School of Library and Information Science
University of Kentucky

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LIS 601 Information Seeking
Spring 2015

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Course Syllabus

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Course description: LIS601 is one of four core, or required, courses in the School of Library and Information Science master's-degree program. The course description reads:

This course provides an overview of the theory and practices of human information seeking behavior, including both basic models to understand user behavior, and techniques to effectively select, locate, evaluate, and use information to meet diverse information needs and facilitate human-computer interaction.

Student learning outcomes: After successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Apply critical thinking to meet users' information needs.
- Identify, evaluate, and select a variety of information sources to match users' information needs.
- Effectively disseminate appropriate information to match users' needs.
- Select information sources with consideration for user diversity, giving special attention to underserved groups.
- Select appropriate information technologies for identifying information relevant to users' needs.
- Create effective search strategies for relevant indexes and databases.
- Identify a variety of tools and methods for assessing users' information needs and describe how they are implemented.
- Describe how information organizations might reach user populations and provide high quality services.
- Communicate effectively with your chosen user population and provide high quality information services.
- Apply effective instructional strategies to teach users to identify, select, acquire and evaluate information.
- Describe how to assess information service delivery.
- Interpret, evaluate and apply research on user information seeking behavior and information services and analyze its impact on the knowledge base and practice of the profession.
- Communicate what you have learned effectively both verbally and in writing.

(See page 9 & 10 for a complete list of course learning outcomes matched to their corresponding program learning outcomes).

Course expectations: To complete this course successfully, you should do the following:

- Attend Class: Attendance in an online environment is critical to the overall success of the course. Online attendance is measured by participation in the discussion forums and required office hour appointments. A minimum of 2.5 hours per week should be spent engaged in "attending class," which does not include reading or completing assignments. Our week is officially defined as **Friday - Thursday**. One absence is constituted by a lack of activity for a week. Unexcused absences for online attendance will affect your grade for class participation. *Unexcused absences in excess of 15% of the course "meetings" will lower your maximum possible grade for the course to a C.* Acceptable reasons for non-participation include illness or bereavement; it is the school's policy NOT to grant incompletes (I) for reasons other than these.
- Plan on and cope with technological challenges: You know the old adage: what can go wrong will go wrong. Expect it and plan for it. Never put off things until the last minute because technology may fail you. Give yourself plenty of time to work around technological bumps in the road. Technological failure is not an acceptable excuse for late work. You'll also need patience and a sense of humor to work through the inevitable glitches.
- Apply self-discipline: Because we will not be meeting face-to-face every week, it can be surprisingly easy to forget about your online course. If you are like me, time whizzes by without my realizing how quickly it has gone. I highly recommend scheduling yourself for several regular times a week to "meet" with the class. Treat these meetings just as you would face-to-face meetings – only missing them in an emergency – and you will find it much easier to keep up with the course. I recommend the use of IStudiez (or comparable Android based apps) to help you keep up, as well.
- Reading: Materials listed for a week should be read PRIOR to the first day of that week. This is an advanced, graduate-level seminar course. That means you will be learning primarily through reading and discussion. Thus, the reading load is much heavier than it might be in a traditional setting. Your class "discussions," "course content," instructions for assignments, and supplemental readings are often text-based. For some of you, this will be challenging and will require patience and tenacity. I am always here to help you and happy to answer any questions you have. I only ask that you carefully read instructions, notes, texts, and assignments thoroughly before asking for clarification. I also recommend that you make some real-time connections with a few of your classmates who live near you.
- Prepare and submit all assignments on time. A 10% penalty will be exacted every day the assignment is late.

Required textbook:

- Case, D. (2012). *Looking for Information: A Survey of Research on Information Seeking, Needs, and Behavior*. San Diego: Academic Press. 3rd Edition.

Additional readings: Additional readings are principally journal articles available online and reference-related web content.

Diversity Statement

The course content and the course environment are dedicated to an understanding of and acceptance of all people. Disparaging remarks in relation to others' ethnic or racial background, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, socioeconomic background, etc., will not be tolerated.

ADA Services

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations in this course, please make your request to the University Disability Center. The Center will require current disability documentation. When accommodations are approved, the Center will provide me with a Letter of Accommodation which details the recommended accommodations. Contact the Disability Resource Center, Jake Karnes, Director at 859-257-2754 or jkarnes@email.uky.edu. The Center is located in the Alumni Gym, Room 2, at the corner of Avenue of Champions and South Limestone Street (next to the Student Center and across South Limestone Street from Kennedy Bookstore). See the campus map.

Other course requirements
You will need a web camera, a microphone, headphones, and 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. 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. 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.).

Course grade:

- Analyzing Your Own Information Behavior   20%
- Annotated Bibliography   10%
- *Community Resource Audit Part I   20%
- *Community Resource Audit Part II   20%
- Presentation   10%
- Participation and In-class exercises   20%
            *core course artifact

Analyzing Your Own Information Behavior (20%):

1. Pick and describe an information behavior from your life.
2. Discuss what this behavior demonstrates about your information needs, how and where you look for and use information, and the information problems you face in your life. Your discussion should make clear that you have thought about and understand the concepts of information, information needs, information seeking, and information behavior as discussed in course readings.
3. Select two of the models, paradigms, or theories we have read about and/or discussed and analyze your information behavior using each of these two models, paradigms, or theories to interpret your behavior in two different ways.
4. Compare and contrast the results of your two analyses. How did these models, paradigms, or theories affect your interpretation of your information behavior? How useful were these models, paradigms, or theories for explaining your information behavior?

To synthesize your content, please produce up to 3,000 words of content, excluding references.

Annotated Bibliography (10%)

In preparation for the Community Resource Audit, you will prepare an annotated bibliography on the information seeking literature related to your community. Additional information will be disseminated on this assignment in class closer to their due dates.

Community Resource Audit

Part I: Background and Needs Assessment (20%)

1. Introduction: Select and describe a community for which you would like to know more about their information needs, uses, and behaviors. What is the typical demographic makeup of this population? What are the salient traits of the community?
2. Literature Review: Find research articles (six or more of them) on the information behavior of this community (or a closely related user group), and use your interpretation and evaluation of the research on user information seeking behavior and services and describe the important aspects of information seeking behavior in the provision of professional practice; DO NOT simply summarize what has been researched, but relate the research articles to each other and synthesize a theme out of the articles you find.
3. Needs Assessment: Identify methods for assessing your community's information needs and discuss how you would conduct a needs assessment (or other research) to learn more about the community. What methods/tools would you use (1 – 2 should be sufficient)? What questions would you ask? How would you analyze the data you gather? How might the results of your analysis improve your understanding of this population's information behavior? Optional: if the members of your community of interest are easily reachable, you are encouraged to conduct simple interview or survey to facilitate your source selection. If you choose to do so, you MUST speak with your instructor **first** so that he or she may ensure you conform to all human subjects review requirements.
4. Ethical Considerations: Draw connections between core ethical principles and the ethical issues related to your community. Examine the ethical issues related and provide examples from practice that relate to your responsibilities as information professional serving that community.

Part II: Information Dissemination (20%)
5. Search Strategy: Describe the database(s) you have selected and the search strategies you have employed for locating information appropriate for your users' needs. Discuss criteria you employed in evaluating and selecting resources from the myriad of sources available.
6. Resource Guide: Prepare an information guide tailored to your user group with at least 20 resources that will be useful for your community. These resources should include a variety of tools to meet the user needs you have identified. Your guide should also contain content designed to instruct your users on how to obtain, evaluate and use information to meet their needs.
7. Communication & Dissemination Plan: Construct a plan for how you will communicate with your user population and provide them with the information and services they need.
Presentation (10%)
Finally, you will prepare a 10 minute presentation of your community resource audit to instruct members of your assigned group. (A portion of your grade will come from the comments of this

peer review. The peer review will be confidential and based on a scale of one to five of the quality of your presentation. Your peer review grade will result from the mean of the scores given to you by the peers in your group.)

To synthesize your content, please produce up to 4,500 words of content, excluding references and resource list.

Participation (20%)

It is important to note that class participation is twenty percent of your grade because participation is an important component of facilitating learning in this class. Participation points come from both quantity and quality contributions to class. In class exercises will also be part of our weekly activities. Acceptable reasons for non-participation (attendance) include illness, bereavement, and religious holidays.

SLIS grading scheme

At the end of the course, I will convert the points earned into a percentage:

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

Withdrawal policy

It is your responsibility to drop a course or withdraw from the college. Failure to do so will result in receiving an "F". It is the school's policy NOT to grant incompletes (I) for reasons other than serious or disruptive illness or bereavement.

Course schedule

Week	Begins	Read (**Complete the readings for the week NO LATER than the first day of that week.**)

1   1/19   *Introduction to Information Behavior*
Information Behavior: An Introduction (Ch 1: 3-17)
Common Examples of Information Behavior (Ch 2: 19-42)

2   1/26   *Information Seeking and Related Behaviors*
Information Needs and Information Seeking (Ch 4: 77-93)
Related Concepts (Ch 5: 95-130)
[If you have not yet taken LIS 600 or need a review, also read Case, Ch 3: 43-76 to review the concept of information).

3   2/2   *Paradigms*, *Theories, Models, Oh My*
Models of Information Behavior (Ch 6: 133-162)
Metatheories, Paradigms, and Theories (Ch 7: 163-198)
Select one focused article from the list.

4   2/9   *Theories and Models, continued*
Dervin, B. & Nilan, M. (1986). Information Needs and Uses. *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology (ARIST)* 21: 3-33.

Kuhlthau, C. C. (1991). Inside the Search Process: Information Seeking from the User's Perspective. *Journal Of The American Society For Information Science*, *42*(5), 361-371.

O'Connor, L. G. (2013). The information seeking and use behaviors of retired investors. *Journal of Librarianship & Information Science*, *45*(1), 3-22

5   2/16   *Theories, Models and Context*
Leckie, G., Pettigrew, K., & Sylvain, C. (1996). Modeling the information seeking of professionals: a general model derived from research on engineers, health care professionals, and lawyers. *Library Quarterly*. *66*: 161-193.

Johnson, C.A. (2004) "Choosing people: The role of social capital in information seeking behaviour" *Information Research*, **10**(1) paper 201
http://www.informationr.net/ir/10-1/paper201.html

Savolainen, R. (1995). Everyday life information seeking: Approaching information seeking in the context of "way of life." *Library & Information Science Research* 17: 259-294.

6   2/23   *Fundamentals of the Information Search Process*
Bates, M. (1979). Information Search Tactics. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 30: 205-214.
ANALYZING YOUR OWN INFORMATION BEHAVIOR PAPER DUE 2/22
SUBMIT COMMUNITY RESOURCE AUDIT TOPIC FOR APPROVAL 2/23

| 7 | 3/2 | *Information Needs Assessment*
The Research Process (Ch 8: 200-219)
Methods: Examples by Type (Ch 9: 221-267) |

Annotated Bibliography I Due 3/8

| 8 | 3/9 | *Information Literacy and Ethics*
ACRL Information Literacy
http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/issues/infolit/index.cfm |

Limberg, L., Sundin, O., & Talja, S. (2012). Three Theoretical Perspectives on Information Literacy. HUMAN IT, 11.2(2012): 93–130. http://etjanst.hb.se/bhs/ith/2-11/llosst.pdf

Chatman, E. (1996). Impoverished Life World of Outsiders. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 47 (3): 193- 206.

Spring Break! (3/16 – 3/22)

| 9 | 3/23 | *Searching for Information, Part II*
Taylor, A. (2013). Examination of work task and criteria choices for the relevance judgment process. *Journal Of Documentation*, *69*(4), 523-544. |

Stefl-Mabry, J., & Beyth-Marom, R. (2003). A Social Judgment Analysis of Information Source Preference Profiles: An Exploratory Study to Empirically Represent Media Selection Patterns. *Journal Of The American Society For Information Science & Technology*, *54*(9), 879.

Community Resource Audit Part I Due 3/29

| 10 | 3/30 | *Communicating Effectively with Users*
Taylor, R. (1968). Question-negotiation and information seeking in libraries. *College & Research Libraries*, *29*(3), 178-194. |

Burns, C., & Bossaller, J. (2012). Communication overload: a phenomenological inquiry into academic reference librarianship. *Journal of Documentation*, *68*(5), 597-617.

VanScoy, A. (2013). Fully engaged practice and emotional connection: Aspects of the practitioner perspective of reference and information service. *Library & Information Science Research (07408188)*, *35*(4), 272-278.

| 11 | 4/6 | *Mediating Information Behavior*
O'Connor, L., & Lundstrom, K. (2011). The Impact of Social Marketing Strategies on the Information Seeking Behaviors of College Students. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, *50*(4), 351-365. |

| 12 | 4/13 | *Assessing Information Services*
Select and read a current article on information service assessment. |

13   4/20   *Users By Type*
                Research by Occupation (Ch 11: 285-323)
                Research by Social Role and Demographic Group (Ch 12: 325-364)

                RUSA Guidelines for the Development and Promotion of Multilingual Collections and
                Services
                http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidemultilingual.cfm
                RUSA Guidelines for Library Services to Older Adults
                http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/libraryservices.cfm
                RUSA Guidelines for Library Services to Spanish-Speaking Library Users
                http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidespanish.cfm
                RUSA Guidelines for Library Services to Teens
                http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesteens.cfm

                COMMUNITY RESOURCE AUDIT PART II DUE 4/26

14   4/27   Future Trends and Issues
                COMMUNITY RESOURCE AUDIT PART II DUE 5/3

15   5/4   Finals Week (No final: Watch and assess presentations)

Rubric for Discussion Participation

Discussion enhances learning as you share your ideas, perspectives, and experiences with the class. You develop and refine your thoughts through the writing process, plus broaden your classmates' understanding of the course content.

The following rubric will be used to assess the overall quality of and assign a grade to your discussion contributions during the semester.

Criteria	Unacceptable E Level	Acceptable C level	Good B Level	Excellent A Level
Frequency	Consistently participates less than 2 times per week.	Participates 2 times and/or postings are on the same day.	Participates 3 times but postings are not distributed throughout week.	Participates 3 or more times throughout the week.
Initial Topic Posting	Posts lack thought and preparation.	Posts adequate topic discussion with basic thought and preparation; and/or doesn't address the topic fully.	Posts well developed discussion that addresses the topic fully and demonstrates high levels of thought and preparation.	Posts unusually insightful and well developed discussion that demonstrates an engagement with the material beyond typical levels of thought and preparation.
Follow-Up Postings	Posts few or superficial follow-up responses to others (e.g., simply agrees or disagrees); does not enrich discussion.	Posts basic follow-up responses and makes a moderate contribution to discussion	Elaborates on existing postings with further comment or observation, enriching the discussion.	Demonstrates analysis of others' posts; extends meaningful discussion by building on previous posts.
Content Contribution	Posts information that is off-topic, incorrect, or irrelevant to discussion.	Repeats but does not add substantive information to the discussion.	Posts information that is factually correct; lacks full development of concept or thought.	Posts factually correct, reflective and substantive contribution; advances discussion.
References & Support	Includes no references or supporting experience.	Uses personal experience, but no references to readings or research.	Incorporates some references from literature and personal experience.	Uses references to literature, readings, or personal experience to support comments.
Etiquette, Clarity & Mechanics	Posts long, unorganized or rude content that may contain multiple errors or may be inappropriate.	Communicates in courteously but with occasional lack of clarity and/or some errors mechanics.	Communicates clearly and collegially with only minor mechanics errors.	Postings are collegial, clear, concise and free of mechanics errors.

LIS 601 Course Learning Outcomes
Matched to UK-SLIS Program Learning Outcomes

1.3 Students will define core ethical principles and describe how they should apply them to the practice of library and information science both as individuals and as part of the collective.

      1.3.1 Students will identify core ethical principles relevant to information seeking behavior and the provision of information services.

      1.3.2 Student will apply relevant ethical principles to information seeking behavior and the provision of information services to their chosen population.

2.1 Students will employ appropriate methods to match information to users' needs through the identification, selection, evaluation and dissemination of information.

      2.1.1 Students will identify a variety of potential information sources to match their users' information needs.

      2.2.2 Students will evaluate and select appropriate information to match their users' information needs.

      2.2.3 Students will design a product to effectively disseminate appropriate information to match their users' needs.

2.2 Students will give special consideration to how information resources support diverse and under-served populations.

      2.2.1 Students will select information sources with a consideration for the diversity of their users, giving special attention to underserved groups within their chosen population.

4.1 Students will examine and assess various information technologies and describe how they can be used to meet system and user needs.

      4.1.1 Students will select appropriate information technologies for identifying information relevant to their users' needs.

4.2 Students will experiment with appropriate technologies and tools to be prepared to implement them in a variety of information environments.

      4.2.1 Students will create effective search strategies for selected information technologies.

5.1 Students will identify methods for assessing the needs of the constituencies served by an information organization.

      5.1.1 Students will identify a variety of tools and methods for assessing the information needs of their chosen user group.

      5.1.2 Students will describe how they would implement needs assessment for their chosen population.

5.2 Students will describe the attributes of high quality, user-centered information services.

      5.2.1 Students will describe how an information organization might reach out to their chosen population to provide high quality services.

5.3 Students will describe the professional behaviors that contribute to high quality information

services.
> 5.3.1 Students will describe how they will communicate with their chosen user population to contribute to high quality information services.

5.4 Students will apply instructional strategies in the provision of information services.
> 5.4.1 Students will apply effective instructional strategies to teach users to identify, select, acquire and evaluate information.

5.5 Students will evaluate information services, particularly in light of the need to reach diverse and underserved populations.
> 5.1.2 Students will describe how they would implement an assessment of information service delivery for their chosen population.

6.1 Students will interpret and evaluate research.
- Students will interpret and evaluate research on user information seeking behavior and information services.
- Students will apply research on information seeking behavior to the provision of information services to their chosen population.

6.3 Students will describe how empirical research advances the knowledge base and practice of library and information science.
> 6.3.1 Students will analyze how empirical research advances the knowledge base and practice of user information services.

9.1 Students will communicate effectively in writing.

9.2 Students will communicate effectively verbally.

9.3 Students will apply critical thinking to solve professional problems.