

INLS 513 Resource Selection and Evaluation

Spring Semester 2022

Online only

Instructor: Rebecca B. Vargha

Email: vargha@email.unc.edu

Office phone: 919-962-2455

Zoom Office Hours: Mondays, 11:00am-noon and by appointment

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Course Description

This course covers the identification, provision, and evaluation of resources to meet primary needs of clientele in different institutional environments.

Our class will explore:

- **Defining characteristics of collections**
- **Challenges of defining the scope and boundaries of collections**
- **Development of collections that are valuable to one or more communities**
- **Sustainability of collections especially with regard to technology**
- **Legal and ethical considerations associated with selecting, evaluating, collecting, managing, and providing access to information and documentary artifacts in a variety of forms (e.g., reference works, nonfiction, fiction, graphic novels, databases, websites, open access materials).**

Collections are, first and foremost, dynamic entities, and many of our discussions will be within the context the “lifecycle of information”—from conception and creation, to selection and storage, to access and evaluation, to long-term preservation, reformatting, and deselection (or “weeding”).

Other issues will include an examination of the high cost of serial subscriptions especially academic journals during challenging budget years for libraries as well as the transition from print to electronic materials and the impact on library budgets. Near the end of the semester, discussions will include emerging issues in collection development and management, especially: e-reader devices, digitization projects, self-archiving behaviors, and institutional repository development.

Discussions will also include considering ways in which cultural institutions can collaborate in their collecting activities and ways in which the efforts of different types of organizations (libraries, archives, and museums) have begun to converge in the past decade.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, it is expected that students will be able to...

- Identify and recall major questions, themes, issues, consequences, philosophies and models in collection management;
- Critique recent literature on collections and collecting—from a variety of perspectives and in a variety of settings—in order to understand the major questions, issues, consequences, philosophies, models, and other forces at work;
- Analyze and evaluate written collection development policies with a sensitivity toward the social contexts in which the collections are situated;
- Articulate similarities and differences between the collecting activities of different types of cultural heritage institutions (e.g., academic/public/special/school libraries, archives, and museums);
- Apply a set of heuristics and principles for approaching collection development and management in professional situations (e.g., use of selection aids, circulation statistics, number of pending hold requests);
- Reflect upon their attitudes and practices for the purposes of self-assessing their performance as developing professionals.

Teaching Philosophy

As an instructor and library practitioner, I think that inquiry-focused learning is more effectively achieved in a dynamic environment where there are opportunities for interactive study and application of collection management theories to real world practice. I will use some of the following strategies to foster this type of learning:

- Online discussions with time for synthesis and reflection
- Continuing discourse between students and instructor and students with peers
- Peers serving as critical friends
- Assignments that require the application of concepts to real world problems
- Instruction that moves from What? and How? to “Why” and “So What”

Critical Stance for This Course

During the semester, we will take a critical stance. Questions to consider when thinking about collection management through a critical lens include:

- Whose lived experiences are included in the collection?
- Whose experiences are excluded?
- How accurate, authentic and deep is the representation of marginalized communities?
- Who is included in collections decisions? Whose voices are left out?
- What assumptions are being made about users and their needs?
- What resources (i.e. selection aids) are consulted to guide collection decisions? Whose voices do these resources represent? Whose voices are not included in these resources?
- Who is involved in the assessment process?
- What power structures are at play in collection management?
- What biases do I bring to collection management?

Assumptions Adopted for this Course

- Collection development is a core service in all types of libraries.
- The cost of a library's collections and their long-term importance to that library and to the world of scholarship in general require that extensive time and effort be spent training new selectors and providing continuing education experiences for seasoned selectors.
- Many selectors will find themselves building collections in subjects for which they have little or no background. Even if a subject background exists, it is not necessarily enough preparation for collection building, which requires an understanding of the individual library and its mission.
- There are micro-collection development training needs which relate to a library's specific collecting and managing policies and procedures and its specific organizational culture.
- There are macro-collection development training needs which relate to subject knowledge, the publishing world, structure of the literature in a discipline, research processes in particular disciplines, shifting paradigms of electronic and print media, and communication and management skills.
- The selector, to successfully perform collection development and management operations, requires a knowledge of and communication with other library operations such as cataloging, reference, serials, and acquisitions.
- Training cannot wait for in-house tools to be developed, such as collection development policy statements and collection development manuals, because selectors must function immediately in their roles. These in-house tools are an important part of successful collection development and management and should ultimately be developed.

From Guide for Training Collection Development Librarians (pp. 2-3), edited by S. L. Fales, 1996. Chicago: American Library Association.

Course Materials

Johnson, P. (2018). Fundamentals of collection development & management (4th ed). Chicago: American Library Association. (required textbook)

****Other required reading materials will be accessible through Sakai.****

Supplementary Materials

Books.

Anderson, J. S., Desjariais-Leuth, C., Gleason, M., Long, C. C., Myers, M., Quinn, M. E., & Sullivan, K. A. (1996). Guide for written collection policy statements (2nd ed.). Chicago: American Library Association.

Hoffmann, F. W., & Wood, R. J. (2005). Library collection development policies: Academic, public, and special libraries. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Hoffmann, F. W., & Wood, R. J. (2007). Library collection development policies: School libraries and learning resource centers. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Journals and serial publications related to themes in this course.

- Collection Management (<http://search.lib.unc.edu/search?R=UNCb5819172>)
- Council on Library and Information Resources Reports (<http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/>)
- Journal of Electronic Resources Librarianship (<http://search.lib.unc.edu/search?R=UNCb5965426>)
- Library Collections, Acquisitions, & Technical Services (<http://search.lib.unc.edu/search?R=UNCb5777025>)
- Library Resources & Technical Services (<http://search.lib.unc.edu/search?R=UNCb5846112>)
- Publishers Weekly (<http://www.publishersweekly.com/>)

And others cataloged with the LC subject headings “Library Collection Development--Periodicals.” and

“Collection development (Libraries)--Periodicals.”

And on Twitter: @amlibraries , @PublishersWkly , @LJBookReview , @sljournal

Professional organizations for collection development.

<https://www.ala.org/tools/atoz/Collection%20Development/collectiondevelopment>

The Charleston Conference

[Held annually in Charleston, SC, in early November]

Website for the November 2022 conference: <https://www.charleston-hub.com/the-charleston-conference/>

Conduct of the Course

This is an asynchronous and completely online class with weekly reading assignments in our textbook and journal articles. I will create weekly lesson modules in Sakai that will include additional materials, instructions, and assignments for that week.

Discussions will occur through the forums on Sakai. You will need to complete the assigned readings for each module in order to make informed contributions to the discussions. Although our class is not meeting together in person, “in person” experiences are valuable to learning about resource selection and evaluation. Therefore, some of your “class work” will include touring libraries virtually, evaluating their collection development policies and interviewing librarians. You will report back on these experiences in the Sakai forums.

During our time together we are learning from each other. Please consider that not only will you get out of the course what you put into it, but also that other students are counting on your thoughtful input to make this a meaningful experience for us all.

Assignments

Assignment 1 –

Collection Librarian Interview

(25 points and due on Feb. 6 by noon)

Conduct a virtual interview with a practicing librarian who handles collection management in a specific setting (e.g. academic, special library or information center, public, school or archives/museum setting)

Questions to ask:

- Who is included in collection decisions?
- What stakeholder groups do they consult?
- How do they communicate with each stakeholder group?
- How do they learn about their community of users and their needs?
- What selection tools do they use?
- How do they judge the trustworthiness of these tools?
- How do they evaluate the collection?
- What kind of data is collected to use for evaluating the collection?
- How are budgets for the collection managed and decided on?
- What budgetary process is used?
- How involved (if at all) are they involved in the decision-making process?
- Is the librarian involved in fundraising? How closely (if at all) do they work with potential donors?
- Do they have a collection development policy?
- If so, how often is the collection development policy updated and who is involved in that discussion?

Write up the results of your interview and reflect on the insights you discovered from the process, including what questions the interview raised for you and what might be done differently. (2500-3500 words, double-spaced) 12 point font. Email your final paper as a Word document (NOT a PDF) to the instructor: vargha@email.unc.edu

Assignment 2 – Collection Development Policy Analysis (Group Project)

(25 points and due on March 6 by noon)

Step 1: Individually select a collection development policy in use for a specific setting to analyze (e.g. academic, special library or information center, public, school or archives/museum setting); each person selects a different policy. Evaluate your individual policy through a critical lens and refer back to Chapter 3, pp. 82-96 in Peggy Johnson's book, *Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management*. Also consider the following questions in your individual analysis:

- Who is included in collection decisions?
- What assumptions are being made about users and their needs?

- What resources (i.e. selection aids) are consulted to guide collection decisions? Whose voices do these resources represent? Whose voices are not included in these resources?
- Who is involved in the assessment process?
- What power structures are at play in the policy?
- Who might be impacted positively by this policy and how? Who might be impacted negatively by this policy and how?

Step 2: Individually write up your analysis (2 to 3 page discussion which is double-spaced) and post a brief overview on Sakai for our class about your findings.

- How did the policy measure up?
- What would you change?

Step 3: Group work

- Share your full analysis and critique with your group

Step 4: Group work

- Choose and revise one of the policies

Step 5: Group work

- Create a virtual class presentation on this project. Your group will create a video, digital poster, PowerPoint or some other interesting visual way of telling the class about your revised policy. Include a summary of the changes that you made to the policy and the rationale behind the changes that were made.

Deliverables to instructor by *March 6 at noon*:

1. Email your double spaced (2-3 pages) individual policy paper from each individual as a Word document (NOT a PDF) to the instructor: vargha@email.unc.edu
2. Email revised policy (Word document) to instructor -one per group
3. Presentation materials – one per group -posted to Sakai plus also email to the instructor: vargha@email.unc.edu

Assignment 3 – Community Resource Collection (Group Project)

(25 points and due on April 24 by noon)

Objectives:

- Conducting informal analysis or environmental scan of a user group to anticipate information needs
- Making selection decisions in response to perceived user needs
- Supporting the decision-making process of selection with appropriate selection aids

Creating a real community based resource collection. In groups of two, you will assess the information needs of a community of your choice. You will describe this community in 2-5 pages. Then you will create an annotated list of thirty selected sources and 5 “good but excluded” sources. Write 150-200 words for each of the 35 resources. Please include (1) the names of everyone in your group at the beginning of this document and (2) any reference citations from your community analysis.

Also create a virtual class presentation on this project. Your team will create a video, digital poster, PowerPoint or some other interesting visual way of telling the class about your project. Your presentation should introduce the community you have chosen; discuss tools/methods (3+) you chose to learn about your community and why you felt they were effective for assessment; summarize what you learned about your community; explain general information needs identified in the assessment; and showcase chosen sources, telling how they directly support/link back to your community's information needs.

Choose a "real" setting with a community or communities of people who work, play, or live there. You could choose an office, a ski resort, a fire station, a social program, a dog show, a winery, a church, a school, retirement community or any other setting that brings people together virtually given the current environment. How has COVID-19 impacted the community that your team selected?

After you have submitted your setting choice (on or before March 21st), begin considering the information needs of that user community. Which reference sources would answer most of the information needs for the clientele in that setting? From your initial explorations, find approximately 40-50 (or more) resources that might be appropriate for that setting and the communities being served. As a group, select the 30 reference sources you think are most important for that environment as well as the top 5 resources that just missed the 30-item cutoff. (In other words, you'll choose 35 resources in total—30 of which would be selected as part of your collection, and 5 of which are still "good enough" but have been excluded.) Note: All group members will share identical grades with respect to this assignment.

Also note: Although the final deliverable is composed of multiple parts, this is not a project that works well with a "divide-and-conquer" approach. Please consider extended group discussions about the community selected by your team before conducting independent research. Convene at a later point to share findings and select items as a group.

Contact people who live/work/play in your chosen community to learn more about the setting, environment, clientele, and information needs. However, you should not simply adopt any of their recommendations of resources as justifications for your choice of resources without some form of corroborating evidence. In other words, the list of 35 resources should be uniquely your own and based upon the best available knowledge you have of the people for whom the collection is being built. You may also want to obtain information about your communities from information centers operating in similar contexts, the LIS practitioner and research literature on information needs and seeking behaviors, census data and/or the American Community Survey, business databases, local newspapers, etc. Refer to materials on community assessment for additional methods.

From your preliminary research, you should be able to briefly but adequately describe your setting and the specific community or communities of interest. If the setting you choose is a place you work or have a personal connection to, please indicate this somewhere in the first paragraph of your submission. For each of your 35 sources, summarize the resource's contents and how it might be used by community members (in 150-200 words). In other words, justify its importance to this user community. The resources you choose need not be in their current collection (if a current collection exists). Your discussion should make explicit the criteria by which you made your decisions: authority, organization, treatment, price/cost, etc.

Remember that for every source you choose to include, there are numerous other sources that you must leave out, and you must be able to justify your group's choices; for the 5 resources that are "good" for the community but excluded from your collection, please briefly comment on why the 30 selected resources are "better" than each excluded one. Do

not list “the Web” as a resource, but do refer to specific Internet resources, either freely available or fee-based, if you consider them to be appropriate.

Please use a variety of selection aids to help you identify sources, compare sources, and evaluate sources—anything that assists you in your collective decision-making process. (Please list any such selection aids in your community analysis narrative.) Some typical examples include:

Balay, Robert, ed. Guide to Reference Books (11th ed.). Chicago: American Library Association, 1996.

Yaakov, Juliette, ed. Public Library Catalog (12th ed.). New York: H.W. Wilson, 2004;

Kennedy, Scott E., ed. Reference Sources for Small and Medium-Sized Libraries (6th ed.). Chicago: American Library Association, 1999;

Yaakov, Juliette, ed. Senior High School Library Catalog (16th ed.). New York: H.W. Wilson, 2002.

Any of the “best of” lists (e.g., from RUSA/MARS) or digital collections (at <http://lii.org> or <http://ipl.org>) that we have talked about in class so far.

Post a summary presentation for the group in the Sakai Forum.

Your submissions will be evaluated on the level of sophistication in presenting the users and their needs, the criteria you use for selecting these resources (from both community characteristics and innate characteristics of the selected resources), the overall balance and appropriateness of the collection, and the quality of your presentation (e.g. organization, grammar, usage).

Assignment Three Presentations:

- 1) Identify your chosen community.
- 2) Tell us about the tools/methods (3+) you chose to learn about your community and why you felt these were effective tools/methods for assessment.
- 3) Tell us about your community. What did you learn? (demographics/characteristics/competing or complementing information services in the area, etc)
- 4) From this assessment, share the general information needs identified.
- 5) Briefly showcase your chosen sources and tell us how they directly support/link back to your community’s information needs.
- 6) Organization/Flow/participation. You may use ppts, access the web, or use any presentation method you feel most suitable.

Participation

25% of your grade will come from ongoing participation and your individual self-evaluation is due April 26. For this class, participation means contributing to online discussions both through posts and comments.

Any classwork detailed in the weekly module will also count towards your participation grade. Items that will contribute to your class participation include:

- Completion of all readings each week

- Completion of all asynchronous components on a weekly basis
- Completion of all assignments
- Leading one weekly discussion via the Forum section in Sakai with a detailed focus on the readings for your week and finding at least one current event during the week related to resource management and sharing a synopsis with the class. If your current event came from a digital source, also share a link.
- Your individual week for leading a discussion will be randomly assigned. If you need to change your specific week then it is your responsibility to trade weeks with another member of your class and to notify your instructor via email about the change.

Grading and Due Dates

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS	DUE DATE
Librarian Interview	25	February 6 by noon
Collection Policy Analysis-Group Assignment	25	March 6 by noon
Designing Community Resource Collection—selection of the community by group	n/a (part of Assignment 3)	March 23 by noon
Designing Community Resource Collection- Group Assignment	25	April 24 by noon
Class Participation	25	Ongoing throughout semester; self-assessment due by April 26 at noon

All work is due at 12pm (noon) Eastern Time on the day assigned unless an extension is arranged ahead of time. Papers and major assignments turned in late without prior permission will automatically receive a lowered grade.

The asynchronous nature of our class allows you some flexibility. But there is still an entire semester of material to cover over the next few months. Stay on top of deadlines and plan ahead to avoid a last-minute time crunch. In terms of group work, each member of the group receives the same grade on the group project.

****Important note for Spring Semester 2022 Grading****

Based on data, and in consultation with the UNC Graduate School, the SILS Faculty decided to implement a Pass/Fail only final grading for graduate students for this semester. In summary only “P” grades or “F” grades will be recorded as final grades for graduate students.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS:

SILS will follow the policies set forth by the University Registrar when it comes to undergraduate grading. Undergraduate students will be graded on the normal A, B, C, D, F scale this spring.

Here is the regular grading policy at the UNC School of Information and Library Science.

Most students should expect to receive a P (pass) in this class (equivalent to B- to A-). H (high pass) is reserved for students who go above and beyond expectations (equivalent to A). L (low pass) and F (fail) indicate inadequate and/or incomplete work (equivalent to C, D, and F). If a student is heading down this path we will work together to try and correct it before the end of the course.

UNC Honor Code and Campus Code

It shall be the responsibility of every student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and to support the enforcement of the Honor Code, which prohibits lying, cheating, or stealing when these actions involve academic processes or University, student, or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.

It shall be the further responsibility of every student to abide by the Campus Code; namely, to conduct oneself so as not to impair significantly the welfare or the educational opportunities of others in the University community.

Diversity Statement

In support of the University of North Carolina'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; and
- 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.

What this means for our course: one of the major tensions we explore involves balancing what people/communities might 'want' and what they might 'need'. To a large extent, where we fall on this continuum reflects our personal experiences (which may be accurate or distorted), conclusions drawn from what we read in the professional literature (which may reflect certain contexts better than others), and other forms of "conventional wisdom". We will look at a variety of examples from practice during class sessions, and I encourage all of

us to approach our analyses of these examples with whatever degrees of openness and/or skepticism seem appropriate to enrich our perspectives.

All work is due at noon EST on the day assigned unless an extension is arranged in consultation with the instructor before that date. Papers and major assignments turned in late without prior permission will automatically receive a lowered grade. Late work, missing a class, and other unfortunate events. Life is unpredictable, and once in a great while circumstances beyond your control may have an impact on your life as a student. Advance notice of any anticipated difficulties is always helpful. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain materials and information covered during your absence.

Grading policy

The final course grade will be assigned on the following definitions from the UNC Office of the University Registrar.

A Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected of students at a given stage of development.

The A grade states clearly that the students have shown such outstanding promise in the aspect of the discipline under study that he/she may be strongly encouraged to continue.

B Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development.

The B grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study.

C A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development.

The C grade states that, while not yet showing unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development.

D A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment.

A student has given no evidence of prospective growth in the discipline; an accumulation of D grades should be taken to mean that the student would be well advised not to continue in the academic field.

F For whatever reason, an unacceptable performance. The F grade indicates that the student's performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content.

A grade of F should warrant an advisor's questioning whether the student may suitably register for further study in the discipline before remedial work is undertaken.

The following scale is a close interpretation of the definitions listed above:

For undergraduate courses:

A = 97-100

A- = 90-96

B+ = 87-89

B = 83-86

B- = 80-82

C = 70-79, with + and – ranges the same as for B

D = 60-69, with + and – ranges the same as for B

F = 59 and below

For graduate courses (from SILS Faculty by-laws)

BASIS FOR GRADING:

On occasion, a student may obtain an "H" grade, which signifies a higher level of achievement than an "A" might be in other schools' A-F grading systems. This is not to say that earning an "H" is an impossible task, but rather, that the attainment of an "H" in any SILS course denotes a very significant academic achievement.

Incompletes will not be assigned on an automatic basis. Rather, they will only be issued in cases of extenuating circumstances such as severe health problems late in the semester. In general, the following grading framework will apply:

- H Superior work: complete command of subject, unusual depth, great creativity and originality that surpasses course expectations & are clearly excellent.
- P Completely satisfactory performance at the graduate level: good solid coverage and work. A "P" will be given when a student completes an assignment satisfactorily and according to the instructions.
- L Unacceptable performance: substandard in many respects (seriously deficient)
- F Performance substandard in many/all respects; completely lacking in merit (unworthy of credit)

NOTE: Most graduate students earn a course grade of "P".

Assignment grades for graduate students:

H =	100-99	(a true rarity except in very objective test situations for any class)
P+ =	91-98	<u>These are all A's in most schools.</u>
P=	85-90	<u>These are B's in most schools.</u>
P-=	80-84	
L=	70-79	<u>This is a C in most schools.</u>
F=	69 and below	<u>This is an F in most schools.</u>

If you have any questions or concerns about your grades in this course, please feel free to ask me. My expectation is that all of you will do well and pass the course with a solid P; on occasion a class member of the class will do outstanding work that will merit an H.

Professional expectations

Ethics

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Honor Code

Students at the School of Information and Library Science are expected to follow the UNC Honor Code. Essentially, the Honor Code states that all students shall "refrain from lying, cheating, or stealing, but the Honor Code means much more.

It is the guiding force behind the students' responsible exercise of freedom, the foundation of student self-governance here at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The University maintains an Honor Code because we believe that all members of our community should be responsible for upholding the values that have been agreed upon by the community. A written Honor Code is an affirmation of our commitment to high standards of conduct inside and outside of the classroom." This information is directly quoted and attributed to the following UNC web site: <http://honor.unc.edu/>

**Here is another link to more detailed information:
<http://instrument.unc.edu/>**

You are expected to abide by the Honor Code of our university and violations are subject to severe penalties. Study groups are encouraged but all formal written assignments must be your individual work with the single exception of a group project. In this class there is one required group assignment and all members of the team will receive the same grade for the written assignment and group presentation.

Statement regarding accessibility related accommodations:

If you feel that you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, please contact the instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. Secondly, please contact the UNC Accessibility Resources & Services at (919) 962-8300 or accessibility@unc.edu at the Student and Services Buildings, located in Suite 2126, 450 Ridge Road to formally coordinate accommodations and services.

Counseling and Psychological Services at UNC:

CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more. (source: *Student Safety and Wellness Proposal for EPC, Sep 2018*)

Title IX Resources:

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Please contact the Director of Title IX Compliance (Adrienne Allison – Adrienne.allison@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Writing and editing for our class:

Please model any references to other documents in your writing after a “standard” style guide throughout the course—for example, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, the *Chicago Manual of Style*, or the *Modern Language Association Style Manual*. If you have any concerns about the quality of your written work for this class, please feel free to share whatever drafts you’ve produced (especially during office hours) or visit the UNC Writing Center (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/>) before an assignment is due.

Here are general guidelines for writing and written work:

(1) Do not presume that the reader can read your mind – anything you want the reader to visualize or consider or conclude, you must provide; (2) Do not presume that the reader feels the same way that you do about a given experience or issue – your argument cannot just assume as true the very things you’re trying to argue for.*

* From “Authority and American usage,” by D. F. Wallace, 2006, in *Consider the Lobster: And Other Essays* (p. 106, fn. 59). New York: Little, Brown and Company [originally published in *Harper’s* in 1999].

Communicating with the instructor:

The standard method is to send an email to your instructor at vargha@email.unc.edu. I will do my best to respond within 48 hours. Please check your UNC email and our Sakai class site often for updates about deadlines, feedback, and schedule modifications.

Above all, enjoy yourself, learn as much as you can from this experience, and be open to where your interests in this broad topic might take you. I am here to help you succeed—both by creating an environment that supports your explorations and by pointing you in the direction of resources which you will find useful in developing your skills and knowledge as a reflective practitioner. My major interest is in your learning which will best proceed as we share questions, answers and experiences. Let's have an excellent virtual semester ahead!