This course is meant to empower students to use professional bibliographic, directory, and full-text database systems competently, and to appreciate their diversity. It analyzes the role of electronic database services in reference work. It educates the students about the features of a variety of database search systems. These include several professional online information services which are the most widely used in college, public and school libraries such as CSA-IDS, OCLC FirstSearch, EBSCO and ProQuest. **Prerequisite:** LIS 601 Introduction to Reference and Information Services.

**LIS Program Learning Goals and Objectives**

- Demonstrate theoretical understanding of and basic competencies in evaluating, selecting and organizing information sources; (5)
- Demonstrate theoretical understanding of and basic competencies in retrieval, dissemination, utilization and evaluation of information sources; (6)
- Apply basic competencies and knowledge that are essential for providing, managing, and designing information services in a variety of information environments; (3)
- Demonstrate basic competency in the latest specialized information technologies; (11)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the above goals within the perspective of prevailing technologies. (12)

**Course Learning Objectives**

- Learn about the state-of-the-art in online database searching, with emphasis on their use as part of reference service in libraries and information/media centers;
- Become acquainted with the characteristics of bibliographic and non-bibliographic databases from a professional searcher's point of view;
- Learn the concept and practice of interactive searching, and the basics of searching the most widely used professional online information systems in college, public and school libraries;
- Understand the role and functions of the search intermediary and search instructor;
- Raise awareness of the deficiencies in the expensive professional online information systems.

The course addresses the following core competencies of ALA:

**Knowledge Organization:** standards to control and create information structures, principles involved in the organization and representation of knowledge and information structures; (3)

**Technological Knowledge:** current information and communication technologies as they affect information centers, concepts and processes related to assessing and evaluating impact and efficacy of tech-based products and services, use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and tools; (4)

**Knowledge Dissemination—Service:** concepts, principles and techniques that facilitate information access for users, interaction with users to provide consultation or guidance in use of information resources, assessment of user needs, diversity in user need. (5)

**Professional Expectations**

All students in the Program are expected to become familiar with and adhere to the Professional Expectations posted at [http://www.hawaii.edu/lis/students.php?page=profexp](http://www.hawaii.edu/lis/students.php?page=profexp)
Teaching Method
- The course applies a combination of lectures, students' exercises and class-room activities.
- The lectures allow the instructor to impart the key concepts and practices of effective online information retrieval, and share prevailing views about related issues.
- The exercises take students to jaunts and journeys of discovery to learn and appreciate the diversity offered by online systems and databases to serve the information needs of users with diverse educational and cultural heritage. The exercises provide the opportunity for immersive learning of database searching and for demonstrating the students' level of professional search abilities.

Research Methods
- Action Research
- Case Study
- Experiment
- Heuristic Evaluation
- Information Retrieval

Required Readings

Reading list: http://www2.hawaii.edu/~jacso/663/663-digr-08-sp.htm

Assignments and Grading

Students shall form a group of 3-4 persons for the assignments and submit one joint paper per group before the class starts on the due date. The Field Work Report and Term Paper will be done individually.
Please see the page about the General Guidelines for the Assignments.
The assignments include test searches, questions about the browsing, search strategy development, query formulation, output options. They are based on the class-room presentations and discussions, the readings, and the MLIS graduate level use of databases by the students.

Assignment 1        10 points
Assignment 2        20 points
Field Work Report 10 points
Assignment 3        25 points
Assignment 4        35 points
SCHEDULE

Session 1  Introduction, course overview
Search flow: interactions and interfaces - the big picture. Guest: Karen Hinton

Session 2  Googling AND/OR/NOT professional searching

Session 3  Using controlled vocabulary

Session 4  Term mapping/ suggestion and clustering

Session 5  Index browsing (master files and index files)

Session 6  Natural language searching

Session 7  Advanced search operations
Query reformulation/refinement

Session 8  Citation-based and citation enhanced databases I.

Session 9  Citation-based and citation enhanced databases II.

Session 10 Field work

Session 12 Discussion of term paper issues

Session 13 Evaluating and improving search results

Session 14 System and database selection, resource discovery

Session 15 Student presentation of term papers

Session 16 The future of online searching, aggregating, linking and surviving