

## **INLS 843 SEMINAR IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES (3 credit hours)**

Spring Semester 2014, Thursdays 2:00-4:45, Room 303 Manning Hall

Instructor: Mary Grace Flaherty

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Office hours: Room 204 Manning Hall, Thursday 10-11:45 a.m. or by appointment

### Course Description:

In this seminar, we will explore public libraries:

- In their historical context
- As social institutions and community spaces
- Services and management
- Current topics, challenges and opportunities

### Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, it is expected that students will:

- Have a general understanding of public libraries' history and current function in society
- Be able to identify and respond to professional challenges in the public library setting
- Reflect upon their attitudes and practices in order to assess their performance as developing information professionals.

### Course Requirements

#### Required Text:

De la Peña McCook, K. (2011). *Introduction to public librarianship*. (2d ed.). New York, NY:  
Neal-Schuman Publishers.

Other course materials will be accessible through the UNC Libraries course reserves system and/or through Sakai.

<b>Session Number Date *2d half – student led</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings Due Dates</b>
Session 1 – <i>January 9</i>	Introduction and course overview; planning	Review of syllabus Selection of individual topics for class sessions
Session 2 – <i>January 16</i>	Data and statistics, planning, current trends in public libraries	Chapter 4 in text Pew research surveys
*Session 3 – <i>January 23</i>	The history of public libraries: from their origins through 1918	Chapter 2 in text Harris (1975) <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 4 – <i>January 30</i>	Public Libraries: 1918-present	Chapter 3 in text Williams (1988) <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 5 – <i>February 6</i>	Organization, law & advocacy, funding & policies	Chapter 5 in text  <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 6 – <i>February 13</i>	Structure & infrastructure of public libraries	Chapter 7 in text  <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 7 – <i>February 20</i>	Administration & staffing	Chapter 6 in text  <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 8 – <i>February 27</i>	Interconnective nature of the public library	Chapter 10 in text  <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 9 – <i>March 6</i>	Stereotype of the Public Librarian	Vonnegut (2004)  <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 10 – <i>March 20</i>	Adult Services	Chapter 8 in text  <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 11 – <i>March 27</i>	Youth Services	Chapter 9 in text  <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 12 – <i>April 3</i>	Global perspective on public libraries	Chapter 11 in text  <i>*Student choice</i>
*Session 13 – <i>April 10</i>	Future challenges for public libraries	Sherman (2013)  <i>*Student choice</i>
Session 14 – <i>April 17</i>	What's happening on the ground in PL's in NC	<i>Outreach - Student presentations</i>
Session 15 – <i>April 24</i>	Wrap-up; final thoughts & reflections	<i>Outreach - written portion due by 4/28 at 12:00 pm</i>

### Additional Readings:

#### **Session 3:**

Harris, M.H. (1975). The role of the public library in American life: a speculative essay. *Occasional Papers*, University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science, No. 117.

#### **Session 4:**

Williams, P. (1988). The public library inquiry. Chapter 5 in *The American public library and the problem of purpose*. Contributions in Librarianship and Information Science, No. 62. New York: Greenwood Press.

#### **Session 9:**

Vonnegut, K. (2004). I love you, madame librarian. *The Spokesman*, 54-55.

#### **Session 13:**

Sherman, S. (2013). The hidden history New York City's Central Library Plan. *The Nation*, September 10.

### Assignments:

Class session: each student will lead the second half of one class session. S/he will be responsible for selecting the appropriate reading(s) to complement the text content and for creating an in-class exercise (e.g. case study, discussion) to exemplify and/or illustrate the weekly topic. Plans for the session must be reviewed by the professor and approved at least one week before the session is scheduled to take place.

Outreach to public library: each student will select a N.C. public library (excluding Chapel Hill) and interview the library director to determine an area of need (e.g. funding for adult programs, new teen resources, etc.). The student will identify a funding source or a resource that could help to address/fulfill the need. Written component: a one page summary of the interview and one page summary of the need and proposed resource (single-spaced). Students will also give a brief presentation of their proposals in class during session 14 (and session 15, if needed).

### Grading:

Class session – 35%

Outreach to public library – 35%

Class Participation – 30%

Based on the UNC Registrar Policy for courses (<http://regweb.unc.edu/resources/rpm24.php>) semester grades will be H, P, L or F for graduate students. Grades for individual assignments will be based on points obtained on each assignment, weighted by percentages listed above, to calculate final grades. Numerical grades for the course as a whole will roughly translate into the following letter grades:

98.0-100% = H (High Pass)

80.0-97.9% = P (Pass)

65.0-79.9% = L (Low Pass)

< 64.9% = F (Fail)

If you have any questions or concerns about any issues at any time, please feel free to discuss with me.

Students at the School of Information and Library Science are expected to follow the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Honor Code. Essentially, the Honor Code states that all students shall “refrain from lying, cheating, and stealing... all students are expected to actively support and protect the ideals of the Honor System at Carolina. These responsibilities must not only be met, but exceeded, for Carolina’s Honor System to continue to thrive.” For more information, see: <http://honor.unc.edu/>. For all assignments, students are required to submit original work and to give credit through citation to any sources/resources they used.

If you feel you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Also, please contact UNC Disability Services at (919) 962-8300 or [disabilityservices@unc.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@unc.edu) at the Student and Academic Services Buildings, located in Suite 2126, 450 Ridge Road, to formally coordinate accommodations and services.

## **Diversity Statement**

In support of the University’s diversity goals and the mission of the School of Information and Library Science, SILS embraces diversity as an ethical and societal value. We broadly define diversity to include race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation and physical and learning ability. As an academic community committed to preparing our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly multicultural and global society we strive to:

- Ensure inclusive leadership, policies and practices
- Integrate diversity into the curriculum and research

- Foster a mutually respectful intellectual environment in which diverse opinions are valued
- Recruit traditionally underrepresented groups of students, faculty and staff
- Participate in outreach to underserved groups in the State.

The statement represents a commitment of resources to the development and maintenance of an academic environment that is open, representative, reflective and committed to the concepts of equity and fairness.

*January 2014*