

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE
MLIS 7220 Public Libraries
Syllabus – Fall Semester 2009
3 hours credit

Instructor

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Catalog Description: A study of the American public library and its place in contemporary communities: Topics include standards, planning, evaluation, governance, funding, and advocacy.

Prerequisite or co-requisite: MLIS 7200 or consent of the instructor.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- Recognize the history of public libraries in the U.S.
- Analyze the role of public libraries in contemporary U.S. society.
- Describe governance of U.S. public libraries including their missions, goals, and functions
- Analyze the development, marketing, delivery and management of public library services and programs
- Identify user and community characteristics and priorities and their effects on public library systems and services
- Examine methods of evaluating public library systems, services, and programs
- Examine the uses and impacts of digital information technology in public libraries.

Required Materials:

Text book: McCook, Kathleen de la Pena. (2004). *Introduction to Public Librarianship*. NY: Neal-Schuman. ISBN 1-55570-475-1 (paper).

American Libraries Direct (AL Direct). An electronic newsletter sent by e-mail every Wednesday. *AL Direct* calls attention to new items on the ALA website (including *American Libraries* news stories, press releases and other news from ALA divisions and offices, and a calendar of events), as well as practical, informative, and entertaining library-related news and tidbits found elsewhere online. Sign up for *AL Direct*: <http://www.ala.org/ala/online/aldirect/aldirect.cfm>

Weekly readings from the professional and research literature. Selected journal articles are listed on the course calendar and in the weekly folders. I have chosen them to update or elaborate on the information provided in your textbook.

Additional Course requirements and resources

This course assumes that you are familiar with Valdosta State University's online learning technologies. The course is designed for the online learning environment and all course activities will take place inside the course website in BlazeView. Distance learning support is available from VSU. Please see:
<http://www.valdosta.edu/vista/students.shtml>

All required readings other than *AL Direct* are summarized on the course calendar and listed in full in the weekly folders. All readings are accessible through Valdosta State University's Odum Library online journal access **or** through public access websites **or** will be provided inside the course website in pdf format.

Students are expected to be able to obtain materials from the Odum Library's electronic collections and resources or their equivalents as part of their successful participation in this course. An online services guide for distance education students is on the Odum Library web site at <http://www.valdosta.edu/library/services/distanceeducation.shtml>

Supplemental readings and resources are listed in the weekly folders by topic. They are, by definition, not required but can help you broaden and deepen your understanding of topics of interest to you and of the subject area of the course in general. They may be of great help to you in successfully completing the course assignments.

Submitting your Written Work

All written work is due on the date and time specified in the course calendar. Any exceptions must be negotiated in advance. Technological crises are not an acceptable excuse for submitting work late unless BlazeView is down.

All written work must be submitted through the BlazeView course website using Word 2003 or rtf formats. If you use Word 2007 please save your document as Word 2003. If you use any other word processing program please save your document in Rich Text Format (rtf). All written work file names should include your last name and the assignment name as the file name. For example, my first library profile report would be named MostRpt1.doc

The university's Information Technology department provides step-by-step guides on how to use VSU's e-mail system and other resources. The IT Help Desk is at <http://www.valdosta.edu/helpdesk/guides/>
Their telephone hotline is 229-245-4357.

Communication

Faculty Office discussion board: This board will be available for the duration of the semester. Please post course-related questions that may be relevant to your classmates on the discussion board. PLEASE READ THE FACULTY DB REGULARLY. You may find useful information that you may not have known you need.

E-mail or voice: If you have a personal question please send it to me via university e-mail. If you would like to speak with me by telephone please let me know via e-mail so we can arrange a good time for both of us to talk.

If you are in the area and would like to meet face to face please let me know so we can arrange a time. If I am on campus and my door is open please feel free to come in.

Summary of Graded Course Activities

The course calendar provides a one page summary of all course readings and activities for the semester. Details for each week are posted in the appropriate folder on the course website. *It is the student's responsibility to check the course calendar for DUE DATES for all class work and the weekly folders for all required and supplemental readings and other materials.* Summary descriptions of all required course work are provided below. Full details can be found in the assignments section of the course website.

Weekly Discussion Board Postings

Total Points Possible: 20

Week 1 – Required - Please introduce yourself on the Introductions DB by Monday of Week 2.

Weeks 2 – 16

For full credit for the Discussion Board activity you must post to 10 of the 15 weekly discussion topics during the week the topic is active as described in the assignments section of the course website. You are encouraged to read and post every week to stay involved with the course.

Public Library Profile Reports

Total Points Possible: 60

Summary: Identify a public library near where you live or work. If you already work in a public library you may use your workplace library and library system for this assignment. You may (and should) use this library as a resource for completing most of the assignments in this course and as a resource for your responses to the weekly discussion board topics when appropriate. The profile has four parts which will be submitted individually by the dates indicated on the course calendar.

Report 1 – Library Description: 15 points

Report 2 – The Library and the Community – 15 points

Report 3 – Library Services – 15 points

Report 4 – Challenges to Your Public Library – 15 points

Goals of Library Profile Reports:

- To become familiar with the organizational structure of a public library system;
- To become aware of the ways public libraries fit into their communities; and
- To become aware of the challenges and opportunities facing public libraries in the 21st century.

Evaluation of Library Profile Reports

Your reports will be evaluated based on

- How thoroughly you addressed the points indicated in each assignment;
- Clarity of organization;
- Correct spelling and grammar.

Research Paper**20 points**

Public libraries are rapidly changing institutions and public librarianship is a rapidly changing field of practice. Identify a relevant topic of interest or concern to you and explore it in a 2500-3000 word paper (body of your paper should be roughly 10 – 15 pages at approximately 250 words per page). This is not an opinion paper; please explore your topic and present different perspectives if you find them. Document your findings following either APA or Chicago/Turabian formal bibliographic style. You should include a reference list and cite your sources in your paper.

Evaluation of research papers

- Clarity of exposition
- Persuasiveness of work
- Presentation
- Bibliography
- Grammar and spelling (proofread your work!)

Course Grades

Students can earn a maximum of 100 points in this course as indicated above.

Course grades will be awarded as follows:

A: 90 – 100 points

B: 80 – 89 points

C: 70 – 79 points

D: 60 – 69 points

F: fewer than 60 points.

University Policies**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 acknowledgment of external sources. Specific regulations related to student conduct and behaviors are contained in the *Student Handbook*, *Student Code of Ethics*. See <http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/AcademicHonestyatVSU.shtml>

It is your responsibility to make sure you understand how to avoid breeches of academic integrity. If you are unsure about the parameters of an assignment, ask for clarification.

If you need help with citations and research resources and techniques the university provides extensive resources for students. For help please start at the Odum Library's "how to" page: <http://www.valdosta.edu/library/learn/howto.shtml>

Equal Opportunity Statement

Valdosta State University is an equal opportunity educational institution. It is not the intent of the 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, disability, or sexual orientation of the individual. It is the intent of the institution to comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent Executive Orders as well as Title IX, Equal Pay Act of 1963, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974, Age Discrimination of Employment Act of 1967, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Accommodations Statement

Valdosta State University complies fully with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Access Office for Students with Disabilities (Access Office) serves students who have documented disabilities, have met the Valdosta State University (VSU) admission criteria, and are otherwise qualified. Students requesting accommodations or modifications due to a documented disability must contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in the Farber Hall. The phone numbers are 229-245-2498 (V/VP) and 229-219-1348 (TTY). The website is <http://www.valdosta.edu/access/>

Student Agreement

Enrollment in this class signifies that the student has agreed to abide by and adhere to the policies and regulations specified above. It is understood that the instructor may adapt or change this syllabus and the assignments contained within it according to circumstances that may arise during the course of the semester.