Valdosta State University
Master of Library & Information Science
MLIS 7100 Information Sources and Services
Syllabus—Spring 2011
Three Credit Hours

Instructor

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Description

An introduction to concepts and processes in reference and information science and to fundamental information sources and services provided by libraries and information organizations. An overview of the reference function includes the history and future of reference service, question negotiation, information needs analysis, effective research strategies, evaluation of information sources in various formats, and ethics of information services.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Apply the principles identified with competent question negotiation as outlined in the most current *Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers*.
- Describe the physical environments for both in-person and virtual reference transactions conducive to delivering effective information services.
- Classify information resources by their distinguishing characteristics.
- Consult the sources most relevant for keeping reference collections up to date.
- Retrieve information based on the needs of the user and on availability of resources.
- Devise search strategies consistent with how a resource organizes knowledge and information.
- Evaluate both print and online resources based on criteria used in professional reviews.
- Apply the central research findings and research literature related to reference services.
- Produce a user aid for a targeted audience.

Required Materials
Textbook
Cassell, K.A, and Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. ISBN: 978-1-55570-672-2

- The code for receiving 10% off the textbook when ordering directly through Neal-Schuman is ONDRU. Insert the code in the appropriate field when purchasing via the online order form (www.neal-schuman.com).

- For the discount via phone (212-925-8650 or 866-NS-BOOKS), fax (212-219-8916 or 866-209-7932), or email (orders@neal-schuman.com), refer to the ONDRU code. The 10% discount does not apply if using Financial Aid funds to purchase the textbook from the publisher.

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

Hardware

- A headset with attached microphone for use with Live Classroom.

Readings
Required readings are listed in the syllabus. Other than the textbook, all readings are available in LISTA full-text database unless indicated otherwise.

MLIS Faculty Advice
MLIS 7100 is a reading/writing intensive core course, students reporting that they spend an average of 10-15 hours/week on assignments, so taking MLIS 7100 with no more than one other course is strongly advised. Students who have never worked in a library should schedule the course **after** completing MLIS 7000 and one other core course, either MLIS 7200 or MLIS 7300.

Attendance
This is a Web-based course, with no required face-to-face meetings. Live Classrooms are optional but listening to the archive(s) is suggested.

Assignments
The following are graded components of the course:

- Reference Transaction Report   20%   Due: Feb 10
- Search Exercises (3@10% each)   30%   Due: See syllabus
- Pathfinder   40%   Due: May 3
- Participation   10%

Assignment Synopses (see Assignments folder in BlazeView for details)

- **Reference Transaction Report**: An essay describing face-to-face and virtual transactions, including a recommendation for improving one of them

- **Search Exercises**: Three print/electronic reference sources search exercises covering a range of major sources

- **Pathfinder**: A bibliographic user guide that introduces the literature of a specific subject area or topic

- **Participation**: Following course guidelines/instructions

Late Assignments

This section of MLIS 7100 does not include a grace period. Late assignments, however, will be accepted according to the following points deduction schedule: -2 points for any part of a 24-hour period; e.g., an assignment submitted 5 minutes late loses 2 points, one submitted 24 hours and 2 minutes late loses 4 points, and so on.

Any request for an extension is to be sent via phone. *Note*: Post questions about assignments in the "Ask Me" discussion in BlazeView.

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Syllabus
Week 1   **Introduction; Reference Librarianship: Now and Then**
J10-16   J13, 6:00 p.m.: Live Classroom
                Readings

                Cassell, K. A, & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 1: Introduction to reference and information services, pp. 3-14. New York: Neal-Schuman.

                Auster, E. & Chan, D. C. (2004). Reference librarians and keeping up-to-date: A question of priorities. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, *44*(1), 57-66.

                Bopp, R. E., & Smith, L. C. (2001). *Reference and information services: An introduction*. Chapter 1: History and variety of reference services, pp. 3-25. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited. Course reserves.

                Hill, K.C. (2001). Acquiring subject knowledge to provide quality reference service. *Reference Librarian*, (72), 219-228.

                Huber, J. T., Boorkman, J. A. & Blackwell, J. (2008). *Introduction to Reference Sources in the Health Sciences*. 5th ed. Chapter 1: Organization and management of the reference collection, pp. 3-27. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers. Course reserves.

Week 2   **Issues and Trends in Reference**
J17-23   J17 MLK Holiday, VSU closed
              Readings

              Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 13: When and how to use the internet as a reference tool, pp. 271-291. New York: Neal-Schuman.

              Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 20: Reference 2.0, pp. 389-415. New York: Neal-Schuman.

              Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 21: The future of information services, pp. 419-428. New York: Neal-Schuman.

              Bopp, R. E., & Smith, L. C. (2001). *Reference and information services: An introduction.* Attitudes and characteristics of the reference librarian, pp. 49-51. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited. Course reserves.

              Blessinger, K. D. (2002). Problem patrons: All shapes and sizes. *The Reference Librarian, 75/76*, 3-10.

              Liu, Z. (2006). Print vs. electronic resources: A study of user perceptions, preferences, and use. *Information Processing & Management, 42*(2), 583-592.

Week 3   **Reference Interview**
J24-30   Due: Thursday J28 Pathfinder topic
              Readings

              Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 2: Determining the question: In-person, telephone, and virtual reference reviews, pp. 15-31. New York: Neal-Schuman.

              Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 3: Finding the answer: Basic search techniques, pp. 35-54. New York: Neal-Schuman.

              RUSA (Reference and User Services Association). (2004). Guidelines for behavioral performance of reference and information service providers. http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelines behavioral.cfm

Week 4   **Chat, E-mail, and IM Reference**
J31-F6   Readings

              Arnold, J., & Kaske, N. (2005). Evaluating the quality of a chat service. *portal: Libraries and the Academy, 5*(2), 177-193.

Coffman, S., & Arret, L. (2004). To chat not to chat: Taking yet another look at virtual reference. *The Searcher*, *12*(8), 49-56.

Desai, C. M. (2003). Instant messaging reference: How does it compare? *The Electronic Library*, *21*(1), 21-30.

Naylor, S., Stoffel, B., & Van der Laan, S. (2008). Why isn't our chat reference used more? Finding of focus group discussions with undergraduate students. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, *47*(4), 342-354.

RUSA Guidelines
http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelines behavioral.cfm

Week 5   **Selection and Evaluation of Reference Sources**
F7-13   Due: Thursday F10: Reference Transaction
Reading

Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction*. 2nd ed. Chapter 17: Selecting and evaluating reference materials, pp. 337-350. New York: Neal-Schuman.

Week 6   **Search Strategies I**
F14-20   Readings

Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction*. 2nd ed. Chapter 4: Asking questions about books, magazines, newspapers, libraries and publishing, and bibliographic networks—bibliographic sources: pp. 57-73. New York: Neal-Schuman.

Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction*. 2nd ed. Chapter 13: How and when to use the Internet as a reference tool, pp. 271-291. New York: Neal-Schuman.

Duke University Libraries. Research Guide.

Jacso, P. (2008). Amazon, Google Book Search, and Google Scholar. *Online*, *31*(1), 51-54.

Jacso, P. (2008). Google Scholar revisited. *Online Information Review*, *32*(1), 102-114.

Neuhaus, C., Neuhaus, E., & Asher, A. (2008). Google Scholar goes to school: The presence of Google Scholar on college and university web sites. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, *34*(1), 39-51.

Week 7   **Search Strategies II**
F21-27   Readings

Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 8: Answering questions about event and issues, past and present—Indexes and full-text databases, pp. 153-178. New York: Neal-Schuman.

E-reference shelf at Odum Library
http://www.valdosta.edu/library/learn/ereferenceshelf.shtml

Week 8   **Search Strategies III**
F28-M6   Due: Thursday M3: Search Exercise I
            Readings

Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 8: Answering questions about event and issues, past and present—Indexes and full-text databases, pp. 153-178. New York: Neal-Schuman.

E-reference shelf at Odum Library.
http://www.valdosta.edu/library/learn/ereferenceshelf.shtml

Fister, B., Gilbert, J., & Fry, A. R. (2008). Aggregated interdisciplinary databases and the needs of undergraduate researchers. *portal: Libraries and the Academy, 8*(3), 273-292.

Week 9   **Spring Break**
M7-13   Spring Break

Week 10   **Encyclopedias and Biographical & Genealogical Sources**
M14-20   Readings

Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 5: Answering questions about anything and everything—Encyclopedias, pp. 75-100. New York: Neal-Schuman.

Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 11: Answering questions about the lives of people—Biographical information sources, pp. 233-248. New York: Neal-Schuman.

Badke, W. (2008). What to do with Wikipedia. *Online, 32*(2), 48-50.

Bibel, B., & Yusko, S. (2010, September 15). Encyclopedia update, 2010. *Booklist, 107*(2), 82-86. *Booklist Online*
http://www.booklistonline.com/ProductInfo.aspx?pid=4324933

Cohen, N. (2008). Start writing the eulogies for print encyclopedias. *The New York Times.*

Davidsson, R. I. (2004). Providing genealogy research services in public libraries: Guidelines and ethics. *Public Libraries*, *43*(3), 142-144.

E-reference shelf at Odum Library.
http://www.valdosta.edu/library/learn/ereferenceshelf.shtml

Francis, L. S. (2004). The genealogy search process. *PNLA Quarterly*, *68*(3), 12, 22.

Francis, L. S. (2004). The genealogy reference interview. *PNLA Quarterly*, *68*(3), 13-15.

Quinn, M. (2002). Encyclopedia update: Do encyclopedias still matter? *Booklist*, *99*(2), 253.

Rector, L. H. (2008). Comparison of Wikipedia and other encyclopedias for accuracy, breadth, and depth in historical articles. *Reference Services Review*, *36*(1), 7-22.

Waters, N. L. (2007). Why you can't cite Wikipedia in my class. *Communications of the ACM*, *50*(9), 15-18.

Week 11   **Dictionaries**
M21-27   Due: Thursday M24: Search Exercise 2
Readings

Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction*. 2nd ed. Chapter 7: Answering questions about words—Dictionaries, pp. 125-151. New York: Neal-Schuman.

Bulson, C. (2010). Reference on the Web: Online dictionaries. *Booklist*, *106*(18), 68.

Cary, P. (2009). Free online dictionaries. *Notes*, *65*(4), 808-813. (Subject is music)

E-reference shelf at Odum Library.
http://www.valdosta.edu/library/learn/ereferenceshelf.shtml

Quinn, M. E. & Bulson, C. (2010, April 9). Dictionary roundup, 2010. *Booklist Online*.
http://www.booklistonline.com/ProductInfo.aspx?pid=4137671

Week 12   **Ready Reference**
M28-A3   Readings

Cassell, K. A., and Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction*. 2nd ed. Chapter 6: Answering questions that require handy facts—Ready reference sources, pp. 103-122. New York: Neal-Schuman.

E-reference shelf at Odum Library.
http://www.valdosta.edu/library/learn/ereferenceshelf.shtml

Week 13   **Government and Statistical Sources**

A4-10   Due: Thursday A7: Search Exercise 3

Readings
Cassell, K. A., and Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 12: Answering questions about governments, pp. 249-268. New York: Neal-Schuman.

E-reference shelf at Odum Library.
http://www.valdosta.edu/library/learn/ereferenceshelf.shtml

Quinn, M. E. and Bulson, C. (2010, March 17). Atlas Roundup, 2010. *Booklist Online*.
http://www.booklistonline.com/ProductInfo.aspx?pid=4137731

Week 14   **Information Ethics, Reference Services for Specific Populations, and Bibliographic Instruction**

A11-17   Readings

Bopp, R. E., & Smith, L. C. (2001). *Reference and information services: An introduction.* Chapter 2: Ethical aspects of reference service, pp. 28-46. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited. Course reserves.

Bopp, R. E., & Smith, L. C. (2001). *Reference and information services: An introduction.* Chapter 12: Reference services for specific populations, pp. 279-306. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited. Course reserves.

Chapman, J. M., Pettway, C. K., & Scheuler, S. A. (2003). Teaching journal and serials information to undergraduates: Challenges, problems and recommended instructional approaches. *The Reference Librarian, 79-80*, 363-382.

Isaacson, D. (2004). Is the correct answer the right one? *Journal of Information Ethics, 13*(1), 14-18.

Miller-Gatenby, K. J., & Chittenden, M. (2000). Reference services for all: How to support reference service to clients with disabilities. The Reference Librarian, *69/70*, 313-326.

Shachaf, P. (2008). Virtual reference services: Implementation of professional and ethical standards. *Library & Information Science Research, 27*(4), 513-533.

Tinerella, V. P., & Dick, M. A. (2005). Academic reference service for the visually impaired: A guide for the non-specialist. *College & Research Libraries News, 66*(1), 29-32.

Week 15   Evaluation of Reference Services
A18-24   Reading

Cassell, K. A., & Hiremath, U. (2009). *Reference and information services in the 21st Century: An introduction.* 2nd ed. Chapter 19: Assessing and improving reference services, pp. 367-387. New York: Neal-Schuman.

Week 16   Pathfinder
A26-M1   Final edits and polish Pathfinder

Week 17   Pathfinder
M2-7   May 2 Last day of classes

Due: Tuesday M3: Pathfinder

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Grading
General Grade Scale
A = excellent work, among the best work seen at the graduate level
B = satisfactory work, better than average work at the graduate level
C = honest attempt, needs moderate to major revisions to be satisfactory
D = perfunctory or missing work

Points Grade Scale
A=93-100
B=85-92
C=77-84
D=69-76
F=Below 69

Final Grade Scale
A = always satisfactory, often excellent
B = mostly satisfactory, occasionally excellent
C = sometimes satisfactory, often needs revisions
D = rarely satisfactory, often perfunctory, late or missing
F = lacking even an attempt to learn or do, dishonesty, plagiarism.

Communicating with the Professor
See the file "Communicating with the Professor" on the BlazeView homepage. Following these guidelines is considered in the participation grade.

Technical Requirements
All class materials will be placed on a password-protected Web site using the BlazeVIEW course management program. New users of BlazeVIEW should go to the BlazeVIEW help pages at http://www.valdosta.edu/vista/students.shtml then return to the BlazeVIEW page and login using their BlazeNet email ID and password.

To meet all course requirements, students should be prepared to: 1) complete assigned readings, which usually requires Adobe Acrobat Reader; 2) view all PowerPoint files posted on BlazeVIEW course homepage; 3) at least listen to optional Live Classroom sessions, which are available through the BlazeVIEW course homepage; 4) check discussions as needed; 5) keep backup copies/files of assignments submitted; and 6) follow instructions/guidelines.

Unless otherwise stated, assignments are to be submitted in Word 97-2003.

Computer hardware/software questions should be sent to VSU's IT Help Desk at http://www.valdosta.edu/helpdesk/guides/ or by phone at 229-245-4357.

Academic Honesty
"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 behavior are contained in the *Student Handbook, Student Code of Ethics*. Please acquaint yourself with the full policy at http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/AcademicHonestyPoliciesandProcedures.shtml.

Students are responsible for making sure they understand how to avoid breeches of academic integrity. Guidelines for citing, quoting, and appropriately using resources for assignments that require written compositions, reviews, or commentary are provided where applicable.

Noncompliance with the guidelines on appropriate use of resources will result in zero credit for those parts of the assignment affected. If unsure about the parameters of an assignment, ask for clarification.

Asking librarians or staff in a library to provide answers or to conduct research to fulfill any part of a graded course requirement is a violation of academic integrity. The same policy applies to contacting any free or commercial reference service for assistance with a graded assignment.

An overall grade of zero can be assigned to an entire assignment if the instructor determines that its contents, or parts of its contents, were completed by a second party. This, of course, does not apply to group projects that require collaboration.

Distance Learning Support
The university's Information Technology department provides step-by-step guides on how to use VSU's email and other sources. The IT Help Desk is at http://www.valdosta.edu/helpdesk/guides/ and their phone hot line is 229-245-4357.

To ask questions about availability or location of VSU online resources, use the VSU Library's Live Chat or E-mail at: http://www.valdosta.edu/library/ask.php or call the VSU Library's reference service at (229) 333-7149.

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 Conduct
Student behavior, which includes emails to class members and the instructor as well as postings to the discussion board in BlazeVIEW, is to be respectful and professional. Guidelines are specified in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Ethics. http://www.valdosta.edu/studentaffairs/documents/SAF_Student_Handbook2009-050809.pdf

Student Agreement
Per the VSU Vice President for Academic Affairs: By taking this course, you agree that all required course work may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to SafeAssign, a tool within BlazeVIEW. For more information on the use of SafeAssign at VSU see SafeAssign for Students (http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/SafeAssignforStudents.shtml).

Note*: The instructor may adapt or change this syllabus and/or the assignments according to circumstances that might arise during the semester.*

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