School of Library and Information Science  
University of Kentucky  

LIS 690 Public Libraries and Business Management – Spring Semester 2010  
Dates of Semester: January 13 – May 7, 2010  
Course to be Conducted Online  

Instructor: Dennis Carrigan e-mail: carrigan@uky.edu  

Course Syllabus  

Classroom sessions: This is an online course and includes no classroom sessions. However, I invite a student who would like to discuss the course with me to make an appointment for that purpose. (See contact information.)  

Contact information: I prefer that you contact me via e-mail; my address is carrigan@uky.edu. If you wish to meet with me, I require a prior appointment, and you should use e-mail to make the appointment. My office address is 317 Little Fine Arts Library building. The School’s general phone number is 859.257.3317 and address is 320 Little Fine Arts Library building. I do not have office hours as such, because I am in my office most of the time, Monday-Friday 7:00 am - 4:00 pm. My virtual office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:00 pm, with the exception of those weekdays on which UK classes do not meet, e.g., Martin Luther King Day, spring break. My goal is to respond to student communications sent to me via e-mail within two hours of receipt of the e-mail or arriving at my office.  

Course Format: This is an online “lecture” course in which I encourage discussion via Blackboard. In the way I go about the course, I make considerable material available to students, including what could be thought of as my “lectures.” I think of it as making available to students the notes they would take during lectures in a classroom.  

Course Requirements: You will need access to an appropriate computer with a broadband Internet connection. NOTE that it is YOUR responsibility to ensure you have a reliable computer for use during the course. Ongoing “computer problems” will not be considered a legitimate excuse for missing course activities. If you have a computer that is known to be unreliable, you should rectify that situation. Required software includes a reasonably current copy of Office Professional that includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access. Note that all UK students are eligible for a one time free download of Office from the UK download site (https://download.uky.edu); you can get help with this process from the UK helpdesk (859.257.1300; http://www.uky.edu/IT/CustomerService/).  

Blackboard: We will use the Blackboard course management system to facilitate the class. Please visit http://www.uky.edu/Blackboard/ to learn about this system and the login requirements. You should be automatically added to the Blackboard roll; if this goes as expected, you will not have to sign up manually for the course. Blackboard help is available online through the Blackboard wiki website (http://wiki.uky.edu/Blackboard/Wiki%20Pages/Home.aspx), and from the UK helpdesk (859.257.1300; http://www.uky.edu/IT/CustomerService/). The helpdesk is also able to assist with all general computing issues (file download, browser updates, etc.).  

Email: It is vital that we can depend on effective email communication. Unfortunately, many personal email accounts can run into problems with the UK mail spam filtering system. For instance, some services like hotmail have been blocked at various times from receiving UK mail. Therefore, I ask that you always follow up if you have not had a response from me within a reasonable period (I usually will respond within 24 hours). If you are not getting through via email, you may leave me voicemail (859.257.3316). However, email will be our primary one-to-one communication channel and I expect you to check your email frequently (ideally at least once a day).  

1 Material “Course Requirements” through “Email” provided by Professor Joe Miller.
Distance Learning Library Services: At UK, students in online courses have available Distance Learning Library Services. The link to DLLS is: (http://www.uky.edu/Libraries/DLLS) Here is some of the information at that site:
Phone: (859) 257-0500, ext. 2171; 2nd Phone: (800) 828-0439; Fax: (859) 257-0505
E-mail: dllservice@email.uky.edu ; Location: 2-2, north wing, William T. Young Library 0456
Distance Learning Librarian: Carla Cantagallo
There is other information, including a link to the process to request document delivery and/or interlibrary loan.

Prerequisites: LIS 690 Public Libraries and Business Management is an elective course that builds on LIS 603 Management in Library and Information Science and on LIS 645 Public Libraries, both of which are prerequisites to LIS 690 Public Libraries and Business Management.

Course description and overview: Organizations come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but each organization exists for a purpose, which, according to those who write about organizations and management, should be stated in the organization’s mission statement: “The mission statement is a short, succinct statement focusing on the purpose of the organization, its reason for existence, and what it hopes to accomplish.” No matter how small or large it is, how it structures or organizes itself, how elaborate its organization chart, whether it is a for-profit firm, a not-for-profit entity, or a government agency, an organization can be thought of as comprising two components, one having to do with why the organization exists, and one having to do with supporting the component that has to do with why the organization exists. The first can be referred to as the mission-furthering component. The second can be referred to in a variety of ways, and one of the ways is, the business management component. This course has to do principally with the major elements that make up public libraries’ business management component. Inevitably, the elements that make up public libraries’ other component – i.e., public libraries’ services – will find their way into the course, but they will not be the focus of the course.

Course objective/student learning outcome: Perhaps the best way to approach the related topics of course objective and student learning outcome is to explain how the course came about: The School has an Advisory Board, and at a meeting of the Advisory Board in March 2009 member Karen Kasacavage, who is Director of the Woodford County Public Library, expressed the view that students in the school who intend to pursue careers in public libraries should be introduced to what she referred to as “business management” while in the master’s-degree program. Karen later explained: “When I referred to ‘business management’ I had in mind an overview of such things as facilities management, financial/fiscal responsibility, public relations, human resources – all the components that go into running a non-profit as a business not just a library.” My objective for the course is to do what Karen called for – introduce the student to the “business management” aspects of public libraries in such a way as to make the student aware of the issues and challenges associated with the many aspects of business management. However, I want to go about this in a certain way, and that gets to the topic of student learning outcome: Although from time to time in the course we will turn to the textbook used in the required management course, nevertheless for the most part we will use materials that I have acquired from public libraries. That is because I want the course to have a strong practitioner orientation so that, at the end of the course, the student will understand and be able to discuss knowledgeably what public library managers confront as they deal with, for example, budgets, tax rates, annual audited financial statements, Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 34.

Thinking managerially: In addition to examining a number of particular aspects of business management and their presence in public libraries, I have another, major objective for the course: to instill in students the habit of thinking managerially. I believe there is such a way of thinking, and I intend to pursue that idea in the course. It will figure in the course in two ways: as a discrete item to be discusses and as a theme for discussing all of the elements.

Books and other readings: Textbooks: When I began to think about this course, I hoped to identify a book that would be well-suited to it. I reviewed a half-dozen or more candidates and, adhering to my decision that I would ask students to


A number of terms will be important in the course, and the book includes an excellent glossary. Also, I will at times refer to and assign readings from the textbook used in LIS 603 the required management course: Stueart, Robert D, and Barbara B Moran. *Library and Information Center Management*. 7th ed. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2007. Because LIS 603 is prerequisite to this course, I will assume students in this course have the Stueart and Moran book.

**Articles:** I will assign certain articles to be read, and they will be from library-related and other journals.

**Library materials:** Almost from the day I began to think about this course, I turned to a small group of public librarians for advice and help, and one of the principal ways they have helped has been by making available to me, for use in the course, materials from their libraries. When I identified something that a librarian provided and that I wanted to make available to students in the course, I was careful to ask for permission. Even though, because Kentucky’s public libraries are public agencies, most of the materials that are produced in the course of operating the libraries has to be available to the public, I thought it was appropriate to ask for permission. In one or two cases I deleted the library’s name.

**Other:** Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives staff member Terry Manuel has written, for this course, “Tax Laws, Regulations and Procedures for Kentucky Special Library Districts.”

**Examinations:** Since I have to turn in letter grades at the end of the course, I have to include in the course things that I grade. My thought is there will be three graded things, two short-answer exams and one essay. The three will weigh equally in course grade. **Short-answer exams:** I will design the short-answer exams to test knowledge of course-related topics; I will design the essay exam to test ability to analyze a situation or problem. The short-answer exams will occur at the middle and end of the semester. The second short-answer exam will emphasize material introduced subsequent to the first short-answer exam but should be thought of as a comprehensive exam, i.e., include material from throughout the course. **Essay:** The essay will be late in the semester, and there will be at least two weeks between the time I assign the topic and the essay is due. Dates for the exams and essay are in the class schedule.

**Discussions:** I think of myself as being relatively new to teaching online, but the fall 2009 semester, teaching LIS 603 and LIS 645 online, I learned the value of Blackboard’s discussion forum. I also confirmed what I anticipated, that if students are not required to participate in the discussion forum, many will not. However, when I taught online for the first time, I did require students to participate in the discussion forum, and some/much of the discussion was of little or no value and simply got in the way of valuable discussion. Still, I’m troubled by the prospect of “free riding,” which the economist Robert Frank defines as “choosing not to donate to a cause but still benefiting from the donations of others.”

Thus, I’m considering making contributions to the discussion forum an element in determining grade for the course, while continuing to make contributions voluntary. I intend to think about this further before making a final decision about how to handle discussions.

**Grading:** The two exams and essay will weigh equally in course grade. I will grade the essay exams comparatively. At the end of the course I will convert the points earned on the three exams to course grade on the basis of:

- 90% and above = A
- 80% to 90% = B
- 70% to 80% = C
- below 70% = E

I assign the grade of I (incomplete) only when I am convinced the student’s circumstances warrant it.

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3 Managerial accounting is *not* the same as financial accounting, and Smith explains what managerial accounting is all about: “The purpose of this book is to explain techniques of accounting analysis that will help managers within a library make better management decisions.” Smith also has written a book on financial accounting and libraries: Smith, G Stevenson. *Accounting for Libraries and Other Not-for-Profit Organizations*. 2nd ed. Chicago: ALA, 1999.

Major Topics:
Following are the major topics to be addressed in the course:

1. Public libraries and business management
2. Managerial accounting
3. Finance and budget
4. Human resources
5. Marketing
6. Facilities
7. Assessment and evaluation
8. Thinking managerially

Comments on major topics:

1. Public libraries and business management: Nearly 30 years ago John Berry wrote an editorial in Library Journal with the headline, “The public’s ‘business people,’” in which he responded to the assertion that “Librarians are notably bad business people.” Much more recently we went through a period when there was heated discussion about running public libraries like bookstores. Neither what Berry addresses in the editorial nor what those have in mind who argue public libraries should be run like bookstores is what the “business management” of this course is concerned with. The fact of the matter is, certain things are generic to organizations, and that’s what the course is concerned with. The things that are generic to organizations, and that I consider to be both significant and appropriate subjects for this course, appear on the list of major topics to be addressed.

2. Managerial accounting: The essence of management, I believe, is decision making. Decisions should, for the most part, be based on information, and the purpose of managerial accounting, according to the author of the book we’ll use, is to “provide useful information to the manager so that efficient and accurate decisions can be made.” (2)

3. Finance and budget: So important is money that finance and budget will receive considerable attention in the course, and this major topic will include such things as funding public libraries, budget and budgeting process, chart of accounts, major financial statements, independent auditor’s report, various kinds of costs (e.g., variable versus fixed, operating versus capital), referendum, public library bond issue. When I told one director of a small public library about the course, to include the fact that economic and financial considerations would be prominent, she replied: “I am so happy to hear that you all are teaching a class on the financial aspects of libraries, one area which is often overlooked.”

4. Human resources: A national survey of public libraries in 2007 revealed that, on average, 65.5% of public libraries’ spending on operations was for staff. The importance of staff in delivering services makes the human resources function all the more important, and the presence of a variety of relevant laws makes it all the more challenging.

5. Marketing: I don’t know when public libraries in significant numbers discovered marketing, but it has become a popular topic and important issue, especially at a time like this, when funding for public libraries in under pressure. We’ll discuss marketing in general and look at marketing efforts by various public libraries.

6. Facilities: That same national survey revealed that, on average, 21.3% of public libraries’ spending on operations was for the variety of things not included in staff and collection. A good part of the 21.3% was for facilities, and we will look at the challenges associated with the varied things that are included in this part of the budget.

7. Assessment and evaluation: I want to devote some of the course to discussing ways to assess and evaluate alternative uses of resources, whether it be on a major scale, e.g., replacing an existing building; increasing the number of branches, or on a minor scale, which photocopier or printer to buy. The ability and inclination to do this – assess and evaluate alternative use of resources – should be a major consideration in the way a public library operates, and for this course I’m including that ability and inclination among the elements that fall within business management.

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8. Thinking managerially: As I wrote, above, I believe there is such a way of thinking, and I intend to pursue that idea in the course. It will future in the course in two ways: as a discrete item to be discussed at the end of the course, and as a theme for discussing all of the other topics.

Class schedule

Week 1 January 13: Public libraries and business management What is “business management”? I’ll make available something I’ve written in which I discuss this. In addition, I’d like those in the class to read a short article: Julie Bloom, “City Ballet Names Chief To Oversee Business,” The New York Times, November 17, 2009, C2.

Week 2 January 18: Managerial accounting I believe the essence of management is decision making, and I believe decisions should be based on information and analysis. Those things – management, decision making, information and analysis – come together in managerial accounting, whose purpose is to “provide useful information to the manager so that efficient and accurate decisions can be made.” (Smith 2) The one book I ask students in the course to buy has to do with managerial accounting, especially in libraries. The book is Smith, G. Stevenson. Managerial Accounting for Libraries & Other Not-for-Profit Organizations. 2nd ed. Chicago: ALA, 2002, and from now on I’ll refer to it simply as Smith. For this week please read Smith chapters 1 and 2. In chapter 1 Smith introduces and briefly discusses “agency theory.” I have written something about “agency theory” and will make it available. In chapter 2 Smith introduces what I find to be valuable part of the book, exercises. We will discuss what is in the chapters as well as the exercises.

Week 3 January 25: Managerial accounting (continued) For this week please read Smith chapter 3. We will discuss what is in the chapter as well as the exercises.

Week 4 February 1: Managerial accounting (continued) For this week please read Smith chapter 4. We will discuss what is in the chapter as well as the exercises.

The real world of public library budgets and finance:

Week 5 February 8: For this week please read Smith chapter 5 and Stueart and Moran chapter 19. Beginning this week and continuing through week 8 we will read, examine, and discuss things that pertain to public library budgets and finance, and I will make available a variety of relevant materials from public libraries.

Week 6 February 15: Public library income; property taxes; role of Property Valuation Administrator; Terry Manuel, “Tax Laws, Regulations and Procedures for Kentucky Special Library Districts.”

Chart of accounts defined and discussed http://www.netmba.com/accounting/fin/accounts/chart/;6 public library chart of accounts; line-item budget;7 analysis, budgeted amounts versus actual spending;

Week 7 February 22: Governmental Accounting Standards Board; Facts about GASB http://www.gasb.org/facts/facts_about_gasb_2009-2010.pdf; Overview, GASB Statement No 34 http://www.gasb.org/repmodel/oview34.pdf; public library audited financial statements; Management’s Discussion and Analysis

Week 8 March 1: Read and discuss Official Statement, Clark County Public Library District (Kentucky) General Obligation Bonds, which I will make available.

Note: Monday, March 8, is the midpoint of the spring semester.

Week 9 March 8: The first exam is this week.

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6 NetMBA, “Chart of Accounts” (“Reprint Policy: The articles published on NetMBA.com are copyrighted material. If you would like to distribute any of the NetMBA.com articles to others, there are three options: 1. Linking (no charge) – permission is not required to link to any NeetMBA.com article.” (accessed December 9, 2009)

7 When I began to create the course, I asked public librarians for materials that I thought relevant to it. When I identified something that a librarian provided and that I wanted to make available to students in the course, I was careful to ask for permission. Even though, because Kentucky’s public libraries are public agencies, most of the materials that are produced in the course of operating the agencies has to be made available to anyone who asks for it, I thought it was appropriate to ask for permission. In this case the person who made it available did so after she deleted the name of the library and the names of the employees. I thought deleting that information entirely appropriate.
Week 10 March 15: Spring break; no assignment.

Week 11 March 22: Human resources: We will read and discuss Stueart and Moran chapters 10 and 11. Also, please read this article: Oder, Norman. “MLS: Hire Ground?” Library Journal, June 1, 2009, 44-46. (Changes in public libraries’ staffing due to changes in user behavior, technology, and tight budgets.) I will make available human resources related materials from a public library.

Week 12 March 29: Marketing: We will read and discuss Stueart and Moran chapter 6. Also, please read this article: Fleming, Helen Ruth. “Library CPR: Savvy Marketing Can Save Your Library.” Library Journal, September 15, 1993, 32-35. (An especially good article about marketing at one public library. If there is a more recent article on the subject, that is as good as this article, I’m not aware of it.) I will make available marketing-related materials from a public library.

Week 13 April 5: Facilities: Please read Smith chapter 6. In addition, I will make available facilities-related materials from a public library.

Week 14 April 12: Facilities (continued): Please read Smith chapter 8.
I will assign the essay topic not later than this week, and it will be due the week of April 26.

Week 15 April 19: Assessment and evaluation: Please read Smith chapters 7 and 9.

Week 16 April 26: The essay is due this week. Thinking managerially I believe there is such a thing as thinking managerially, and I believe it is important that managers do so. I also believe there is no guarantee that a person who is, formally, a manager, will think managerially all the time. Please read: Kaplan, Robert S & David P Norton. “Using the Balanced Scorecard as a Strategic Management System.” Harvard Business Review 85 (July/August 2007): 150-161. (Smith refers numerous times in his book to “balanced scorecard.” For example, “…the balanced scorecard evaluates performance targets through the perspectives of the customer, finance, learning and growth, and internal business processes.” [4]) Please read also: Everett, Shuenessy. “Do More, Better, for Less.” Library Journal, September 15, 2006, 28-31. (a “quality improvement program” at Columbus Metropolitan Library, OH.)

Week 17 May 3: The second exam is this week.