that revised versions of papers or other documents originally prepared for or primarily intended for other professors or purposes will not be accepted.

#### **XIV. Information for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability which requires special accommodations, of course you should notify the professor informally and you must contact the Office of Disability Services, 112 Johnston Hall, 225/578-5919. For more information, go to <http://www.lsu.edu/disability>