Syllabus

Information Literacy and Library Instruction

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Summer, 2010
August
6:30-8:20
3 credit hours
Office Hours by Appointment

This course is intended to introduce information literacy and library instruction methods used in a variety of information systems including libraries, archives, and electronic environments. It will include an overview of theoretical and applied research and discusses relevant issues and concepts. The focus of the course is on the process of designing, implementing, and assessing instructional programming. This process has its roots in education and training. As such, much of the content in the course is drawn from the fields of education as well as from library and information science.

GOALS:

1. To become familiar with instruction and assistance in libraries and information systems.
2. To understand instructional theories, issues, strategies, programs, and technologies.
3. To develop practical skills in designing and presenting instruction at both the class level and within a program.
4. To develop a personal philosophy of assistance and instruction.

EXPECTATIONS:

Students in the course will be expected to participate fully in the course. Students are expected to take part in all discussions and to maintain individual contact with the instructor about course assignments.

In addition, students are to subscribe to ILI-L, the information literacy and instruction listserv, to better understand the real-world challenges facing instruction librarians.

COURSE OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the course, the students will be able to:

- Articulate rationales and principles driving the library instruction movement
Identify teaching methods and learning theories associated with the current library instruction movement

Describe the differing groups of library users served by instructional programs

Locate the current standards that serve as the basis for developing instructional programs

Locate sources that provide examples of instructional methods suitable for librarians

Create lesson plans based upon instructional objectives and learning theories

Deliver an instructional presentation based on those theories/objectives apropos to a particular library user group

Recognize/realize own personal learning and teaching preferences/styles

**TEXTBOOK**


There will be other readings, which the instructor shall provide.
Assignments:

While there will be numerous other assignments during the semester, this should take the most time to develop.

In a **project-based assignment**, the students will have to imitate life without any of the concomitant baggage. In most workplaces, there is the opportunity to propose a new idea to one’s coworkers/boss in a memo format and then do a brief “pitch” to sell this idea. The inherent assumption is that one has only a brief (one-page) memo and then about 8 minutes to sell any idea to others. Students will have great latitude in picking their topic and target library. This will be explained in detail. The memo will be due December 5th and Presentations will be the following week(s).

**Watch a movie** about a teacher who inspired students (from this list or one familiar to you):
- Blackboard Jungle
- Children of a Lesser God
- Coach Carter
- Conrack
- Dangerous Minds
- Dead Poet’s Society
- Freedom Writers
- (Nice promotional website at: [http://www.freedomwriters.com/](http://www.freedomwriters.com/))
- Goodbye Mr. Chips
- The Great Debaters
- Mr. Holland’s Opus
- The Miracle Worker
- Music of the Heart
- Race the Sun
- Renaissance Man
- Stand and Deliver
- To Be and To Have
- To Sir, With Love
- Up the Down Staircase

**Discussion:** How does a teacher inspire students to learn?

What movie did you view? Describe the needs of the students. Talk about the characteristics the teacher possessed that contributed to motivating the students (refer to the preparation, performance, and passion characteristics in Chapter 13). Specifically, what principles from learning theory (as described in Chapter 3) did you see these teachers using to motivate their students? Was their teaching style one that appealed to you? Why or why not?

**Learning Styles:**

Your library has subscribed to a service that is converting all your microforms (microfilms, fiche, etc) into computer readable files. Starting soon, the microform readers will be removed and users will have to locate microform documents from a menu that appears on the library’s homepage. Because your microforms included the archives for the local newspaper (used heavily by students) and local census data (frequently requested by researchers and genealogy enthusiasts), this change affects a wide range of library users. Select a particular “audience” for whom you, as a librarian, might have to create an orientation to this new service. Based upon what Grassian and Kaplowitz have to say about factors that might influence learning (learning styles in chapter 4, library anxiety in chapter 5, active
learning in chapter 6, and group or cultural learning preferences in chapter 14), describe how you would customize your presentation to “maximize” learning for that audience.

Practicum:

Students are expected to attend an (preferably two) instructional session in any library or information-related environment of their choosing in order to observe real-world instruction situations. Should you be able to teach a class, all the better.

Reporting back on the observation.

Help!-ful Analysis – Choose an online library catalog and an online bookstore website. Create a list of searches for yourself consisting of two title searches (one an exact title search and one a search on keywords from the title), two author searches (one with the name inverted and one without the name inverted) and two subject searches (one very broad topic and one very specific topic). Work through your list in each of the systems (library catalog and online bookstore). In each case, enter your searches, observe the results, and then request help from the system. Assess the quality of the help systems, noting strengths and deficiencies, and compare/contrast the help systems. Answer the question – what elements of the library catalog help system would improve the online bookstore help system, and vice versa? Write a 1000 word analytic essay discussing your assessments of the help systems and the conclusions you drew based on your experiences. Attach the list of searches you created as an appendix to the paper. (my thanks to Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe for this assignment)
September 5: Introduction to Information Literacy

*Who, what, where, and when?*

September 12\textsuperscript{th}          No classes

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September 19\textsuperscript{th}          Background—what is information literacy?

**Read** Grassian & Kaplowitz Textbook, Chapters 1, 2, and 15

([http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/review/reviewarticles/31231.html](http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/review/reviewarticles/31231.html))

*Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* ([http://www.alan.org/acrl/ilcomstan.html](http://www.alan.org/acrl/ilcomstan.html)) and the *Model Statement of Objectives for Academic Bibliographic Instruction*

> View these programs and think about how they facilitate information literacy:

FirstGov for Kids (Federal Citizen Information Center)  
Browse the site – it’s huge, look for things that seem the most child-centered.

Flint Public Library Tutorials (Flint, Michigan)  

The Information Cycle (Penn State University)  
[http://www.libraries.psu.edu/instruction/infocycle/infocycle.html](http://www.libraries.psu.edu/instruction/infocycle/infocycle.html)

Virtual Tour (Baruch College)  
[http://newman.baruch.cuny.edu/help/virtualtour.html](http://newman.baruch.cuny.edu/help/virtualtour.html)  
View the library’s main features either as a Flash movie or in HTML frames.  
(Translated into nine different languages.)

**Discussion 1:** What Elements Coalesce to Form an Information Literacy Program?

Discussion topics: What are the roots of information literacy? How is the current definition of information literacy different from “library instruction”? How are principles of information literacy reflected in the online programs you viewed? Select a library environment and tell how you think information literacy applies to that type of library.
Read:

**September 26**

**Teaching and Learning Styles**

Read: Grassian & Kaplowitz, Chapters 13 and 3

Watch a movie about a teacher who inspired students (from this list or one familiar to you):

- *Children of a Lesser God*
- *Coach Carter*
- *Conrack*
- *Dangerous Minds*
- *Dead Poet’s Society*
- *Freedom Writers*
  
  (Nice promotional website at: [http://www.freedomwriters.com/](http://www.freedomwriters.com/))
- *Helen Keller*
- *Mr. Holland’s Opus*
- *Race the Sun*
- *Renaissance Man*
- *Stand and Deliver*
- *To Sir, With Love*
- *Up the Down Staircase*

**Discussion:** How does a teacher inspire students to learn?

What movie did you view? Describe the needs of the students. Talk about the characteristics the teacher possessed that contributed to motivating the students (refer to the preparation, performance, and passion characteristics in Chapter 13). Specifically, what principles from learning theory (as described in Chapter 3) did you see these teachers using to motivate their students? Was their teaching style one that appealed to you? Why or why not?

**October 3**

**More instruction building blocks**

Read Grassian & Kaplowitz Textbook, Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 14

**Activity:**

Chapter 4 includes an overview of Kolb’s Experiential Learning Model (pp. 68-70). This model divides learning styles into four categories. Two professors at North Carolina State University have created a questionnaire that “calculates” what learning style you favor. If you want to try it, go to [http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html](http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html).

**Discussion:** What influences learning (from the learner’s point of view)? Use the following exercise to articulate and outline these influences.

Assignment: Your library has subscribed to a service that is converting all your microforms (microfilms, fiche, etc) into computer readable files. Starting soon, the microform readers will be removed and users will have to locate microform documents from a menu that appears on the library’s homepage. Because your microforms included the archives for the local newspaper (used heavily by students) and local census data (frequently requested by researchers and genealogy enthusiasts), this change affects a wide range of library users. Select a particular “audience” for whom you, as a librarian, might have to create an orientation to this new service. Based upon what Grassian and Kaplowitz have to say about factors that might influence learning (learning styles in chapter 4, library anxiety in chapter 5, active learning in chapter 6, and group or cultural learning preferences in
chapter 14), describe how you would customize your presentation to “maximize” learning for that audience.

October 10th
Becoming an effective Instructor.
Read:
Grassian & Kaplowitz Textbook, Chapters 8, 9 and 11

October 17th
Program Planning

Required Preparation:

Read Grassian & Kaplowitz Textbook, Chapter 7

Students are expected to attend an (preferably two) instructional session in any library or information-related environment of their choosing in order to observe real-world instruction situations. Should you be able to teach a class, all the better.

Reporting back on the observation.

October 24th
Program Planning (continued)
Writing learning objectives
Bloom’s Taxonomy
Gagne’s Nine Events of Instruction
Books on best practices

The authors introduce the Information Literacy Standards developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) on pp. 144-145. They do not discuss the Information Power standards established by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL). Those of you who are thinking about children’s librarianship may want to review the AASL policy:

Association of College and Research Libraries Information Literacy Standards
http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.htm

American Association of School Librarians Information Power Standards
http://www.ala.org/aaslTemplate.cfm?Section=aaslinfolit
From this page, click on the “Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning.”

October 31st
Guest speaker?
Helpful Analysis – Choose an online library catalog and an online bookstore website. Create a list of searches for yourself consisting of two title searches (one an exact title search and one a search on keywords from the title), two author searches (one with the name inverted and one without the name inverted) and two subject searches (one very broad topic
and one very specific topic). Work through your list in each of the systems (library catalog and online bookstore). In each case, enter your searches, observe the results, and then request help from the system. Assess the quality of the help systems, noting strengths and deficiencies, and compare/contrast the help systems. Answer the question – what elements of the library catalog help system would improve the online bookstore help system, and vice versa? Write a 1000 word analytic essay discussing your assessments of the help systems and the conclusions you drew based on your experiences. Attach the list of searches you created as an appendix to the paper. (my thanks to Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe for this assignment)

November 7th
Guest speaker?

The online tutorial
Read:
Grassian & Kaplowitz, Chapter 16, 17.

We will discuss the content-end of an interactive web-based tutorial. Interactive is meant here to describe a tutorial that includes in its design instances in which decisions made by the learner affect the information that the tutorial presents to the learner. Possible topic areas include electronic bibliographic databases, a web-based resources, reference tools, software packages, search strategies, and research concepts. You will need to discuss tutorials, audience and purpose (standards, goals, and objectives), as well as analyzing the effectiveness of the tutorial. Use the goals and objectives in the literature to predict and analyze effectiveness.

For your learning pleasure
View these award-winning tutorials based on the ACRL Information Literacy Standards:

Searchpath (Western Michigan University)
http://www.wmich.edu/library/searchpath/
“Don’t miss “It’s Time to Play”- an arcade-like assessment in Module 1.

TILT (University of Texas)
http://tilt.lib.utsystem.edu/
Go into “Full Tilt” and try out the “Tiltometer.”

November 14th
Class to work on their projects

November 21st
The day before Thanksgiving..

November 28th
Evaluation and Assessment Programmatic
Read: Grassian & Kaplowitz Textbook, Chapter 12.
ACRL Environmental Scan. Analysis of Instructional Environments.
Students will participate in an analysis of Hunter College Libraries.
We will work through a painful, but effective analysis together.

December 5th
Memo Due

Assessment continued
December 12th
Presentations

December 19th
Presentations