

LIS 662 Information Sources and Systems in the Social Sciences

Fall 2001: Class meets Tuesdays 1:00-3:40 in SL 110

Instructor: Dr. Diane Nahl

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11-12:30 & 4:00-5:30 p.m.; Wednesday 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Thursday 11:00-12:30 & 4:00-5:30 p.m.; and by appt.

Course Description

This course provides an overview of information sources in the social sciences, their generation, bibliographical control, and use; reference services; reference effectiveness research and reference negotiation; and bibliographic instruction for the social sciences.

Prerequisite: LIS 601

Program Learning Objectives

This course addresses the following objectives of the LIS Program, enabling students to:

1. demonstrate an understanding of the philosophy, principles, and ethics of library and information science;
3. attain basic competencies and knowledge that are essential for providing, managing, and designing information services in a variety of information environments;
6. demonstrate an understanding of the theories and processes involved in retrieval, dissemination, and utilization of information sources;
7. demonstrate an understanding of the principles of administration applicable to libraries and information centers;

9. demonstrate an understanding of research techniques and methods of applying new knowledge as it becomes available;

10. acquire attitudes and interpersonal skills needed to communicate with colleagues and information users;

Course Learning Objectives: Students will seek to:

1. discern the similarities and differences in information structure and use between social science disciplines and those in the sciences, arts, and humanities.

2. understand the principle means by which social science information is created and disseminated.

3. become familiar with the characteristics of the literature of the social science disciplines and of their information structures.

4. gain insight into the approaches to social science information taken by scholars, students, and the lay public.

5. apply principles of search strategy in seeking answers to reference questions.

6. improve search skill by documenting and analyzing their own search strategies.

7. understand the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that are important in achieving accurate reference service.

8. develop grounded data for reference service design by documenting and analyzing user behavior.

9. complete a pilot study with users on some aspect of using information systems, including data instrument design, data gathering, analyses, and reporting.

Course Philosophy

This course emphasizes developing professional knowledge and skills in understanding information seeking and use for the purpose of designing reference services for social science information. This includes learning to teach novice users how to search and how to ask the right questions in pursuit of information. Fieldwork helps students to focus on the intermediary role of librarians and instructors through real world experience observing librarians helping people solve their information problems. The broad goal of the course is to help students acquire the ability to design and provide user-oriented reference service and conduct user-based research in a collaborative, classroom-workshop environment.

Teaching method

Limited lecturing; guest lectures; role playing; collaborative class exercises; field research; research design workshops; oral presentations; written synthesis.

Requirements

Readings

Required Text: Nahl, Diane. 2001. *Strategic Research Approaches for Reference Librarians*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall-Hunt.

In addition to the text, there are weekly reading assignments from the reference literature and relevant Web sites that will be the focus of class discussions. You will search for the answers to social science reference questions, document and discuss your efforts in class. There will be class exercises and some guest speakers. Active class participation is essential when discussing readings, search strategies, and social science sources. Consult the written instructions for the assignments listed below:

Assignments and Grading

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Subject Discipline Report | 25 |
| Social Science Event Report | 15 |
| Action Research Report | 30 |
| Reference Questions | 20 |
| Class participation/exercises | 10 |
| | 100 |

Total

Refer to the written *Assignment Instructions*. Read the instructions for each assignment and follow them closely. Your grade will depend on how well you follow written instructions. Please do not use report covers or binders.

Grading Scale: 90-100 = A; 89-80 = B; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D

Due Dates

Due dates are given on the course schedule. Late assignments will be assessed one point per day. Those presenting subject discipline reports may postpone the assigned reference questions for that week. Those presenting **subject discipline reports between **Nov 13-Dec 11** must submit the social sciences Event Report by **Nov 6** (Event Reports may be turned-in any time before the due dates).

Grading scale: A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69

Participation Requirements

Attendance, assigned readings and exercises, fieldwork, and active class participation are required.

Technology Requirements

This course requires you to use a computer to produce all of the written assignments. PCs and Macs are available in the ICS and other UH computer labs, but you must bring your own paper to print. You are also required to obtain and use your free UHUNIX email account (or a commercial one if you prefer) to

subscribe to lis-stu (our internal mail list for students). Students are expected to use the Internet and subscribe to at least two instruction-oriented listservs, and to locate and study World Wide Web resources pertinent to the course topics.

LIS 662 Fall 2001 COURSE SCHEDULE

(Subject to Change)

| Session | Date | Topics | Assignments & Due Dates |
|---------|-----------|--|--|
| (1) | AUG 28 | Nature of the Social Sciences | |
| (2) | SEP 4 | Scholarly Communication in the Social Sciences | Nahl Ch 1; Dogen, Li, <i>Subject Discipline Topics Due</i> |
| (3) | SEP 11 | Evolution of Social Theory: The Literature and its Bibliographic Structure | Nahl Ch 2; Friedes, Herron, Webb <i>Political Science Questions</i> |
| (4) | SEP 18 | Reference Effectiveness Research | Nahl Ch 3; Brown, Dewdney & Ross <i>Discipline Report</i> |
| (5) | SEP 25 | Human Factors in Reference Services | Nahl Ch 4; ALA/RASD, Larson & Dickson, Radford <i>History Questions</i> <i>Discipline Report</i> |
| (6) | OCT 2 | Information Use in the Social Sciences | Nahl Ch 5; Folster, Lazinger <i>et al.</i> <i>Discipline Report</i> |
| (7) | OCT 9 | Librarian and User Behavior Studies | Nahl Ch 6; Nahl, Ross & Dewdney <i>Discipline Report</i> <i>Anthropology Questions</i> |

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|------|-----------|---|--|
| (8) | OCT 16 | Library Response to Information Use in the Social Sciences | Ferguson & Bunge, Geffert & Christiansen <i>Sociology Questions</i> <i>Discipline Report</i> |
| (9) | OCT 23 | Tensions in Information Use in the Social Sciences | Nahl Ch 7; Massey-Burzio, Searing <i>Education Questions</i> <i>Discipline Report</i> |
| (10) | OCT 30 | Digital Information Use in the Social Sciences | Nahl Ch 8; Garnsey & Powell, Kasowitz <i>et al.</i> <i>Discipline Report</i> |
| (11) | NOV 6 | Bibliographic Instruction for the Social Sciences | Nahl Ch 9; Sever, Smalley & Plum <i>Psychology Questions</i> <i>Discipline Report</i> **Event Report |
| (12) | NOV 13 | Issues in Bibliographic Instruction | ACRL/IS Web Site, Kuhlthau, Oberman **Discipline Report <i>Communication Questions</i> |
| (13) | NOV 20 | Information Retrieval Issues in Reference Services | Cochran & Staples, Dewdney & Michell <i>Geography Questions</i> |
| (14) | NOV 27 | Business Reference Services Vicky Lebbin, BHSD Reference Librarian | Ren & Au, Vaughan **Discipline Report <i>Statistics & Demographics Questions</i> Event Report |

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|------|--------|---------------------------------|--|
| (15) | DEC 4 | Reference Services for Law | Bast **Discipline Report <i>Business & Economics</i> <i>Questions</i> Action Research Oral |
| (16) | DEC 11 | User-Centered Reference Service | **Discipline Report Action Research Oral <i>Course Evaluation</i> |
| | DEC 18 | Final reports due | Action Research Report |