THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

LSC 553, Information Sources and Services
Fall 2007

3 Credit Hours; No Prerequisites
Classroom TBD
Thursdays, 4:10 – 6:40 p.m.

DRAFT Syllabus, Version 0.1: August 6, 2007

Instructor: David Shumaker
Office: 239 Marist; Hours by appointment
E-mail: shumaker@cua.edu
Phone: 202-319-5551

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to the terminology, concepts, and practices for the provision of information services to meet user needs effectively in a variety of settings. Special emphasis on the reference process and on the content, organization, use, and evaluation of resources in print and electronic formats. Covers the sources, policies, technologies, and systems that support access to and retrieval of information central to reference services.

Instructional Methods
The course will incorporate lecture/discussion; hands-on exercises, role playing of simulated interview scenarios, and homework. Class meetings will be supplemented by announcements, discussion, and other materials posted in the class Blackboard site (http://bb.cua.edu) Homework assignments will include field observation, practice exercises, and analytical assignments.

Required Text

Other Required Readings

http://www.google.com/support/bin/static.py?page=searchguides.html&ctx=basics

http://www.google.com/support/bin/static.py?page=searchguides.html&ctx=advanced

http://www.dogpile.com/info.dogpl/search/help/tips.htm
Course Goals

The goals of the course are to introduce fundamental concepts of library public services, and the skills required to deliver them effectively. The emphasis of this course is on the skills needed for direct interaction with information seekers, singly or in groups, that leads to the satisfaction of their information needs.

Goals for Student Learning
At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

- Articulate a philosophy of reference service; discuss ethical and other issues relevant to the provision of information;
- Apply appropriate communications skills in one-on-one reference interviews and instructional settings
- Apply standard evaluative criteria to basic reference sources in order to determine the fitness of sources to meet particular information needs;
- Demonstrate proficiency in retrieving information from general reference sources (print and electronic), including designing basic search strategies; and
- Discuss policies and procedures for the provision of service, and the role and evaluation of reference and information service departments

**Professional Standards Addressed**

This course addresses the following competencies of the “Competencies for Information Professionals of the 21st Century,” revised June 2003, by Eileen Abels, Rebecca Jones, John Latham, Dee Magnoni, Joanne Gard Marshall. (http://www.sla.org/content/learn/comp2003/index.cfm)

“C.2 Conducts market research of the information behaviors and problems of current and potential client groups to identify concepts for new or enhanced information solutions for these groups. Transforms these concepts into customized information products and services.

C.3 Researches, analyzes and synthesizes information into accurate answers or actionable information for clients, and ensures that clients have the tools or capabilities to immediately apply these.

C.4 Develops and applies appropriate metrics to continually measure the quality and value of information offerings, and to take appropriate action to ensure each offering’s relevancy within the portfolio.”

[from Section D., Applying Information Tools and Technologies:

“Information professionals harness the current and appropriate technology tools to deliver the best services, provide the most relevant and accessible resources, develop and deliver teaching tools to maximize clients’ use of information, and capitalize on the library and information environment of the 21st century.

…”

“IPs educate others in the use of information tools and technologies in a variety of ways, from training people in finding the information they want on the Internet or in proprietary databases to integrating information tools into their clients’ workflow or curriculum.”

**Course Requirements**

Assignments and their weighting in the overall course grade are:
1. **Field Study (15%)** Each student will explore a library information service of the student’s choosing, by interviewing a member of the Reference or Public Services staff and observing operations.

2. **Reference Source Analysis (20%)** Each student will evaluate a digital library reference resource and alternatives.

3. **Role Play Analysis (20%)** Each student will play the role of a reference librarian. A videorecording will be made of the role play. The student will then view the video and analyze her/his own performance.

4. **Final Project (20%)** Each student will prepare a written report on a project related to the subject matter of the course. At least two options will be offered for this assignment.

5. **Final Exam (15%)** There will be an in-class final exam.

6. **Class Contributions (10%)** The class is designed to be highly interactive. Students who attend regularly and contribute the most to the shared pool of knowledge will receive the highest grades in this area.

**Expectations and policies**

**Academic honesty:** Academic honesty is expected of all CUA students. Faculty are required to initiate the imposition of sanctions when they find violations of academic honesty, such as plagiarism, improper use of a student’s own work, cheating, and fabrication.

The following sanctions are presented in the University procedures related to Student Academic Dishonesty (from http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityprocedures.cfm): “The presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. There may be circumstances, however, where, perhaps because of an undergraduate student’s past record, a more serious sanction, such as suspension or expulsion, would be appropriate. In the context of graduate studies, the expectations for academic honesty are greater, and therefore the presumed sanction for dishonesty is likely to be more severe, e.g., expulsion. ...In the more unusual case, mitigating circumstances may exist that would warrant a lesser sanction than the presumed sanction.”

Please review the complete texts of the University policy and procedures regarding Student Academic Dishonesty, including requirements for appeals, at http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrity.cfm and http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrity.cfm.

**Other Policies or Expectations.** Note your policies or expectations (e.g. Attendance and punctuality policy, Participation expectation, note re: cell phones, timeliness on papers, form of submission of papers electronic vs. hard copy, policy on making up (or not) quizzes, tests etc.)
Important University Resources:

All students should know their NT (CUA network) account information and be able to log on to the CUA network. Contact the Center for Planning and Information Technology at 202-319-4357 for assistance.

All students should be able to use the CUA library resources, including the ALADIN online system. Visit the CUA Library homepage at http://libraries.cua.edu for assistance and directions.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact Disability Support Services (at 202 319-5211, room 207 Pryzbyla Center) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. To read about the services and policies, please visit the website: http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu.

Assessment

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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reference Field Study</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reference Source Analysis</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview Role Play Analysis</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management Evaluation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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University grades:
The University grading system is available at http://policies.cua.edu/academicgrad//gradesfull.cfm#iii for graduate students. Reports of grades in courses are available at the end of each term on http://cardinalstation.cua.edu.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

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<tr>
<th>Session No. / Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Read/Assignment</td>
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| Aug. 30    | • Introductions of students and teacher  
• Course overview  
• Structure of the course; operations; requirements |                                                       |
| Sept. 6    | • Service Philosophy  
• Ethical Considerations  
• The Reference Interview | Bopp & Smith, Ch. 1, 2, 12                           |
| Sept. 13   | • The Reference Interview continued: Face to Face and Virtual | Bopp & Smith, Ch. 3, 7; Kuhlthau                      |
| Sept. 20   | • Introduction to reference sources  
• Evaluating print and digital resources | Bopp & Smith, Ch. 4, 13                              |
|            |                                                                        | Assignment 1, Reference field study, due              |
|            |                                                                        | Reference source analysis plan due (ungraded)         |
| Sept. 27   | • Comparing digital and print sources                                   | Bopp & Smith, Ch. 5-6; Google (both); Infospace (all); Yahoo! (both) |
| Oct. 4     | • Online Class: Reference Exercises                                        | Students perform videorecorded reference interview role plays |
| Oct. 11    | • Search strategy                                                       | Nexis; Thomson Dialog                                 |
|            |                                                                        | Assignment 2, Reference source analysis, due          |
| Oct. 18    | • Search strategy, part 2                                               | Do ORE exercises 1, 2, 3, 4, 5                        |
| Oct. 25    | • Research projects                                                      |                                                       |
| Nov. 1     | • User instruction; Introduction to Instructional Design                 | Bopp & Smith, Ch. 8                                  |
|            |                                                                        | Assignment 3, Role play analysis, due                 |
| Nov. 8     | • Modes of instruction, continued                                       |                                                       |
12. Nov. 15  |  • Operation and Management of Reference and Research Services  |  **Read:** Bopp & Smith, Ch. 9-11; Janes, Ramsay, Wagner, Whitlatch

Nov. 22  |  • Thanksgiving; No class

13. Nov. 29  |  • Panel Discussion: Emerging Trends in Reference and Public Services  |  **Assignment 4 due**

14. Dec. 6  |  • Course Capstone: Review and Wrapup

Dec. 13  |  • In-class Final Exam: Thursday, December 13, 4:00 – 6:00pm

**Bibliography of Optional Readings:**


Available:

Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers. Available:

Available:
http://www.alapl.org/ala/rusa/rusaprotools/futureofref/technologycluelessness.htm

http://www.alapl.org/ala/rusa/rusaprotools/futureofref/desirableness.htm