

INLS 502 User Education Fall 2013 Course Syllabus

Logistics	Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm Manning Hall, Room 304	Prerequisites	INLS 500, INLS 501 or permission of instructor
Website	Sakai [INLS502.001.FA13]	Office Hours	Almost anytime by appointment
Instructor	Rachael Clemens rclemens@unc.edu 714.926.1098 cell		

Description from Catalog:

Examines the history and context of LIS training programs. Pedagogy, teaching skills, and methods of evaluation are addressed. Students may tailor learning projects to their own interests. (3 cr.)

Rationale:

User education takes many different forms across a diverse array of information environments including academic and public libraries, school library media centers, archives and special collections, computer help desks, and all types of medical and special libraries. However the underlying purpose is universally focused on empowering users to effectively access and critically utilize appropriate resources and tools in meeting information needs. Information professionals need the expertise, skills, creativity and confidence to develop meaningful education and training experiences for users. This course provides an opportunity for students to explore, develop and evaluate instruction material and methods targeting an information context of their own interest.

Objectives:

Students will cultivate an understanding of library *users* as highly variable human beings engaged in problem-solving; of *libraries* as variable situations designed for giving educative help and service; and of *librarians* as the educators who design and create these situations.

Through this course you will:

- Develop your own philosophy of user education and teaching; identify and reflect on the particular skills and qualities that you contribute to an effective learning environment
- Define and critically analyze information literacy as a concept and map learning outcomes to related information literacy standards
- Examine some of the best practices of user education relevant to a variety of library and information settings by observing real-world instruction
- Develop your teaching and presentation skills by planning, designing and delivering an instruction experience to effectively meet information needs in a specific context
- Cultivate your critical thinking and communication skills by engaging in and leading class discussion
- Examine methods and rubrics for assessing and evaluating instruction; learn to provide constructive feedback by addressing the presentations of colleagues
- Consider emerging and potential non-traditional opportunities for user education

Course Materials:

- Required reading and viewing list of resources available via class website

Assignments & Evaluation:

This class has a significant reading component; you should expect to devote at least 3 hours per week carefully reading and reflecting on the assigned material. I have made substantial efforts to select only highly relevant, authoritative, well written, timely, and engaging material for our class. The investment you make in engaging with the material both in preparation for class and during classroom discussion will be reflected in your participation grade, discussion questions and discussion leadership role. Classroom discussions are so much more enjoyable with you present and prepared – so please read the materials before class and bring your reactions and ideas.

This class also has two important real-world, '*get your hands dirty*' components: 1) the instruction observation and reflection assignment gives you the opportunity to weave our class content with a real-life example(s) of professional practice; 2) the instruction experience project allows you to explore a context, population, information need of interest to you and then design, craft, conduct and assess a user education experience to meet that opportunity – again, encouraging you to take the content we are learning in class and try it out in the real world. Throughout the semester you will be building the pieces of your instruction experience with plenty of opportunity for feedback, redesign, reflection and experimentation. I encourage you to actively explore and pursue venues, people and opportunities that are closely aligned to the user education contexts you find most engaging – I am happy to assist in any way I can in terms of talking to the right people, brainstorming options, etc.

- Assignments should be submitted via email or in hardcopy to Rachael by class-time on the due date unless otherwise noted. However, discussion questions should be submitted via email by 6:00 pm on the day **before** the relevant reading; this allows me to tweak class planning if needed and also incorporate your questions into class content.
- Please communicate with Rachael if you have questions about an assignment or need to request an extension.
- Late assignments will be accepted for up to a week after due date but will receive a 10% reduction automatically.

My expectation is that you will do original work in this course. It is fine for you to build on your previous work, but it is unacceptable to submit the same work (or nearly the same work) that you used for another course or as part of your research assistantship (if applicable).

Students are strongly encouraged to cooperate and assist one another and share insights and respective expertise in this course. Please acknowledge the support you receive from your colleagues (this may be done in acknowledgements at the end of assignments or projects). It is crucial, however, that in every case where you use the actual written words of others, that these be properly quoted and cited.

Written work in this course is somewhat informal but should be professional in tone and language.

Assignment	Brief Description	Due Date	Possible Points Total = 100
In-class participation	<p>Your participation in class is critical to the success of this class – both for yourself and your colleagues. Contributing your ideas, reactions and questions to the topic at hand will nurture you skills and comfort at presenting your thoughts orally. In addition we all benefit from a dialogue that includes diverse and even conflicting perceptions.</p>	Every class	15
Discussion questions	<p>Select 3 different assigned readings from the course schedule and craft a question or comment that would prompt further discussion among your colleagues. These discussion prompts should relate to the reading in some fashion but feel free to follow tangents, point out inconsistencies or conflicting information, agree or disagree, integrate ideas from other classes, find examples of practice, make predictions, etc. Prompts should be well thought out and may even be provocative. But they may also express tentative and exploratory thoughts – we won't hold you to any hard and fast opinions.</p> <p>Each of the three discussion prompts is due by 6:00 PM on the day before the reading is to be discussed for the first time. You are expected to read and reflect on all of our readings – but you choose the three readings to which you will address your prompt.</p>	3 times during the semester	6
Classroom discussion facilitator	<p>You will need to sign up to lead / facilitate one classroom discussion during the semester focusing on the reading for that day. Look over the class schedule and assigned readings, select one of particular interest to you and sign up with Rachael. If you find an additional reading of extreme interest with relevance to our class, you are welcome to inquire about using it instead – talk with Rachael for permission.</p> <p>Expect to lead a constructive and engaging discussion for approximately 10-15 minutes – visual aids are not required but certainly not forbidden. Please view this as an opportunity to try a new (to you) format of discussion if you'd like.</p>	1 time during semester (sign up with Rachael)	9

Assignment	Brief Description	Due Date	Possible Points Total = 100
Teaching philosophy statement	<p>This preliminary statement should express your thoughts and convictions about learning and teaching. You might describe particular ways you have learned things in your own experience and how you intend to incorporate those elements into practice. You may wish to comment on strong or weak teaching practices you have observed, or ideals of the classroom that matter to you. You should include concrete examples of what you do or anticipate doing in a teaching environment. You might comment on the significance of information literacy, information literacy standards, putting theory into practice, professional development, innovative techniques, and/or the role of instructional technology.</p> <p>Use this statement to start a <i>user education portfolio</i> for yourself. Keep useful materials here – articles, lessons, examples, your own projects – it will be helpful when you are asked to prepare presentations for potential employers. We will discuss this in greater depth during class and but an excellent tutorial is available through the University of Minnesota’s Center for Teaching and Learning to guide you through the process of drafting a teaching philosophy statement. In addition several sample statements are linked from our website.</p> <p>Please provide this statement (<i>aim for 1 single spaced page but no more than 2</i>) to me by September 24. I will provide feedback to you and then ask you to revisit it at the end of the term.</p>	Sept 26	10

Assignment	Brief Description	Due Date	Possible Points Total = 100
Observation, review and reflection of outside instruction experience	<p>The intent of this assignment is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give you the opportunity to experience “user education” in a context of interest to you – or explore a context you know nothing about • prompt you to think about how you learn • prompt you to think about how you might teach others <p>Any number of instruction/training sessions occur on campus and in the community – a growing list of opportunities is available through our class website. You should make arrangements with the instructor to attend a face-to-face instruction session or participate in an online instruction tutorial. Feel free to talk with Rachael about possibilities.</p> <p>After you attend the session please document & reflect on your observations and reactions (in 3-pages or less). Address points such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The purpose of the session as you understand it 2. Audience and your perception of their expectations 3. What sorts of teaching styles and techniques does the librarian utilize? 4. What instructional technology is used in the session? What seemed to work effectively? (or not?) 5. How was the experience for the participants? (we are NOT critiquing the instructor here – just making observations about participant’s reactions) 6. What elements might you try to incorporate or avoid in your own teaching style after experiencing the session? 	Nov 14	10
PechaKucha Presentation	<p>Information technology in the classroom is neither new nor guaranteed to improve instruction... however in the right hands and with a real purpose technology can help immensely – from engaging participants to reaching multiple learning styles to adding some flair and “stickiness”.</p> <p>For this assignment we will work in groups of two or three. With your partner(s) you will select an information technology “tool” to investigate and share with the class in the form of a PechaKucha (presentation format that is based on a simple idea: 20 slides x 20 seconds). We’ll discuss details in class.</p>	Oct 31 or Nov 5	10

Assignment	Brief Description	Due Date	Possible Points Total = 100
Instruction experience	Pitch idea to colleagues / brainstorming (in-class exercise)	By Sept 19	
	Context description and needs assessment (who will/might attend this session and what sort of information needs are they likely to have?)	Oct. 22	5
	Learning outcomes for instruction project and rationale for instruction design	Oct 29	5
	Practice a slice of your instruction delivery or demo your digital product in class	Prearrange to support your project	5
	Instruction delivery or completion of digital product (outside of class)	Before Dec 3	5
	Self-evaluation 1-2 pages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written explanation of the instruction experience you designed and produced Self-assessment and reflection on feedback from colleagues Thoughts on whether/how you might revise the experience 	Dec 5	5
Instruction assessment and feedback for colleagues	Supporting colleagues with constructive feedback is an extremely valuable skill but not always easy to do. We will be using a format called The Tuning Protocol that involves engaging in the role of <i>Critical Friend</i> . Through in-class oral and written feedback we will develop our skills and styles of exchanging professional, objective, substantive and thoughtful feedback. We will discuss further in class the expectations and parameters of this feedback exercise.	TBD	10
Revised teaching philosophy statement	This final writing exercise will prompt you to reflect and possibly revise the teaching philosophy that you composed earlier in the semester. You may rework it based upon things you've learned through the course and in particular your instruction experience. A polished version of the 1 to 2-page document is due by Dec 10.	Dec 10	5

Grading rubric

H = 94-100%

P = 70-93

L = 60-69% F = 0-59%

Policies & Honor Code:

Each student is expected to abide by the UNC Honor Code available via: <http://honor.unc.edu/> The UNC Honor Code is found within the *Instrument of Student Judicial Governance for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill* an important document which discusses issues of student and faculty conduct, values and integrity. From the Preamble:

This Instrument of Student Judicial Governance for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ("*Instrument*") is adopted in furtherance of the University community's shared commitment to the pursuit of truth, and the dissemination of knowledge to succeeding generations of citizens devoted to the high ideals of personal honor and respect for the rights of others. These goals can only be achieved in a setting in which intellectual honesty and personal integrity are highly valued; other individuals are trusted, respected, and fairly treated; and the responsibility for articulating and maintaining high standards is widely shared.

Classroom Environment

In order to cultivate a classroom environment where opportunity for learning and growth is paramount I expect the following from both you and myself:

- Arrive on time and prepared to participate fully in class
- Demonstrate inclusive respect and courtesy to everyone in our classroom
- Engage exclusively and completely with our class during session (i.e. leave Facebook, email, Twitter, texting and other tasks until after class)

Communication

Short questions are fine to send to myself and/or the class listserv and I will try to respond within 24 hours. If you need assistance understanding a concept or an assignment, or have another potentially complicated question, please schedule an in-person meeting (my availability is extremely flexible). If you ask a question via email that I believe is better suited for in-person discussion, then I will ask you to come in and speak with me. If you have questions about how your assignment was evaluated, then you must visit me in-person to have this discussion. I will not discuss your grades and evaluation of your work via email.