MLIS 7000 FOUNDATIONS OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

MASTER OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROGRAM
VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY
Fall 2009

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MLIS 7000 Learning Outcomes
Students will:

1	Discuss the major topics, concepts, history, and issues of library and information science (LIS)
2	Explain the functions, service perspective, and ethics of the LIS profession
3	Explain the role of technology in LIS practice
4	Describe the similarities and differences among types of libraries and information centers
5	Use LIS vocabulary appropriately
6	Analyze trends in LIS job announcements
7	Examine LIS literature
8	Discuss the role of library and information services in a diverse global society
9	Employ oral and written communications skills

MLIS 7000 also introduces students to the Core Competencies as outlined by the American Library Association as well as other knowledge and skills. Students should become familiar with the Core Competencies, approved and adopted by ALA Council in January 2009. Students are required to take core courses that address individually many of the Core Competencies. Electives more fully address others. See http://www.ala.org/ala/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/finalcorecompstat09.pdf.

INTRODUCTION

Please carefully read the syllabus. It is a sort of contract. We will seek to cover and accomplish the learning outcomes objectives as outlined above in a variety of ways. This course is presented in a number of ways. There are the lectures. We will explore a range of subjects sometimes using a Socratic method, sometimes a "sage-on-the-stage," sometimes a "guide-on-the-side." The student is also expected to act as teacher. Several assignments are geared to that end. My lectures will not parallel or recapitulate your readings. We will, however, discuss readings.

We will use both face-to-face and online formats in this course. Online discussion is an important element and it is required. More is provided on our use of course-ware below.

Foundations is a course designed to introduce the student to the fundamental roots and concepts of the library and information sciences disciplines. The term "disciplines" is

used purposefully. Ours is a profession undergoing as ever profound and sweeping changes. In recent years some have argued that the library and with it librarians have become anachronistic. Others argue that the structure and form libraries take and their functions in society have and will continue to change. I incline toward the latter because libraries and librarians are far more than "brick and mortar" repositories of unread books and "markers and parkers" of monographs.

And just FYI, take a look at http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos068.htm and http://www.usnews.com/articles/business/best-careers/2008/12/11/best-careers-2009-librarian.html

Before doing anything else, fully and carefully read the syllabus. If you have questions, ask them in BlazeView so others can benefit from the answers.

Please note. This is a large class. We meet four weekends at Macon State University over the semester. Because of the set schedule and class size, we will not have as much flexibility as one might like.

BlazeView
BlazeView is the course-ware adopted by the University System of Georgia for online course delivery. We will use BlazeView to augment in class instruction. And we will use it for purposes of in-course communications and online discussions. Finally, use BlazeView email for all course related correspondence with fellow students and with the instructor.

CLASS MEETING
We meet at Macon State University in Jones 102
        Aug 22 (10:00-5:00) Aug 23 (10:00-3:00),
        Sep 26 (10:00- 5:00) Sep 27 (10:00-3:00),
        Oct 24 (10:00-5:00) Oct 25 (10:00-3:00),
        Nov 21 (10:00-5:00) Nov 22 (10:00-3:00)

TEXT BOOKS

There two assigned textbooks. These are:
- Richard Rubin *Foundations of Library and Information Science, 2nd edition*
- Nicholas Basbanes, *Patience & Fortitude*

Recommended Resource:
- Kate Turabian, et al. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 7th edition*. There are many online style guides. Rather than buying the manual, I suggest you begin with online resources. See e.g. http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/turabiangd.php

Writing and Citation Style
I have suggested Turabian to guide both your writing and your use of citations. This manual of style will benefit you through several courses. It can help guide you as you formulate hypotheses for papers. It can help guide you as you develop the paper.

WARNING: Turabian is but one approach to style and format. It is an abridged version of the Chicago Style as required by the University of Chicago Press. Even Turabian requires decisions. As is provided in section 15.3 (p 135) there are several ways to cite

materials within a given style or system. Section 15.3 discusses note-bibliographic and parenthetical styles. The choice is yours but you must be consistent.

As you are no doubt aware there are several other major approaches to writing and citation style, to format. These include APA and MLA in the humanities and social sciences and a variety of approaches in the sciences. All are valid. We will limit ourselves to the guidance Turabian offers for this course. Other MLIS professors require other formats and styles in their courses. Once you master the principles of one system it is easier to master the principles of another. Do not mix them up.

For an idea of the degree of variety, examine professional journals not only in library and information science but in other fields as well (for a list of many LIS journals see Rubin, appendix A). In the end, if you write for a professional journal use the format the journal editor indicates. Most journals provide instructions for potential authors.

And required articles:

You are to read my paper "Information science as 'little science': The implications of a bibliometric analysis of the Journal of the American Society for Information Science," *Scientometrics 51*, 1 (2001): 117-32. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the paper argues that a transition has taken place in information science. The second is that the paper discusses bibliometrics as a research methodology.

You are to read my *Our Changing Values: An Historical Survey of Library Theory and Practice in the West: Intellectual Property, Copyright, and Fair Use*. Available online

I also require that students in this class become very familiar with Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, various editions). It is sometimes argued that our discipline has or is undergoing a paradigm shift. It is indeed possible that it has experienced several in the near to distant past. I am not assigning Kuhn for any specific week, but you can expect to be asked to apply his work in response to some question on the Final Exam. In a "Foundations" class it is not unreasonable to speculate and analyze whether the foundations of our field have or have not shifted. If indeed there has been a shift, what are the extent, breadth, and limits of that shift? If we are indeed in the middle of a shift, what might be the implications of that shift?

I suggest you might also find June Lester and Wallace Koehler, *Fundamentals of Information Studies, 2 ed.*, 2007 of interest and use. This work is *not* required.

READING SCHEDULE
Classes begin August 17, 2009. I trust you will have already reviewed this syllabus by then. Readings indicated under specific class dates are preparation for those days.

Find a copy of Kuhn at your local academic library – any edition. Read it over the course of the semester.

Aug 22 (10:00-5:00), Aug 23 (10:00-3:00)
        Rubin: Ch 1, Ch 2
        Basbanes: Part One

Sep 26 (10:00- 5:00), Sep 27 (10:00-3:00)
     Rubin: Ch 5, Ch 7, Ch 8, App D, App E
     Basbanes: Part Two
     Koehler: *Our changing values...*
Oct 24 (10:00-5:00), Oct 25 (10:00-3:00)
     Rubin: Ch 4, Ch 6, Ch 9
     Basbanes: Part Three
     Koehler *Information science as little science…*
Nov 21 (10:00-5:00), Nov 22 (10:00-3:00)
     Rubin: Ch 3, Ch 10
     Basbanes: Epilogue

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are four requirements and exams required for this course described below. These are (1) a take-home or "do-at-home" Final Exam, (2) a History Report both oral and written, (3) a Career Report both oral and written, and (4) a "Living Librarian" report

Requirements 1, 2 and 4are to be individual assignments; item 3 is a group project. Each student is required to prepare a brief (not to exceed one page) description of the group process in the assignment one week following oral presentations.

Assignments Defined

Living Librarians -- 15 percent of final grade -- Due September class.

Somewhere in the print media (newspapers, magazines, journals), find non-fiction stories that include references either to practicing librarians or to individuals who have completed library training (MLIS, BLIS, equivalent degrees). **OR** you may interview a librarian you know and write up that person's experience. Find material that focuses on the impact of the work history or the library training they received. For example, Laura Bush holds an MLIS. What effect did that have on the direction of her life?

Choose someone who is contemporary. It can be a famous librarian – for example James Billington, Librarian of Congress. Billington is not a "librarian;" he is, by training, an historian. Or choose your local children's librarian who turned you on to Dewey Decimals.

History Reports - Individual effort -- 25 percent of final grade Due October class

A list of "Key People and Events" is provided in the BlazeView online class site. Each student will select one of these people or events and prepare a written and oral report. Selection will be performed prior to the first class meeting.

Written reports are to be turned into the instructor one week prior to the oral presentation in digital format (pdf, html, or Word). These will then be posted to the class BlazeView site.

Wikipedia sub-assignment

As part of either the Living Librarian or the History Report, prepare an original upload for Wikipedia (if the individual or event is not already discussed there) or add to and edit existing Wikipedia posts. For example, I submitted the following: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_david_kohler. Someone else added the portrait. Should one of you report on Köhler, additional family or career information might be appropriate.

Career Report --Group effort -- 25 percent of final grade Due November class

Contemporary librarianship and the information sciences cover a multitude of different but overlapping careers and professions. If anything, these professions and approaches to the issues are undergoing continuing differentiation and diversification.

The purpose of the career report is to expand our understanding of the scope and practice of the information profession and to provide practical information on career possibilities. In addition, you will gain experience in-group report preparation, a bane of your future professional life.

The topic for the career report is to be selected from the positions listed in BlazeView. Each team is to gather information from a variety of sources, compile that information into a written report, and make an oral presentation in class.

Written and oral presentations should include the following:

- A generic job description, including typical requirements for and responsibilities of such a position and other possible titles for the position
- Environment in which the position exists; e.g. public or private sector, organizational setting, etc.
- Characteristics of the career that make it part of the "information profession."
- A general profile of a "typical" practitioner. This should include typical education, years in the field, background, and age.
- Expected compensation
- Opportunities for career advancement and diversification
- Sources of advertisements for the position

The written report should not exceed six pages. The oral report should not exceed thirty minutes. In both cases, if the necessary ground can be covered in a shorter format, so much the better. Remember to use visuals and other support technologies for the oral presentation. You might want to look at Lester and Koehler's Chapter 7.

Take Home COMPREHENSIVE EXAM Individual Effort --30 percent of grade. The exam is due Friday, December 11 at noon as a Word or RTF upload to BlazeView. Remember Turabian!

There will be one exam in this course. It will be a comprehensive, do-it-at-home, open book exam. You may use any resource you wish to complete the exam with the EXCEPTION OF DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER PEOPLE. You may not collaborate with other students. You may not ask me questions, nor can you ask experts in the field. In short, you are limited to texts, notes, articles, and books.

Everything offered or required in this course is fair game for the Final Exam. This includes lectures, oral and written presentations by you and your peers, and assigned required readings. The exam will consist of five questions. I give you one question to consider and develop over the course. This question is required. The other four will be made available December 7, 2009, and you are to answer any three of these. I expect well written and well researched and documented answers.

Your first question: Define the relationship between library science and information science. Have library science and/or information science undergone a paradigm shift. Discuss the paradigm shift issue in the context of Kuhn's concepts. Koehler has argued that information science is in transition. How do Koehler's arguments support (if they do) a Kuhnian interpretation? What evidence for this shift can you provide?

PORTFOLIO – 5% of grade. Due November 22.

The portfolio requirement begins in the Foundations course. It will continue across the duration of the Program. There is a formal portfolio requirement in the exit course MLIS 7800. The requirement will be discussed during the first class meeting. Information is also posted at the Foundations BlazeView Vista site. You should also discuss it at least once a semester with your adviser. We strongly recommend that the portfolio be kept current. Both paper and e-portfolios are appropriate.

I believe the portfolio serves two purposes. First, it documents one's expertise and experience and can serve as an important foundation for employment and advancement opportunities. Second, a related purpose, the portfolio is also an outcomes assessment tool for both he student and the Program. How well did the student do learning and applying knowledge gained? Did the Program provide adequate exposure to the field's core competencies?

SUGGESTIONS
As you are no doubt aware, the VSU MLIS Program is a non-thesis, non-comprehensive exam program. It does have exit requirements. These are brought together in the Program's final course MLIS 7800 Capstone. Among the requirements for Capstone are (a) preparation of a publication quality paper and (b) submission of a developed portfolio. One might begin considering a Capstone paper subject as early as now.

University Policies
Please become aware of and be guided by these USG, VSU, and departmental policies:

Academic Dishonesty
Equal Opportunity Statement
Sexual Harassment
Special Services

Additional resources and links can be found on the MLIS Webpage
http://www.valdosta.edu/mlis/student_resources/