

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
MASTER OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE  
MLIS 7110 Online Searching  
Syllabus—Spring Semester 2006  
Three Credit Hours

**Instructor:**

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**Catalog Description**

An introduction to the information retrieval from popular online databases, to include the World Wide Web. The course addresses key concepts such as Boolean and keyword searches and the development of complex search strategies and algorithms. Prerequisite or corequisite: MLIS 7000.

**Course Outcomes**

Given a series of online searching exercises that simulate real-world client questions, students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Interview a client to verify information need(s)
- Identify searchable resources appropriate to information need(s)
- Translate research questions into effective and efficient search statements
- Navigate to and from adjunct files (indices, thesauri, saved documents)
- Interpret results output (citations, full records, full-text formats)
- Preserve findings in a form most accessible to the client
- Locate actual source materials or deliver location information to clients
- Evaluate the success of their own search efforts

Given a real-world environment of online information retrieval products, students will be able to draw comparisons among:

- Commercial vendors and marketplaces
- Databases of varying content, scope, format
- Interfaces based on usability
- Indexing and controlled vocabulary features
- Free Web resources

**Attendance**

This is a Web-delivered course with weekly assignments and most materials accessible via the Vista/WebCT course site. It is each student's responsibility to check the Vista/WebCT course pages as spelled out in the Course Calendar. A face-to-face Saturday meeting on the Macon State campus is an option that will be scheduled only if deemed necessary.

## Textbooks

*EBSCOhost User Guide: Academic Search Databases.*  
[http://support.epnet.com/custsupport/UserDocumentation/ebs\\_2565.doc](http://support.epnet.com/custsupport/UserDocumentation/ebs_2565.doc)

*Introduction to Dialog Featuring DialogWeb*  
[http://training.dialog.com/sem\\_info/courses/pdf\\_sem/intro\\_dialogweb.pdf](http://training.dialog.com/sem_info/courses/pdf_sem/intro_dialogweb.pdf)

*Introduction to Dialog for Information Professionals.*  
The Dialog Corporation, 2004.  
Print copy supplied free to graduate LIS programs.  
Students will receive your copies in the mail.

## Academic Requirements

Independent Search Sets 3 sets of search problems will be assigned intermittently throughout the semester.	30%
Discussion Posts	10%
Research Project #1 Commercial vendor and database analysis	15%
Research Project #2 Topical Web resource exploration	20%
Final Project Documented paper showing your search techniques on multiple databases to find materials on a multi-faceted topic for a client. Examples of your search histories and consultations with the client (who will be a classmate) must also be described.	25%

## Submitting Assignments

Deadlines for each graded activity are clearly stated on the MLIS 7110 Course Calendar posted on the course home page on Vista. Missing a deadline for any activity will result in a reduction in your grade unless you can arrange a mutually acceptable alternative with the instructor.

## Grading

Exceptionally exceeds minimum standards	A
Exceeds minimum standards	B
Meets minimum standards	C
Barely meets minimum standards	D
Fails to meet minimum standards	F

## Technical Requirements

All Independent Searches and Projects must be submitted using a program compatible with VSU supported products. MS Word is the preferred document format. WordPerfect 12 allows you to save your documents as Word documents. If you are using a lower version of WordPerfect or some other word processor, save your documents in Rich Text Format (rtf). Pasting your text into an e-mail is not an acceptable solution and will not be accepted by Dr. Ondrusek.

To view assigned online tutorials, you will need the Adobe Acrobat Reader, the Flash viewer, and the PowerPoint Viewer (if you have PowerPoint, you have the Viewer already). Free download URLs will be listed in your course notes. The Vista version of WebCT works best with the Netscape browser - freely downloaded from <http://browser.netscape.com/ns8/>.\*

If you are a new Vista user, go to the Vista help pages at <http://www.valdosta.edu/vista/>.\*On the right margin are "Self Help" links. View the "Getting Started" tutorial first. Then return to the Vista page and login using your BlazeNet email ID and password.

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.

## Distance Learning Support

A VSU reference librarian, Ms. Shiloh Smith, is responsible for coordinating library services for off-campus VSU students. She may be reached by email at [shismith@valdosta.edu](mailto:shismith@valdosta.edu)\* or by phone at 229-245-3717. An online guide for distance education students is on the Odum Library Web site at <http://books.valdosta.edu/dist/dmain.html>.\*A brochure for off-campus students provides valuable links to the reference desk and to the library's rather new reference chat service.

## Academic Dishonesty

"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 VSU policy at [http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/Academic\\_Dishonesty.html](http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/Academic_Dishonesty.html).\*

## 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 not registered with the Special Services Program should contact the Access Office for Students locate din room 1115 Nevins Hall. The phone numbers are 229-245-2498 (voice) and 22-219-1348 (ttv).

\* These URL's are scheduled to change during the fall semester 2006.