

INLS 747: SPECIAL LIBRARIES AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT SYLLABUS

Fall 2017

Objectives – Textbooks -- Assignments & Grading -- Class Policies

“Whether termed ‘librarians’ or ‘information professionals,’ special librarians...have to be aware of management interests and to respond to these by providing a customized, tailor-made service; special librarians must be flexible, resourceful and knowledgeable about information resources. They must be both generalist and specialist in many fields: they must be pragmatic, and they must have the imagination to seek information from unlikely sources.” ---Peter Drucker

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Course Description

People who perform information services in organizations have various titles. Two of the most traditional are special librarian and information resources manager; people with these titles usually have responsibility for a collection and a service facility. Other titles include market researcher, competitive intelligence specialist, information analyst, knowledge manager or simply research associate; people with these titles gather and analyze external information, compare it to internal information and compile summary reports. People working in knowledge management often help formalize communities of practice and create databases for internal “tacit” knowledge of work practices. Still other information professionals work independently and run their own businesses. Two examples of typical titles for self-employed librarians are information broker or information consultant.

Although titles differ and the organizational context affects the nature of services delivered, a common knowledge base and theoretical framework undergirds all these positions. Additionally, they share a need for a common set of professional and personal competencies. The knowledge base and theoretical framework for the class comes from library science, knowledge management, and business literature. Relevant applications are from the library/information science (LIS) literature in particular from the Special Libraries Association (SLA), the professional society for over 7,000 information professionals worldwide. Within the course, professional and personal competencies promulgated by SLA:

<http://www.sla.org/about-sla/competencies/>

<http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/careers/corecomp/corecompspecial/knowledgecompetencies>

Objectives of the Course

"The core of knowledge management is the organization of processes in which new knowledge is developed, knowledge is distributed to those who need it knowledge is made accessible for current and future use and use by the whole organization and knowledge areas are combined."

The goal of the instructor is that each student learn:

- To define potential career paths in both specialized library settings and nontraditional settings from museums to federal government and knowledge management positions
- To investigate current trends in knowledge management and their manifestations in business and industry
- To use problem solving skills including evaluation, observation, analysis and interpretation to hone critical thinking abilities
- To design appropriate information services with accompanying performance measures for a specific organizational environment
- To examine and practice management competencies in the framework of knowledge organizations

- To achieve self-reliance and self-confidence in presenting the need for information services to upper level management and other members of the organization.
- To develop strategies for continual development of leadership skills

Textbooks

“The ultimate corporate resource has become information-the ultimate competitive advantage is the ability to use it-the sum of the two is knowledge management.” – Nigel Oxbow

One book has been selected for the class and the rest of our readings will be from the current journal literature:

O'Dell, Carla and Hubert, Cindy. *The New Edge in Knowledge: How Knowledge Management Is Changing the Way We Do Business* Wiley, 2011. ISBN: 978-0470917398

This text is a contemporary introduction to the strategic evolution of knowledge management during the last two decades. The author's state that their book illustrates “one how leading organizations achieve great results in knowledge management, or KM, and provides the strategic principles to help everyone do the same in your organization.” Throughout the semester the focus of the class is on corporate settings especially *Fortune* 500 companies with numerous other examples from the world of nonprofits including federal government, hospitals and the BBC (British Broadcasting Corp). The BBC uses knowledge management (KM) techniques to ask questions within their context of learning so the right decision can be made at the right time.

Whether the settings are nonprofit, government or corporate, the process of leveraging knowledge is a strategy for gaining a competitive advantage in the marketplace. On occasion, we will also discuss relevant management topics and the management textbook titled, “Library and information Center Management” written by Prof. Barbara B. Moran is excellent background reading if you have specific areas of interest throughout the semester. There are print copies of the book (8th edition) in our library on SILS Reserves and the material is available as an ebook:

<http://search.lib.unc.edu/search?R=UNCb8947301>

Additionally, you will want to explore other readings on relevant topics that are applicable to your chosen career path. To this end, you are expected to share one substantive reading for every two weeks. The reading can come from the professional or business literature; it can be an article in a news magazine or newspaper, a chapter from a book, a website or blog that you find helpful. The outside readings are to be posted to the course Sakai site so all members of the class can access them. Your skill in concisely summarizing the key points of the reading will be good practice and will enhance our class discussions.

Assignments and Grading

The course will be conducted by lecture, classroom exercises, discussions and student presentations. Readings, visits, and invited speakers will extend the understanding of possible career options as well as the dynamics of particular settings and functional activities.

You will want to participate actively and regularly in the class through postings to the Sakai forum and regular attendance. Active involvement is fundamental to learning.

Providing encouragement to fellow classmates through your constructive comments, questions and suggestions will help to create an effective and enjoyable learning environment and will make you a good citizen of the class.

Six assignments are planned for you to develop appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities. You may propose an alternative assignment for any of the assignments. If you have particular needs and interests; the chances are high that we can work out an accommodation.

The assignments will be described in detail and posted to the Sakai site.

Below are the grading weights for the assignments and your class participation:

Assignments

Class Participation	10%
Assignment 1: Career Journal, Chapter One	15%
Assignment 2: Profile of an Industry	15%

Assignment 3: Environmental Analysis of an Organization	15%
Assignment 4: Designing Service Offerings with Performance Measures	15%
Assignment 5: Developing a Marketing Plan	15%
Assignment 6: Issue Paper on Your Choice of Topic	15%

The first and last assignments are individual. The second assignment is to be done as a team. Assignments 3, 4, and 5 may be done individually or as a team. If the latter option is chosen, all members of the team will receive the same grade unless there is overwhelming evidence why it should be otherwise.

Participating in class:

You are expected to participate in all our class discussion, class exercises, conversations with guest speakers and small group exercises. In addition to talking being a participant also means being an active listener too. The viewpoints of everyone in our class contribute to the success of our semester. My expectation is that all of you will do well and pass the course with a solid P; some of you will do outstanding work that will merit an H.

Your class participation grade is based on the following rubric. (adapted with permission from Dr. Stephanie Haas)

	Strong	Needs development	Unsatisfactory
Preparation	Arrives with notes, observations, and questions.	Sometimes arrives unprepared	Shows little if any indication of having prepared for class or reading assigned materials
Listening	Actively supports, listens and engages	Shows effort to interact at times shows disinterest in peer contributions	Limited or no interaction with peers and may exhibit disrespect.
Quality of contributions	Comments and questions are relevant and demonstrates close reading & keen insight	Participates constructively but unevenly. Comments and questions are at times irrelevant or lack depth.	Never participates or participates only when prodded and does so in perfunctory manner. Shows little interest in materials or peer contributions.

Frequency of participation	Participates actively at appropriate times.	Participates sometimes but fails always to be attentive.	Rarely participates and is not generally engaged.
Impact on class	Moves discussion forward; class members benefit from student's contributions and group dynamic is enhanced.	Sometimes advances discussion but at other times seems like merely filler. Group dynamics are sometimes better (but never worse) as a result of student participation.	Comments and questions fail to advance conversation. Group dynamics are impaired as a result of the student's participation.

UNC Chapel Hill Policies on Academic Integrity and Diversity

For over one hundred years, our university has had a student administered honor and judicial system. The UNC Honor System is responsible for investigating any suspected violations of the Honor Code. Every student is a member of the UNC Community and is expected to properly credit the ideas, research and references of sources used in academic life. Please contact the instructor if you have any questions about the Honor Code and how it relates to your academic work for our class. Here is more information about the UNC Honor Code:

<https://studentconduct.unc.edu/>

<https://studentconduct.unc.edu/sites/studentconduct.unc.edu/files/documents/Instrument.pdf>

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 the following areas:

- Race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation and physical and learning ability. As an academic community committed to preparing SILS 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; and
- Participate in outreach to underserved groups especially in North Carolina.

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.

Class Policies

“The people who get on in the world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can’t find them, make them.” – George Bernard Shaw

With the exception of the individual assignments, collaboration with you classmates is highly desirable and encouraged. Sharing your work and giving and receiving assistance from others in the class is valuable. My major interest is in your learning which will best proceed as we share questions, answers and experiences.

We will work from a class schedule that is available on Sakai under the “Resources Section.” It shows the topics, readings, assignment due dates and class activities. We may deviate from the schedule as opportunity arises, but if so, I will make sure you have sufficient notice about the change. Please plan to set aside each week about three-four hours for assigned readings, about three-four hours in planning and writing your assignments and three hours for class time.

Class policies:

- All assignment due dates are posted in advance on Sakai and on our class reading schedule. Reading assignments should be done before each week’s class sessions (except for the first session). Any major

changes in the schedule will be announced in class a week ahead of time and also posted on the “Announcements” section of the Sakai site.

- Two assignments carry a presentation requirement to give you confidence and skill in orally presenting information in a succinct manner.
- It is my intention to make the class interesting and engaging for all of you as we explore the dynamic world of specialized libraries and knowledge management together.