The Catholic University of America
School of Library and Information Science
LSC 633 Information Retrieval and Analysis Strategies
Spring 2012
Syllabus

Credit Hours: 3 credit course

Prerequisites: LSC 553 Information Sources and Services

Day and Time: Monday, 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

Class Location: Marist 131

Instructor: Joan Weeks, MLIS, M.Ed., MA Int. Rel.

Office: Marist Hall Room 237

Hours: Tues., Wed. Thurs.  6:30-9:00 p.m.

Phone: (d) 202-707-3657 (e) 202-319-6129

Email: weeks@cua.edu

Course Description:

This course provides a solid grounding in the theory and practice of information storage and retrieval in the online environment. Special emphasis on the history of the online information industry, awareness of issues and trends in the provision of online services, types and structures of online databases, and basic search skills including the selection of an appropriate electronic source and construction of effective search strategy. The course illustrates search techniques using the internet and commercial databases, such as Dialog, Lexis, and Factiva. It explores electronic reference services and discusses the management of online search services.

Goals for Student Learning:

With successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Become capable, professional information searchers with a proficiency in pre-search interviewing, search strategy organization and planning, search result evaluation for the solution of real information problems for clients as evidenced in problem sets and projects.
• Understand and apply database characteristics and search syntax of Dialog, Lexis/Nexis and Factiva through hands-on search and retrieval exercises.
• Analyze and synthesize the results of literature searches in a variety of online databases and search systems to construct highly relevant research reports as evidenced in the social sciences and scientific annotated bibliography projects.
• Develop the ability to successfully select and evaluate appropriate electronic sources to fulfill information requests in several subject fields as evidenced in social and physical science annotated bibliographies.
• Achieve the ability to transfer the knowledge and skills learned for one system to an unfamiliar database as evidenced in problem sets and Ask a Librarian chat scenarios.
• Develop the proficiency in using documentation and search aids to learn about the scope, coverage, unique features, and search language of the unfamiliar database and perform quality searches in such a system as well as recommend trials for purchase.
• Cultivate informed opinions and develop the awareness of issues and trends in the development of online systems and the provision of online services in a variety of settings from online and in-class discussions and readings.

**Professional Standards Addressed:**

The course addresses the Curriculum standards stated in Section II of the Standards for Accreditation of Master's Programs in Library & Information Studies, 1992:

- It is concerned with recordable information and knowledge, and the services and technologies to facilitate their management and use.
- It fosters development of library and information professionals who will assume an assertive role in providing services.
- It emphasizes an evolving body of knowledge that reflects the findings of basic and applied research from relevant fields.
- It responds to the needs of a rapidly changing multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual society including the needs of underserved groups.
- It responds to the needs of a rapidly changing technological and global society.
- It provides direction for future development of the field.
- It promotes commitment to continuous professional growth.

Specifically, the course focuses on competencies identified in the American Library Association Statement of Core Competences (2009). URL: 
http://www.ala.org/ala/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/corecompetences/finalcorecompstat09.pdf

1. **Foundations of the Profession**
   1A. The ethics, values, and foundational principles of the library and information profession.
   1B. The role of library and information professionals in the promotion of democratic principles and intellectual freedom (including freedom of expression, thought, and conscience)

4. **Technological Knowledge and Skills**
   4B. The application of information, communication, assistive, and related technology and tools consistent with professional ethics and prevailing service norms and applications.
   4C. The methods of assessing and evaluating the specifications, efficacy, and cost efficiency of technology-based products and services.
4D. The principles and techniques necessary to identify and analyze emerging technologies and innovations in order to recognize and implement relevant technological improvements.

5. Reference and User Services
5A. The concepts, principles, and techniques of reference and user services that provide access to relevant and accurate recorded knowledge and information to individuals of all ages and groups.
5B. Techniques used to retrieve, evaluate, and synthesize information from diverse sources for use by individuals of all ages and groups.
5C. The methods used to interact successfully with individuals of all ages and groups to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance in their use of recorded knowledge and information.
5F. The principles of assessment and response to diversity in user needs, user communities, and user preferences.
5G. The principles and methods used to assess the impact of current and emerging situations or circumstances on the design and implementation of appropriate services or resource development.

6. Research
6C. The principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research.

7. Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning
7B. The role of the library in the lifelong learning of patrons, including an understanding of lifelong learning in the provision of quality service and the use of lifelong learning in the promotion of library services.
7C. Learning theories, instructional methods, and achievement measures; and their application in libraries and other information agencies.
7D. The principles related to the teaching and learning of concepts, processes and skills used in seeking, evaluating, and using recorded knowledge and information.

Instructional Methods:
The instructor will model and the students will engage a variety of instructional methods in order that they may apply the best methodology for their own future information retrieval and analysis strategies to include:

• Hands-on computer instruction
• Interactive presentations and discussions
• Collaborative team activities
• Synchronous and asynchronous online discussion and instruction using Adobe Connect Pro Meeting and Blackboard Discussion Forum
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Projects and Assignments</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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| 1/9   | Introduction to Online Retrieval, Assessment of technology skills, overview of syllabus, class projects and assignments, Adobe Connect orientation  
       | Overview of search and retrieval concepts – field searching and controlled vocabulary, natural language  
       | Using citation programs-Ref Works                                                               |                                                     |
| 1/16  | **Martin Luther King Holiday-No class**                                                         |                                                     |
| 1/23  | Advanced searching tools  
       | Boolean, Truncation symbols, wildcards, limits, pearl growing, precision and recall, relevance and authority records  
       | Understanding database structure - surrogates, records, fields, indexes, parsing, inverted index  
       | (Online using Adobe Connect)                                                                     |                                                     |
| 1/30  | Organization of electronic databases, A-Z lists, ERMS, federated searching, Serial Solutions, FindIt, Database analysis and recommendation. (Trip to LC ) | Social Science resource guide & annotated bibliography topic due |
| 2/6   | Introduction to Dialog Databases Social Science & Humanities databases                         | Assignment 1- Online databases recommendation and evaluation due |
| 2/13  | Dialog broader and narrower searching with proximity and prefix, suffix functions Dialog Expand and Dial Index, citation & numerical databases | Assignment 2 -Dialog problem set 1 due                |
| 2/20  | Introduction to Lexis/Nexis databases                                                           | Assignment 3 - Dialog problem set 2 due               |
| 2/21  | Online retrieval industry, Aggregators Fees verses free, ownership verses access, data analysis and evaluation (Online Adobe Connect) |                                                     |
| 2/27  | Bibliographic databases, Voyager and OCLC World Cat                                             | Assignment 4 - Lexis/Nexis problem set due  
<pre><code>   | Topic for Project 2 - Scientific resource guide and annotated bibliography due.                  |                                                     |
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>Spring break - No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>Scientific Databases in Ebsco, Web of Science</td>
<td>Project 1 - Social Sciences/Humanities resource guide &amp; annotated bibliography due</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/19</td>
<td>NTIS, Patents &amp; Statistical databases</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/26</td>
<td>Factiva</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/2</td>
<td>Searching Web 2.0 Deep web searching, Search engines, portals, RSS, Blogs, Wikis (Online Adobe Connect)</td>
<td>Assignment 5- Factiva problem set due</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>Easter Monday Holiday-No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/16</td>
<td>Using Web 2.0 in Ask a Librarian Online Reference Services (Online using Adobe Connect)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/23</td>
<td>Class presentations of scientific annotated bibliographies</td>
<td>Project 2 - Scientific resource guide &amp; annotated bibliography due</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/30</td>
<td>Final exam in class</td>
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**Required Technologies:**

The following capabilities are required for course delivery:

- Windows XP or higher with daily access to a high-speed internet connection, headset with microphone or computer speakers and microphone, Adobe Connect web conferencing and Blackboard, CUA network and library accounts, proficiency in the use of ALADIN.

The following technologies are taught as an essential part of this course:

- RefWorks, Dialog, Lexis, Factiva, ProQuest, World Cat and multiple subscription databases

**Course Readings:** The readings are centered on the topics we will cover in class on a given date and therefore should be read prior to the class so that you will be able to participate fully in the discussions.

**Required texts- available through Amazon.com or CUA Bookstore**


Vendor Supplied Manuals online:

Dialog - 2010 Dialog and DataStar Database Catalog
Factiva - Inside-Out Complete Reference for Factiva.com
LexisNexis - Learning Lexis Nexis

Articles available online via ALADIN or the web: (Please activate your electronic library privileges in Mullen Library.)

Readings by Date

1/9 Introduction to Information Retrieval, assessment of technology skills, overview of syllabus, class projects and assignments, overview of search and retrieval concepts – field searching and controlled vocabulary

Bell Chapter 1,
Chowdhury Chapter 1, 2,


1/16 Martin Luther King Holiday- No class

1/23 Advanced searching tools, truncation, natural language, symbols, wildcards, limits pearl growing, precision and recall, relevance and authority records, understanding database structure - surrogates, records, fields, indexes, parsing, inverted index, using citation programs

Bell Chapters 2, 3, Chowdhury 5, 6, 7, 21

1/30 Organization of electronic databases, A-Z lists, ERMS, federated searching, Serial Solutions, SFX FindIt, Abstracting, Database analysis and recommendation  (Trip to LC )

Bell Chapter 11, Chowdhury 8, 12, 13
2/6 Introduction to Dialog Databases Social Science & Humanities databases

Bell Chapter 4, 7, Chowdhury Chapter 9


2/13 Dialog broader and narrower searching with proximity and prefix, suffix functions
Dialog Expand and Dial Index, citation & numerical databases

Chowdhury Chapter 21


2/20 Introduction to Lexis/Nexis databases


2/21 Online retrieval industry, Aggregators, Fees verses free, ownership verses access, data analysis and evaluation
(Online Adobe Connect)


Chowdhury 22, 23


2/27 Bibliographic databases, Voyager and OCLC World Cat

Bell Chapter 6

Chowdhury Chapter 3, 4


3/5 Spring Break – No class

3/12 Scientific Databases in Ebsco, Web of Science, Government and Open Source

Bell Chapter 5


3/19 NTIS, Patents & Statistical databases

Bell Chapter 8


3/26 Factiva


4/2 Searching Web 2.0 Deep web searching, Search engines, portals, blogs, wikis, podcasts

Bell Chapter 10, 12,
Chowdhury 16-18,
Hock Chapter 2 in BB
Sauers, Chapter 11 in BB

4/9 Easter Holiday- No class

4/16 Using Web 2.0 in Reference Services (Online using Adobe Connect)

Bell Chapter 9, Chowdhury Chapter 10. 11, Hock Chapter 6 in BB

4/23 Presentations on scientific research

4/30 Final exam in class

Supplemental Reading Sources:

Information Today Online Magazines:

*Online*, [http://www.infotoday.com/online/default.htm](http://www.infotoday.com/online/default.htm)

Assignments, Projects and Grading

The following assignments and projects are due on the dates indicated on the syllabus and will count for 85 points out of 100 for your final grade. The complete details of all assignments and projects will be in the Assignments area of Blackboard. The final in-class final exam will count for 10 points.

1. Assignment 1 – Subscription database analysis, evaluation and recommendation 5
2. Assignment 2 - Dialog problem set 1  5
3. Assignment 3 - Dialog problem set 2  5
4. Project 1 - Social Sciences annotated bibliography 30
5. Assignment 4 – Lexis-Nexis problem set  5
6. Assignment 5 - Factiva problem set  5
7. Project 2 - Scientific annotated bibliography  30
8. Final Exam in class  10
9. Class participation in discussions of readings and presentations  5

Grading

Grading Scale Points
A (100-94)
A- (93-90)
B+ (89-87)
B (86-83)
B- (82-80)
C+ (79-77)
C (76-74)
C- (73-70)
F (<70)
Course Policies:

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** You'll find the CUA policies on “Student Academic Dishonesty” on the web at: http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrity.cfm. You are held responsible for adhering to these policies. Incidences of academic dishonesty, defined by the University as “failure to observe rules of fairness in taking exams or writing papers, plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating” will result in a grade of F (0 points) on the project or exam in question, and will be reported to the Dean for possible further action (including failure in the course and/or dismissal from the academic program). Talk with me, if you have questions about what is involved in such offenses. Plagiarism, which includes 

"[1] intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; [2] failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information from print sources or websites; [3] buying completed papers from other to use as one's own work", will not be tolerated. For more on what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it, please read (carefully) Margaret Proctor's "How to Avoid Plagiarism" (http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html).

**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.

**TIMELY SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:** Assignments are due on the dates indicated in the syllabus and each assignment handout. Late assignments will be penalized with loss of one point per day.

**PASSWORDS:** For Dialog, Lexis/Nexis, Connexion and Factiva, each of you will have an ID and password to sign on.

**Note 1:** These IDs and passwords are for classroom instruction purpose only and will expire once the semester ends. Please DO NOT use these passwords for any tasks other than for class projects and assignments. They are provided by the vendors for instruction only and any other use will constitute a violation of the agreements between CUA-SLIS and the vendors.

**Note 2:** This syllabus is subject to change to meet unforeseen circumstances. Students will be notified in class and via Blackboard of changes.

January 2, 2012