VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCINCE
MLIS 7110 Online Searching
Syllabus—Spring Semester 2012
Three Credit Hours

Instructor:
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Catalog Description
An introduction to methods of information retrieval used in commercial databases and on the World Wide Web. Advanced search strategies such as complex Boolean operations and keyword commands will be included. Prerequisite: MLIS 7300 or MLIS 7520.

Learning Outcomes

Given a real-world environment of online information retrieval products, students will identify:
- Commercial vendors and marketplaces
- Databases of varying content, scope, format
- Interfaces based on usability
- Indexing and controlled vocabulary features
- Free Web resources

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

Textbooks

   The purchase of a commercial textbook is not required for this course. The instructor provides numerous handouts and guided search sheets. Print these out and organize them into a notebook.

   In addition, please print out or download each of the items listed on the next page. You will need to refer to these materials repeatedly throughout the course.

Online manuals

EBSCOhost Integrated Search User Guide (last updated September 2010)
http://support.ebsco.com/knowledge_base/detail.php?id=4481
 (Click on the "Document Download" link)
NOTE: VSU does not have access to the Integrated Search feature described on pages 12-13.

Introduction to DIALOG for Information Professionals (Sections 1-4)
http://gep.dialog.com/instruction/workbook/

Dialog Datastar Database Catalog 2010
http://support.dialog.com/publications/dbcat/dbcat2010.pdf

Journal Articles

Class 4
"Information Search Tactics" by Marcia J. Bates.
http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/bates/articles/Information%20Search%20Tactics.html
Published in 1979 – still a classic.

Class 5
Two conference presentations from 1998 by Jessica L. Milstead:
"NISO Z39.19: Standard for Structure and Organization of Information Retrieval Thesauri"
http://www.bayside-indexing.com/Milstead/z39.htm

"Use of Thesauri in the Full-Text Environment"
http://www.bayside-indexing.com/Milstead/useof.htm

Class 13
"Adding Value to Your Online Results" by Robert Schwarzwalder. *Database Magazine* 20
(1997), unp. Full-text available in Academic Search Complete.

"After the Research: Information Professionals' SECRETS for Delivering Results"
by Angela Kansiger. *Online* 27 (2003), unp. Full-text available in Academic Search Complete.

Instructor Availability & Support

Check with your instructor for her/his policy on how frequently e-mail and telephone messages will be returned. By institutional policy, instructors are asked to communicate with students online through VSU accounts (BlazeView and VSU e-mail). If you are registered for the course as a non-degree student, a VSU email account will be assigned to you for this semester.

All discussion posts and assignment submissions for this online course must be sent via BlazeView. Your VSU email username serves as your BlazeVIEW login. The BlazeVIEW password requires at least one capital letter in it. See the section on 'Technical Requirements" on page 9 of this syllabus for contact information in the case you need technical help.

Attendance

This is a Web-delivered course, with no required face-to-face meetings. The instructor will schedule real-time instruction using tools in BlazeVIEW such as Live Classroom.

Course Activities Outline
The following list is a brief overview of the activities included in this course. Complete instructions for each assignment along with grading criteria will be posted on the BlazeView course site in advance of that assignment's due date.

Independent Search Exams   **32 points**
  Exam #1 (16 points) – applying searching techniques and rules using a search form.
  Exam #2 (16 points) – applying searching techniques and rules using a command interface.

Discussion Posts   **28 points**
  Practice Search 1 (7 points) – keyword searching in a menu-driven search form.
  Practice Search 2 (7 points) – searching using thesaurus terms.
  Practice Search 3 (7 points) - advanced searching using multiple techniques.
  Dear Dr. Search-It (7 points) – explaining a metasearch interface.

Course Project #1: Biography of a Database   **16 points**
  A report that traces the history of a database, its contents, audience, types of material included, scope and coverage, updating, search features, and the vendors that offer subscriptions.

Course Project #2: Client Report   **24 points**
  A documented client report that demonstrates your search techniques on multiple databases and free Web sites 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.

Assignment Calendar

Week of:	*Activities:*

Class 1
Jan. 9-15

<u>Introduction</u>

Use the "First Contact" discussion board to say hello to your classmates and post a picture of yourself.

Go to the Class 1 Folder containing:
- Class 1 Overview
- Links to pertinent Web sites
- Article titled "Electronic Data Sources" from *World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* 3rd Edition (1993) – a historical overview
- A "Virtual Lecture" on the Information Retrieval system
  (in two versions – PowerPoint and PDF – you choose)
- *GALILEO Introduction* Information Sheet

Mon. Jan. 16   Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. VSU Library and campus offices are closed.

Class 2   Multi-subject Databases
Jan. 17-22

Go to the Class 2 Folder containing:
- Class 2 Overview
- Links to EBSCO training materials (view tutorials, consult the *Guide*)
- Introduction to the ProQuest menu-driven interface
- *Multi-subject Databases* information sheet (print out for future reference)
- *Quick Search: Four Multi-subject Databases*
  (Print out, follow the instructions and do the searches for practice)
- Post any questions or comments you have on this exercise to the
  Ask the Instructor discussion board

Class 3   Course Project #1
Jan. 23-29

Complete Course Project #1: Biography of a Database

Choose a database from the list of databases provided in the Class 3 folder.
Prepare a report that gives an overview of the database and a vendor that markets
that database. You must use multiple sources.

Guidelines and Grading Criteria for Course Project #1 are in this folder.
Please read and heed.

Project 1 is due Monday, Jan. 30, 11:59 pm. A one-day grace period will be in effect. After
that, you will be graded down for each late day unless arrangements that are mutually
acceptable to the instructor are made.

Class 4   Keyword Searching Strategies
Jan. 30-Feb. 5

Live Classroom Lecture-Demonstration: Tuesday, Jan. 31st at 8 PM.

The presentation will be archived for those who cannot attend.

Go to the Class 4 Folder containing:
- Class 4 Overview
- Link to the article entitled "Information Search Tactics" by Marcia J. Bates
  (print out and read it)
- Guided Search 1: Selecting and Combining Search Terms as Keywords
  (Log into Academic Search Complete and follow along with the search steps
  illustrated.)
- Handout 1: Evaluating Search Results (Study the guidelines presented.)
- Handout 2: Venn Diagrams
- Handout 3: Diagramming Search Terms
- Worksheet 1: Formulating a keyword search

Practice Search 1: Selecting and Combining Keyword Terms
(Use this search to experiment with KEYWORD strategies on your own.)

Use Worksheet 1 in this Folder to:

>Describe what search <u>terms</u> gave you the "best" results.
>Show us what search <u>strategies or tactics</u> you employed that proved successful.
>Use <u>truncation</u> and <u>group equivalent terms</u> to expand your search.
>Specify at least three (3) tactics from the Bates article that you used in your search.

Post the Worksheet 1 as an attachment to the Practice Search 1 Discussion Board.
Post is worth 7 points.

Posts are due Monday, Feb. 6, 11:59 pm. You have a one-day grace period.
After that, posts will lose points (see Late Submissions on page 9).

Look for a Group Feedback message from Dr. Ondrusek.

Class 5   <u>The Thesaurus and Controlled Vocabulary</u>
Feb. 6-12

Go to the Class 5 Folder containing:
- Class 5 Overview
- Links to pertinent on-the-web materials (view these)
- Guided Searches
  (Log into the designated databases and follow along with the search steps illustrated.)
- Worksheet 2: Formulating a search using controlled vocabulary

Practice Search 2: Selecting and Combining Controlled Vocabulary Terms

After stepping through Guided Searches 2, 3, and 4, locate <u>thesaurus terms</u> to search the same topic from last week's keyword search.

Use Worksheet 2 in this Folder to complete the assignment.

Post Worksheet 2 as an attachment to the Practice Search 2 Discussion Board.
Post is worth 7 points.
Posts are due Monday, Feb. 13, 11:59 pm. You have a one-day grace period.
After that, posts will lose points (see Late Submissions on page 9).

Look for a Group Feedback message from Dr. Ondrusek.

Class 6 & 7   <u>Advanced Searching Strategies</u>
Feb. 13-26

Go to the Classes 6 & 7 Folder containing:
- Guided Searches
- Worksheet 3: Formulating an advanced search

Practice Search 3: Formulating a complex search with multiple strategies in **PsycInfo**

Use Worksheet 3 in this Folder to complete the assignment.

Post Worksheet 3 as an attachment to the Practice Search 3 Discussion Board.
Post is worth 7 points.

Posts are due Monday, Feb. 27th, 11:59 pm. You have a one-day grace period. After that, posts will lose points (see Late Submissions on page 9).

Look for a Group Feedback message from Dr. Ondrusek.

You can expect to see search questions such as these practice questions on your exam.

Thur. Mar. 1	**Last day to withdraw from a class without academic penalty.** **Note: Report your withdrawal notice to the VSU Registrar.** **Professors do not withdraw students from courses.**

Class 8
Feb. 27-Mar. 4

<u>Independent Search Exam #1</u>

This is to be solely your work. Collaboration with classmates is **<u>not</u>** permitted.
You may ask Dr. Ondrusek for "helps."
Exam 1 will be posted in the Class 8 Folder.
Submit to the Assignment Tool.
Due date deadline: Monday March 5th at 11:59 PM. No grace period.
Late submissions lose points (see Late Submissions on page 9).

Class 9
Mar. 5-11

<u>Command Driven Systems</u>

See this week's folder for learning materials and activities.

Submit questions to the **Guided Search Q and A** discussion board so all can benefit from the answers.

Mar. 12 - 16   Spring Break – Most University services closed. The Odum Library is open.

Class 10
Mar. 19-25

<u>More Command Driven Searching</u>

See this week's folder for learning materials and activities.

Submit questions to the **Ask the Instructor** discussion board so all can benefit from the answers.

Class 11
Mar. 26-Apr. 1

<u>Independent Search</u> <u>Exam #2</u>

This is to be solely your work. Collaboration with classmates is **<u>not</u>** permitted.
You may ask Dr. Ondrusek for "helps."
Exam 2 will be posted in the Class 11 Folder.
Submit to the Assignment Tool.
Due date deadline: Monday, April 2nd , 11:59 PM. No grace period.
Late submissions lose points (see Late Submissions on page 9).

Class 12
Apr. 2-8

Metasearching and Vendor-specific Searching

View the PowerPoint presentation in this week's folder on Metasearching

Live Classroom Guest Lecture – Speaker and date will be announced.

Complete the "Dear Dr. Search-It" activity. Instructions are in this week's folder.

Post your answer to the question on the Dear Dr. Search-It Discussion Board.
Post is worth 7 points.

Posts are due Monday, Apr 9th, 11:59 pm. You have a one-day grace period.
After that, posts will lose points (see Late Submissions on page 9).

Class 13
Apr. 9-15

Performing an Expert Search and Preparing a Client Report

Read the articles by Schwarzwalder and Kanziger for background.

Post your topic for Project 2 on the discussion board by Mon., April 16th.

Course Project 2: Performing and Preparing a Mediated Search (3 Parts)

This is a three-part assignment.

You will be assigned a partner from class based on interest and searching skill.

> Part 1. You will be asked to select a topic that you want a
> classmate to research for you using online databases and
> resources.
>
> Part 2. You will exchange topics with a classmate assigned to be
> your search partner. Using each other's topics, conduct searches
> as though your classmate is your client. Create a client report
> that includes a bibliography of your "best" findings on the topic.
> Instructions on how to format your client report are in the Class
> 13 Folder.
>
> Part 3. You will receive a copy of the bibliography compiled by
> your classmate. Review it for relevance and post your review to
> the final discussion board.

Guidelines and Grading Criteria for Course Project 3 are in the Class 13 folder.
Guidelines for creating your client report are in the Class 13 folder.
Please read and heed.

Classes 14 & 15   <u>Work weeks for preparing Course Project 2</u>
Mon. Apr.16 -
Sun. Apr. 29   Submit to the Assignment Tool.
                      Final deadline is Monday, April 30th at 11:59 pm.

Graded Course Requirements

As a student in this class, you are expected to: (1) read or view all assigned background materials; (2) participate in all online discussions and class follow-up activities; (3) check the BlazeVIEW course site regularly for messages and posted materials; and (4) submit all projects on time and according to the format designated by the instructor, and (5) conduct your research and composition according to the rules of academic integrity (see Academic Honesty section on pages 9-10).

Course Project #1: Biography of a Database   16 points

Independent Search Exams   32 points

  Exam #1 (16 points)
  Exam #2 (16 points)

Searching Exercises Shared on Discussion Boards   28 points

  Practice Search 1 (7 points)
  Practice Search 2 (7 points)
  Practice Search 3 (7 points)
  Dear Dr. Search-It (7 points)

Course Project #2: Client Report   24 points

        100-90 points = A   89-80 points = B   79-70 points=C   69-60 points=D   59 points or less=F

   To receive an A in this course requires completing <u>every</u> assignment.

Letter Grading

Your final grade will be one of these letter grades:

        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 class materials will be placed on a password-protected Web site using the BlazeVIEW course management program. If you are a new BlazeVIEW user, go to the BlazeVIEW help pages at http://www.valdosta.edu/vista/students.shtml. Then return to the BlazeVIEW page and login using your BlazeVIEW ID and password.

To meet all class requirements, you should be prepared to: (1) open and save or print all documents that are required background reading - this requires the Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer; (2) view all PowerPoints placed on the course BlazeVIEW site – these are saved to **Powerpoint 97-2003** and will open in all higher versions; (3) participate in Live Classroom sessions – login links and instructions will be available through your BlazeVIEW course homepage; (4) check discussion groups as needed; and (5) keep electronic backup copies of each assignment and project you submit.

Unless otherwise stated, assignments must be submitted using a word processing program compatible with Microsoft (MS) Word. BlazeVIEW accepts attached documents in **MS Word 97-2003 or higher**. If you are using WordPerfect or sharing documents with classmates who have a different version of Word, save your documents in Rich Text Format (rtf). The instructor returns documents that cannot be opened on VSU equipment.

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.

Late or Missing Submissions

There are no grace periods for taking the two exams. I use a progressive point deduction system for late submission of work whereby for the first assignment submitted late, I will deduct 1 point per day. The second late submission will lose 2 points per day. If you submit late a third time, you will lose 3 points per day late, and so forth. If you inform me of extenuating circumstances **before** the deadline, we can work out a solution for submitting an assignment without penalty. Completely skipping an assignment is not acceptable in graduate school. To receive an A in this course requires completing every assignment.

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."

The *Guide to Ethical Conduct* is a booklet created for VSU MLIS students (http://www.valdosta.edu/mlis/student_resources/documents/GuidetoEthicalConductWebversion.pdf). It contains guidelines on appropriate conduct and outlines the ethical principles that instruct the profession of library and information science.

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.

It is **your responsibility** to make sure you understand how to avoid breeches of academic integrity. The instructor posts rules for citing, quoting, and appropriate use of resources for assignments that require written compositions, reviews, or commentary.

Noncompliance with rules on appropriate use of resources will result in zero credit for those parts of the assignment affected. If you are 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 an infraction 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 paper or project 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 on a final product.

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. You may also phone 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 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.

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).