LSC 557 Libraries and Information in Society

1. The outline for this syllabus was developed by Dr. Jean Preer, and I acknowledge with appreciation her permission to use her ideas. The schedule has been adjusted from the original due to smaller class enrollment. Additionally, because of smaller class size we may need to supplement class activities.

2. Student participation is each class session is requisite to the success of the class as well as the individual. Therefore, class attendance is essential, as is punctuality in arriving for class. Students should inform me before class if they are unable to attend, and should contact me immediately with any questions about the course. I will arrange times to meet with students as needed during the semester. Please let me know if you need to meet with me, and we can set up a time to get together.

3. As part of a pilot project, three sessions of this class will be offered through CUA’s synchronous online learning software eSLIS. These sessions are indicated below in the calendar section as [Virtual]. These classes will take place at the normal class time. To participate, you will need a broadband internet connection (not dial-up), a recent Windows or Mac computer, and an inexpensive headset. If you don’t have access to these from home or work, you can use computers at SLIS. For more information on system requirements, training and support please visit the eSLIS web page at http://slis.cua.edu/eSLIS.

CHECKLIST

Before the first class meeting, make sure to:

- Read the LSC 557 Syllabus and note any questions
- Subscribe to the SLIS listserv (to subscribe to this list, send an email to listserv@lists.cua.edu containing this message in the body of the email: SUBSCRIBE LIBSCI-L FIRSTNAME LASTNAME (where FIRSTNAME= your first name and LASTNAME= your last name). You will receive a message asking you to verify that you mailed the subscribe message. Reply with the word OK without quoting the original message. You will then receive confirmation that you have been added to the list.
OBJECTIVES: Libraries and Information in Society is designed to help students develop a sense of professional identity and an awareness of ethical standards of professional conduct. By examining the historical context and contemporary issues of library and information science, the course provides a framework in which to consider trends affecting the roles of library and other information professionals and institutions.

Introduction to the nature of information, the role of libraries, and the profession of librarianship in contemporary society. Incorporates historical developments, current trends, and the outlook for the future. Emphasizes the values, principles, legal, and ethical responsibilities of the profession and builds a foundation for each student’s ongoing professional development and leadership.

Course Goals and Goals for Student Learning
At the end of this course, students will demonstrate knowledge of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Goals</th>
<th>Program Competencies</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. The role of information in society</td>
<td>Professional identity</td>
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<td>2. The historical development of the role of information, libraries, and librarianship in society</td>
<td>Professional identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The role of libraries, archives, museums, and other information service organizations in society</td>
<td>Professional identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Librarianship and related information professions, including their core values and ethical principles</td>
<td>Professional identity</td>
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| 5. The impact of multicultural and diverse populations on librarians and information professionals | Professional identity
|                                                                                | Services                                   |
| 6. Policy issues related to the creation, dissemination, preservation, and use of information | Professional identity Information resources |

Professional Standards Addressed
With respect to the curriculum objectives stated in Section II of the Standards for Accreditation of Master’s Programs in Library & Information Studies, 1992, this course
addresses:

- **Development of library and information professionals who will assume an assertive role in providing services** by educating students in the role of librarians in modern society
- **An evolving body of knowledge that reflects the findings of basic and applied research from relevant fields** by incorporating current news and trends into the content of the course
- **The needs of a rapidly changing ... society** by exploring the breadth of contexts, roles, and contributions of librarians, and the influences affecting their role in society
- **Commitment to continuous professional growth** by exploring the dynamic forces at work that are continuing to change the tools and practice of librarianship, and the role of information in society

This course also addresses competencies A.8, B.6, D.3, and D.4 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](http://www.sla.org/content/learn/comp2003/index.cfm)):

“A.8 Advises the organization on copyright and intellectual property issues and compliance. “B.6 Develops information policies for the organization regarding externally published and internally created information resources and advises on the implementation of these policies. “D.3 Protects the information privacy of clients and maintains awareness of, and responses to, new challenges to privacy “D.4 Maintains current awareness of emerging technologies that may not be currently relevant but may become relevant tools of future information resources, services or applications.”

In addition, the course addresses the Personal Competencies defined in the document by developing each student’s understanding of the strategic role of the information professional in any organization and in society at large.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** The assignments focus on the central themes of the course: professional and institutional identity, ethics, professional and societal issues, access to information, funding, and future trends in library and information science. The course emphasizes activities to foster a sense of professional involvement. Students are expected to develop the habits of the library/information science professional: keeping abreast of events affecting libraries and information centers, scanning the professional literature, sharing pertinent information with colleagues, respecting intellectual property rights, and completing assignments on time and in the form specified.

Assignments emphasize writing skills that are essential to any professional situation brevity, clarity, and relevance. Projects include reports on a library luminary and a library visit, an interview of a librarian, a letter to the editor, a book review, attendance at a hearing or board meeting involving library issues, and preparation of testimony advocating a library project. Each student will compile a bibliography of items relating to the central themes of the course. Attached is a bibliography of course readings.

For each written assignment, students are to make enough copies for the instructor and all members of the class.

**CLIPPINGS:** Students are expected to read daily newspapers and current periodicals, both popular and professional and to consider what they hear on the radio and see in films and
television and on the Internet with the course themes in mind. Bring to each class items from the **POPULAR** media relating to the major themes of the course.

**GRADING:** Grades will be determined as follows:

- 50% Class assignments and participation taken as a whole, with loss of credit for failure to follow instructions or to meet deadlines.
- 25% Midterm essay exam.
- 25% Final essay exam.

Grades are based on the work submitted.

In accordance with school policy, incompletes will not be granted except in extraordinary circumstances of illness or emergency.

**ADA ACCOMMODATION:** Students with disabilities requiring accommodation under federal regulations must present a written accommodation request to the instructor by the second class meeting. It is strongly recommended that the student contact the Office of Disability Support Services, Suite 207, Pryzbyla Center (202-319-5211; email cua-disabilityservices@cua.edu, web http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu/). This is the University office responsible for disability accommodation and services, and its staff can answer questions about services and requirements regarding documentation. Special accommodations or other arrangements cannot be made without documentation approved by this office.

**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.
CALENDAR

Sept. 01  Introduction to the class
IDENTITY: A discussion of the role of library/information professionals and institutions past and present.

Sept. 08  IDENTITY: Continued
Due: Assignment 1. Library Luminary

Sept. 15  ETHICS: A discussion of the standards governing ethical professional conduct.

Sept. 22  ETHICS:
Due: Assignment 2. Library visit
Due: Last day to report title of book to be reviewed for Assignment 5

Sept. 29  ISSUES: A look at the major issues confronting library/information professionals.
Due: Assignment 3. Interview

Oct. 06  ISSUES: An examination of societal issues facing library/information professionals and institutions.
Due: Assignment 4. Letter to the editor  (Virtual)

Oct. 13  ACCESS: The continuum of access issues, beginning with copyright basics.
Due: Assignment 5 Book Review  (Virtual)

Oct. 20  No Class MID-TERM EXAM (Take home exam, due by 11:59 p.m. October 15th)

Oct. 27  ACCESS: An exploration of the various aspects of access to information and how that access is changing.
Due: Assignment 5 Book Review  (Virtual)

Nov. 03  FUNDING: A discussion of funding patterns and trends.
Due: Assignment 6. Report on hearing/meeting attended

Nov. 10  FUNDING:
Due: Assignment 7. Testimony/Advocacy

Nov. 17  FUTURE: Planning for the future of information institutions and professionals.
(Virtual)

Nov. 24  NO CLASS, Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 01  FUTURE:
Due: Assignment 8. Bibliography parts 1 and 2

Dec. 08  FINAL EXAM (Take home exam, due by 11:59 p.m. on Dec. 10th)
ASSIGNMENTS

FOR EACH ASSIGNMENT, FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS FOR FORMAT, PAGE, AND WORD LIMITS. FOR THE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS, MAKE ENOUGH COPIES OF YOUR WORK TO DISTRIBUTE TO THE INSTRUCTOR AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE CLASS.

Assignment 1 -- Library Luminary DUE: September 8th

Locate biographical information on the library/information science notable you are assigned in class. Prepare brief remarks to present to your colleagues about the life and work of your luminary. Follow the instruction on the separate assignment sheet.

Assignment 2 -- Library Visit DUE: September 22nd

Visit a library in your area. It may be public or private, academic, government or special, or branch or departmental library. Choose one related to your professional interests, but not one where you are or have been employed. Focus on a specialized reading room rather than a huge institution (e.g. the Performing Arts Reading Room, not the entire Library of Congress).

Prepare a one-page, single-spaced summary describing your visit to the library. Include information about its institutional affiliation, holdings, clientele, restrictions on use, and indicators of institutional mission. Bring to class a copy of any guides or descriptions available to library users. Visit the library’s website as well, and include that in your summary.

Assignment 3 -- Librarian Interview DUE: September 29th

Arrange a brief interview with a librarian/information scientist who works in a type of institution in which you are interested. You may wish to interview a librarian at the library you visited for Assignment 2. Discuss with your interviewee what he or she regards as the major satisfactions and concerns of information professionals today. Prepare a one-page, single-spaced summary of your interview. The person interviewed need not be named. Send a note of thanks to your interviewee.

Assignment 4 -- Letter to the Editor DUE: October 6th

Prepare a letter to the editor of a specific newspaper, journal, popular periodical, (or to the producer of a radio or television program) commenting on a news item, article, or program on a topic relating to a course theme. Write in letter format, ready to mail, and LIMIT YOUR LETTER TO 300 WORDS. If the article to which you are responding is brief, attach a copy. You are encouraged, but not required to send your letter to the publication or program.

Assignment 5 -- Book Review DUE: October 27th

Prepare a review (of no more than 600 words) of a recent or classic work related to one of the themes discussed in the course. Describe the book’s content, evaluate its contribution to the knowledge and practice of information science, indicate its usefulness for its intended audience, and, if possible, compare it to other works on the same topic. Include complete bibliographic information, and indicate whether or not the work is still in print.
NOTE: Report title to be reviewed to instructor by September 18th.

Assignment 6 -- Hearing/Meeting DUE: November 3rd

Attend a meeting of a policy-making body (such as a library board or city council) or a hearing of a committee of an elected body (local, state, or federal) on a matter relating to one of the themes of the course. Prepare a one-page, single-spaced summary describing the session you attended. Include the date, the participants, and the subject matter under consideration. If any agendas, press releases, or prepared statements are available, bring one to share with the class.

Assignment 7 -- Testimony DUE: November 10th

Prepare testimony suitable for presentation to a Congressional or state legislative body, a local library board, state funding agency, or foundation. Identify a specific funder, and argue why the library program or improvement you are proposing is worthy of that body=s financial support. Prepare a two-page, single-spaced written version of the testimony, an a 4-minute oral version to present in class.

Assignment 8 -- Bibliography DUE: Part 1, October 13th
Parts 1 & 2, December 1st

Over the course of the semester, compile a bibliography of items you have read on each of the themes covered in the class: professional identity, ethics, issues, access to information, funding, and future trends. List at least 24 items in all, 4 for each theme, with a brief summary of the content of each item. Include diverse materials from popular and professional sources, in print and non-print formats, examples may include articles, monographs, proceedings of conferences, radio or television programs, Web sites, government publications, etc. Follow the bibliographic form of A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 6th edition, 1996, by Kate Turabian, Revised by John Grossman and Alice Bennett, or The Chicago Manual of Style. Use an appropriate form for non-print materials. Refer to the course bibliography for guidance as to format, but do not include listed there, or any reserve reading material for the course. Your items may focus on a type of library or librarianship in which you are interested. Your entries should be accurate, complete and consistent. Limit each part of the bibliography to three single-spaced pages.

Part 1 of the bibliography, due October 13th, should include items on the themes of identity, ethics and issues. It should be revised, corrected, and resubmitted along with Part 2 on December 1st. Part 2 should include items on the themes of access, funding and future trends.