Instructor: Julie Hersberger  Email: jahersbe@uncg.edu
Office: Curry 349D  Office Hours: Tues. 2:00-5:00 & By Appt.
Voice: 336.334.3482 (office)
FAX: 336.334.5060

Class meets: weekly online in Blackboard asynchronously (no real time meetings)

Catalog Description:
Changing demographic patterns affecting library and information services in all types of libraries. Services, collections, and staffing to reflect a variety of cultural/ethnic experiences/needs. (3:3:0)

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Analyze the information environment of a specific group, which affects information services to that group.
2. Analyze barriers to information seeking and use for a specific group and determine how those barriers might be overcome.
3. Design and develop information services for a specific client group.
4. Analyze and reflect on your learning journey over the course of the semester.
5. Demonstrate excellent written communication skills in course assignments and in class participation.

Course Introduction:
Purpose of the course:
This class will focus on designing, developing, implementing and evaluating information services (which we will define ourselves in the early weeks of the course) for diverse client groups (we will also define these terms as well).

Developing information and library services for specific client groups is both an art and a science. All too often these services are based on “hunches” from concerned information professionals/librarians and instituted without the proper rigor of thought. A little bit better (but not by much) is
the tendency to jump on bandwagons so the fact that other libraries are offering services x, y and z thinking we ought to too so the only preparation is to see what others are doing and just replicate that in our library.

Each library community is different, whether it is an academic, school or public library. And beyond libraries, there is a great need to produce excellent information sources to inform specific groups about important topics. Websites that allow breast cancer survivors, for instance, to share information and link to other sources provide needed information AND value added social support in the sense of caring. So, how do we do assess information needs, analyze information seeking and then produce valuable information products? Hopefully you will leave this class knowing the answer to that question, or at least understand the process by which you can learn the answer.

A recent example of poorly developed information services is where many public libraries perceived a need for library services to Latino/Hispanic new users. Rather than doing their homework and meeting with current and/or potential users from this particular group they looked at what other libraries were doing and copied them. This isn’t necessarily a bad idea, but if that is ALL one does to assess information needs it is very sloppy. The Hispanic population is NOT homogeneous (we will learn that none are, actually) and assuming so, well, we know what that makes you and me.

In order to assess information needs we need to study information seeking patterns, information sources sought, barriers to information, etc. and we need to do this in a systematic way. That, along with readings and discussions on thorny topics such as definitions of important terms, inclusion and exclusions of people in groups, power, politics, etc. will provide each of you with insights into how to really go about the business of designing, developing, implementing and evaluating efficient and effective information services targeted to specific client groups.

Participating in an online seminar:

This course is run as an online seminar, which means that the success or failure of the class depends, to a great extent, on your participation throughout the semester. Think of this participation as an INVESTMENT in your education. The more you invest in the class, the more you will get back -- the more DIVIDENDS you will receive. Participation means the student will do all the readings and post cogent and well considered Blackboard discussion messages. Participation also means "discussing" the points made by other students on the Bb discussion board, i.e. responding to their messages or even starting discussion threads of your own interests. Participation may also take the form of posting citations to other articles (articles being interpreted very broadly to mean web sites cites, newspapers, periodical articles, etc.) or posting directions to other interesting or useful stuff (think outside the box).

Posting in an asynchronous environment: it is very confusing to read posts without referents, i.e. posting something like, “Yes, I think you make a good point” makes no sense to the reader as we will be reading posts out of sequence. The correct way to do this is to cut and paste what you are responding to. For example, cut and paste the point made: “Jane Doe writes: I really liked the point you made about x and y but I disagree with you on z as in the readings Ranganathan said “Save the time of the reader”… This way we are clear on what you mean without having to retrace our steps to find the original posting.

NOTE: YOU WILL BE PENALIZED IN THE PARTICIPATION GRADE IF YOU CONTINUALLY FAIL TO REFER TO WHAT YOU ARE RESPONDING TO. HOWEVER, IF YOU JUST BLATHER ON WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING YOU ARE WASTING BANDWIDTH AND OUR TIME. THE MOST EGREGIOUS ERROR THOUGH IS SIMPLY SAYING, “I AGREE WITH YOU” OR “DITTO” OR SOMETHING INANE LIKE THAT. You may certainly agree but then expand, “I agree- the plot twists and character development was really well developed. I laughed here and cried there…” At the mid-point of the semester I will let everyone know what their participation grade would be at mid-semester with recommendations for improvement if needed. If anyone is breaking the above rules I will send gentle email
reminder directly to you- I will not embarrass anyone publicly. Let’s have really good
discussions- you do NOT need to agree with what the instructor says. But we all need to respect
the views of everyone in the class and act with common courtesy. No flaming please although this
is easier to do in a virtual environment than in a face-to-face course. Let’s all have robust and
lively discussions!

PLEASE, if you have questions or concerns about what is happening in the class, do not wait
until the end of the semester to express them. I will be willing to help you adapt and adjust as
much as possible. Learning can be fun in addition to being educational so my goal is to put
together a collegial learning forum where we can explore diverse client groups in a structured, but
not rigid, learning environment. Remember that you get back what you put into such classes!

**Required Texts:**

There are no required texts for this course. Assigned readings will be available via Blackboard
under “COURSE DOCUMENTS.”

**Assignments:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Research Paper on a Group (20%)</td>
<td>Sept. 28th</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Term Project Analytical Paper (20%)</td>
<td>Nov. 13th</td>
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<td>3. Term Project Information Product(s) (20%)</td>
<td>Nov. 13th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reflection Paper (15%)</td>
<td>Nov. 30th</td>
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<td>5. Participation (25%)</td>
<td>weekly</td>
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**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**ACADEMIC HONOR CODE**

Students are required to abide by the university's academic integrity policy (URL: [http://www.uncg.edu/saf/studiscp/Honor.html](http://www.uncg.edu/saf/studiscp/Honor.html)).

**My Requirements**

Late assignments are unacceptable unless arrangements are made at least 24 hours prior
to their deadline with the instructor except in the case of emergency. Assignments turned
in late will receive one whole grade reduction. Incomplete assignments will result in a
half grade deduction for that assignment. All assignments must be completed in order to
pass the course. Simply handing in all assignments however will not guarantee the
student of a passing grade in the course.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require
accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact the instructor at the
beginning of the semester or when given an assignment for which an accommodation is
required. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Offices of
Disability Services, 157 Elliot University Center (336.334.5440).
Tentative Course Schedule

Aug. 24th  
**Introduction to LIS 662**

Personal Introductions, How to Succeed in Class, Doing Readings for the Next Week, etc.

Aug. 31st  
**Studying Groups: Defining “Diversity,” and “Culture”**

Readings:


White, Herb. Unity through diversity: We need to define some terms. *Library Journal*, Nov. 15, 1995, pp. 43-44


Sept. 7th  
**Research, Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Information Services**

Readings:

Taylor, R. S. On the study of information use environments. In: ASIS '86. Learned Information, 1986


Sept. 14th  
**Differentiation of Information Groups by “CLASS”**

Readings:


Hersberger, J. A. (1999). The homeless, public libraries, and outreach
Sept. 21st  
**Differentiation of Information Groups by “RACE”**

Readings:

Sept. 28th  
**Differentiation of Information Groups by “ETHNCITY”**

Readings:

**** Assignment #1, Research Papers Due Sept. 29th ****

Oct. 5th  
**Differentiation of Information Groups by “GENDER & SEXUAL ORIENTATION”**

Readings:

Oct. 12th  
**FALL BREAK- CLASS DOES NOT MEET**

Oct. 19th  
**Differentiation of Information Groups by “AGE”**

Readings:
Shenton, Andrew Kenneth & Dixon, Pat. Information needs: learning more about what kids want, need, and expect from research. *Children and Libraries*, Summer/Fall 2005

**Oct. 26th**
Differentiation of Information Groups by “ABILITY”
Readings: TBA

**Nov. 2nd**
Project Work Week- class does not “meet” although we will discuss how projects are progressing, questions, problems, successes, etc. as Warranted

**Nov. 9th**
ASSIGNMENTS 2 & 3 DUE THIS WEEK- NOVEMBER 13th
Discussion of Term Projects on Blackboard

**Nov. 17th**
The Future of Informing Diverse Client Groups

**Nov. 24th**
THANKSGIVING WEEK- CLASS DOES NOT MEET

**Dec. 30th**
Class Wrap-up
**** Assignment 4 Due November 30th ****

**Assignments:**

I want the best work that each student is willing to give me. If a student feels they need a bit more time for an assignment they may request an extension and name the amount of time needed. This is NOT meant to enable procrastinators… indeed; one might be better off handing in an assignment in whatever form it is in at the due date. You see, I believe that learning is iterative and not necessarily linear. So, you will choose when you turn in your assignments to me. For those of you who turn your assignments in on time, I will evaluate, add comments and grade them. When you receive the paper, you may elect to take the grade assigned. If you wish, you may elect to revise and resubmit the paper for evaluation. THIS OFFER DOES NOT EXTEND TO AN A- PAPER BUT THOSE B+ OR LOWER. An A- is a perfectly fine grade and it would otherwise be a waste of my time and yours for revision. Again, this offer is not valid for those who are procrastinating but it might be valid based on other circumstances (i.e. having a baby, illness, etc- something outside of your own control).

**Assignment 1: Research Paper on a Group (20%) Due: SEPTEMBER 28th, Midnight**

Analytical Report: 7-8ish pages, clearly titled, single spaced with a double space between paragraphs, numbered pages, use the style manual your are most familiar with (APA, MLA, Turabian, etc. but it needs to be a standard format, not one that you made up yourself). NOTE: VERY IMPORTANT- USE HEADINGS!!!!!!!! FORGET WHAT YOU LEARNED IN YOUR ARTS & SCIENCES UNDERGRAD CLASS AND SAVE THE TIME OF THE READER. THE STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER IS AS VALUABLE AS THE PAPER CONTENT.

Either working as an individual or in a group you will select the group that your term project will focus on and then using Robert Taylor’s analytical framework of Information Use Environments you will research the 1) set or sets of people, 2) settings where information seeking and exchange take place, 3) problems (which lead to information needs) and 4) problem solutions. I’m adding two more concepts to be researched; 5) barriers to information and 6) the social networks of these groups as we still get a lot of information from friends, family, neighbors, others, etc.

You will need to find current facts and research within LIS and in other disciplines to gain valuable insights in order to design and develop your term project/products. Using research databases in LIS, sociology, communication, marketing, websites, blogs etc. you will pull
together information that will help you do the groundwork for future work as well as inform the instructor and your fellow students about the group.

Your work will be graded on the depth of analytic thought – i.e. connecting the dots in synthesizing what you see in the lit and why it’s important. Those papers that are only descriptive and repeat what others have written will receive a lower grade than those staking a position on what the varying points of view mean- by which I mean the “why” of the issues. Description is the what. What people are saying is important but why what they are saying either matters greatly or does not is your own analytic take on the subject. I’m NOT looking for simple regurgitation, but for some measured and reasoned thought. Again, you may work on this paper individually or in a group of your (plural) choosing.

Assignments 2 & 3: Term Project & Information Product(s)  Due: NOVEMBER 13th, Midnight

Analytical Project Paper (20%): Based on the information you gathered for your first assignment, your project is to then select a group of real information users and interview them and then design and develop an information product or products. You will write a paper where you (again as an individual or as a group) describe your project, its purpose, methodology, findings, etc. which lead to the product or products you will have designed and developed. What worked well, what did not and why?

Information Product(s) (20%): Based on your research, interviews, participant observations, etc. you will then develop an information product(s) or needed service(s). I encourage everyone to think creatively and ground the products and/or services in your research. An A project must include an evaluation of the product/service by members of the target group (which may or may not be made up of those you interviewed, observed, etc.). Sure, a shelf of books in a library might potentially answer lots of a group’s questions but not if they can’t read English or are too fearful of government related agencies to ask for help.

Assignment 4: Reflective Paper (15%)  Due: November 30th · Midnight

Analytical essay: Number of pages varies but try for no more than 4-5 pages singles spaced with a space between each paragraph (as per usual).

The final paper is your opportunity to cogently and in a structured manner (no stream of consciousness babbling please) to reflect upon what you learned this semester and present this information in a well-reasoned document. Citing readings from class, course discussions or outside sources to support your statements is necessary for an A paper.

The concept is simple; the execution may or may not be. Over the course of the semester some issues may “resonate” with you more than others. What did you “know” or “believe” at the beginning of class? Was there “growth” in your knowledge of designing, developing and implementing information services for diverse client groups? (If not, I will be rather disappointed!)

Assignment 5: Class Participation (25%)  Due: WEEKLY

Participation is an extremely important aspect of graduate coursework. This is especially true of an online seminar.

In an online class the postings to the weekly discussion boards give me an idea whether you did the readings and whether you are learning the important concepts, theories, etc. To get an A grade I expect you to: 1) respond to general questions posted by the instructor each week, 2) post some of your own thinking, share outside information you have found, and 3) respond to the postings of other students. Failure to do these three things each week will result in lower participation grades.
Communicating on Blackboard: I am not a fan of requiring \( x \) numbers of postings although I understand students would like this type of grading specificity. YOU ARE NOT TO SIMPLY POST STATEMENTS LIKE “I AGREE” OR “THANKS FOR THAT INFORMATION” as you will be PENALIZED for taking up our time reading such non-essential blather. If you feel you MUST share a personal experience with the poster or say “thanks” or “I agree,” simply click on the poster’s email address in the heading of their message and speak to them directly rather than posting for all to read. I will enable the Bb function where you can go back and revise your posting but I will NOT be enabling anonymous postings. One last important bit of advice: the others in the class (including your instructor) will NOT be reading posts in a linear format. This makes it imperative that when responding to a post you cut and paste the antecedent you are referring to. Failure to do this will result in the instructor sending out emails to STOP THIS as it is very frustrating to read something along the lines of, “Julie, I totally disagree with this rubbish. I believe…” as we will have no real idea of what you are referring to without going back and reading the other posts. SAVE THE TIME OF THE READER is Ranganathan talking about online discussions! 😊. Instead, the correct form is to cut and past the segment of text that you are responding to such as: Julie says. “This is a great class…. and so on.” Then you reply and share your thinking. I will try to model this behavior early and often.

Grading:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td><strong>Outstanding achievement.</strong> Student performance demonstrates full command of the course materials and evinces a high level of originality and/or creativity that far surpasses course expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td><strong>Excellent achievement.</strong> Student performance demonstrates thorough knowledge of the course materials and exceeds course expectations by completing all requirements in a superior manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td><strong>Very good work.</strong> Student performance demonstrates above-average comprehension of the course materials and exceeds course expectations on all tasks as defined in the course syllabus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td><strong>Good work.</strong> Student performance meets designated course expectations, demonstrates understanding of the course materials and is at an acceptable level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td><strong>Marginal work.</strong> Student performance demonstrates incomplete understanding of course materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td><strong>Unsatisfactory work.</strong> Student performance demonstrates incomplete and inadequate understanding of course materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td><strong>Unacceptable work.</strong> Coursework performed at this level will not count toward the MLS or MIS degree. For the course to count towards the degree, the student must repeat the course with a passing grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td><strong>Failing.</strong> Student may continue in program only with permission of the Department Chair.</td>
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I= Incomplete; indicates inability, for reasons beyond the student's control, to complete course requirements by the end of the term in which the course was offered. (A grade of incomplete is not encouraged, and only granted in consultation with the instructor).

W= Withdrawal from course within the time period specified by the university.

NC= No credit (for audited courses).