

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE
MLIS 7800 Capstone
SYLLABUS
Fall Semester 2007
Three Credit Hours

Instructor:

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Course Description

Required for partial fulfillment of the requirements for the MLIS degree. Emphasis will be on synthesis of knowledge, honing writing and presentation skills, and creating a professional development plan.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Synthesize knowledge gained throughout the course of study and apply that knowledge to the consideration of current professional issues.
2. Make an effective professional presentation.
3. Write a paper of publishable quality.
4. Create a professional development plan.
5. Navigate the job hunting process.
6. Articulate personal professional goals.

Course Prerequisite or Corequisite: Taken during the final semester of study

Required Text

Rubin, Richard E. *Foundations of Library and Information Science*. New York: Neal Schuman. The edition you used in Foundations will be fine.

Assignments

Major presentation and paper: You will prepare a conference-style presentation and a paper of publishable quality on an LIS-related topic of your choice, with the topic subject to instructor approval. Presentations will last 15-20 minutes, with 10 minutes for questions and discussion. Paper length and style will depend on topic and on requirements of appropriate publication venues. Due dates are listed on the Assignment Calendar (see pp. 3-4).

Current Issues Discussions: Due at Class #2. You will moderate class discussions on two current issues in LIS. These will be topics that have appeared in either the LIS or popular literature during the past year and ones on which people of good will have disagreed. Topics will be discussed at Class #1. For each of your topics, you will identify pieces of published literature that state all sides of the issue and you will prepare two or three questions to guide the discussion. Due dates are listed on the Assignment Calendar (see pp. 3-4).

Professional Development Plan: Each student will create and record a personal plan for professional development. For students who need to seek employment, this will include a detailed job-hunting plan. For all students, this will include plans for solidifying and updating their professional knowledge in the two-year period following graduation. Due dates are listed on the Assignment Calendar (see pp. 3-4).

Reflection on MLIS Experience: Each student will prepare an essay that reflects on and evaluates his or her experience with the MLIS degree program. The essay will include the student's determination of strengths and weaknesses within the program. Submit via WebCT Vista. Due dates are listed on the Assignment Calendar (see pp. 3-4).

Portfolio: Bring your portfolio from MLIS 7000 to the first Capstone class. We will discuss how to update and present your portfolio. Feedback will be provided by the instructor and classmates. Due dates are listed on the Assignment Calendar (see pp. 3-4).

Requirements

Presentation	25%
Paper	25%
Current Issues Discussions	15%
Professional Development Plan	10%
Reflective Essay	10%
Portfolio	15%
Resume or CV (not graded, but is a required part of your Portfolio)	

Grading

General Grading Scale

- A excellent work - among the best work seen at the graduate level
- B satisfactory work - better than average work at the graduate level
- C honest attempt - needs moderate to major revisions to be satisfactory
- D perfunctory or missing work
- Late work is dropped one letter grade

Final Grading Scale

- A - always satisfactory, often excellent
- B - mostly satisfactory, occasionally excellent
- C - sometimes satisfactory, often needs revisions
- D - rarely satisfactory, often perfunctory, late or missing
- F - lacking even an attempt to learn or do, dishonesty, plagiarism

Assignment Calendar

Deadlines for most of your projects are due on Saturdays. However, please note that many activities continue throughout the semester, and these Saturday dates are meant as “guideposts.”

Sat. Aug. 18 Face-to-face Class

All registered Capstone students will meet at Macon State College.
Room: Student Life Center (SLC), Room 280
Morning session: 10 am to noon.
Pizza social with new MLIS students, noon to 1:30.
Afternoon session: 1:30 to 5:00.

Use the next three weeks to prepare your reflections essay and to select a topic for your “Current Issues” talk.

Sat. Sept. 8 Reflections

A copy of the essay you wrote when you applied to the MLIS Program will be returned to you at the Aug. 18 Macon class.

Read that essay and write a companion piece that reflects how you feel about your current professional goals and aspirations and your thoughts the strengths and weaknesses of the MLIS program.

Submit this **Reflective Essay** via e-mail to Dr. Ondrusek by Saturday, Sept. 8th.

Submit your proposed Current Issues topic to the Discussion board for approval. Dates for your Current Issues presentations will be scheduled. Plan to prepare a Powerpoint-supported talk for use with Live Classroom unless otherwise posted.

Sat. Sept. 22 Current Issues Discussions

Expect to have delivered your **Current Issues talk** by the end of this Saturday (if not earlier). Post comments to the Current Issues Discussion board.

Sat. Sept. 29 Marketing Your Skills

Submit drafts of your **Professional Development Plan** and of your **Resume’ or Curriculum Vitae**.

Dr. Ondrusek will return these as “approved” or with suggested revisions.

Final versions of both documents are to be placed in your Portfolios.

Sat. Oct. 6 Starting Your Capstone Research

Submit your proposed Capstone topic with at least one paragraph explaining the research underpinnings of your topic (e.g., past research with which you are familiar and what unique aspect you plan to explore on this topic).

Dr. Ondrusek will return as “approved” or with suggested revisions.

“Embedded Librarians” (mentors willing to help you with your research) will be introduced on the WebCT course site.

Each of you will have your own Capstone discussion board on WebCT which you should plan to use to communicate with Dr. Ondrusek and the Embedded Librarians.

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Use the next three weeks to:

- Consult with the instructor, the embedded librarians, and any other specialist who you know to help you start your search for sources.
- Formulate at least one formal research question that will serve as the “keystone” for your Capstone project.
- Start a works cited file and add references to it as you identify them.

Sat. Oct. 27 Progress Reports on Capstone Research

Submit your formal research question(s) and a draft of works cited that you have identified so far on your topic.

No matter how slight, your draft bibliography must reflect a search for scholarly, peer-reviewed sources in the LIS literature databases and be constructed using either APA or MLA style.

Based on feedback from Dr. Ondrusek, continue your literature searching and the development of your research question(s).

Sat. Nov. 10 Progress Reports on Portfolio Development

This is the time to ask questions about the final contents of, and formatting for, your portfolios. E-portfolios may be submitted via your individual Capstone WebCT discussion board any time after this Saturday. Notebook-style portfolios may be mailed to Dr. Ondrusek any time after this date as well.

All portfolios must be received by Wednesday, December 5th.

Sat. Nov. 17 Capstone Paper Draft Review

Submit a **draft** of your paper and bib to your personal Capstone WebCT discussion board. Dr. Ondrusek and embedded librarians will review from there.

Reviewers understand that this is a work in progress. However, aim for a scholarly “look and tone” for the draft.

Keep tuning in to your discussion board for comments and suggestions from reviewers.

Begin to extract material from your Capstone paper that captures the essence of your research and conclusions. Start thinking about how to present this content to an audience (likely to be comprised of LIS faculty and professionals) using a Powerpoint presentation.

Sat. Dec. 1 Capstone Presentation Practice

Individual practice sessions will be scheduled around this date using a format agreed-upon by class members and Dr. Ondrusek. Peer review is encouraged.

Wed. Dec. 5 All **Capstone papers** and **Portfolios** are due.

Fri. Dec. 7 Capstone Presentations and Graduation

Details for these two main events will be worked out well in advance of the date.

Instructor Availability & Support

Dr. Ondrusek checks her e-mail and telephone messages at least once daily throughout normal business hours (M-F, 9-5). By institutional policy, instructors are asked to communicate with students online through VSU accounts (WebCT/Vista and BlazeNet e-mail). The BlazeNet login page is at <http://luminis.valdosta.edu/cp/home/loginf>.

All online components of this course must be sent via WebCT/Vista. In the case that we encounter technical problems with the WebCT software, group e-mail assignments will be routed through BlazeNet.

Attendance

This is a hybrid course with the first class at Macon State College as a required face-to-face meeting. Virtual “meetings” that require synchronous online sessions using methods such as Live Classroom software will be scheduled during times mutually agreed-upon by class members and the instructor. All Live Classroom sessions will be archived (recorded) and will remain available on the WebCT course page for the duration of the course.

Technical Requirements

All class materials will be placed on a password-protected Web site using the WebCT/Vista course management program. If you need to review WebCT/Vista procedures, go to the WebCT/Vista help pages at <http://www.valdosta.edu/vista/>. On the right margin are “Self Help” links. View the “Getting Started” tutorial first. Then login using your BlazeNet ID and password.

To meet all class requirements, you should also be prepared to: (1) check the WebCT/Vista course homepage several times a week, sometimes daily, if a course discussion is in progress; (2) locate additional course readings using the GALILEO databases and download or print these out (this requires the Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer); and (3) keep electronic backup copies of each assignment and project you submit.

All assignments must be submitted using a program compatible with VSU supported products. MS Word 2003 or 2007 are the preferred document formats. WordPerfect 12 allows you to save your documents as Word documents. If you are using a lower version of WordPerfect or the Microsoft Office 2007 version of Word, save your documents in Rich Text Format (rtf). Pasting your text into an e-mail is not an acceptable solution and will not be accepted by Dr. Ondrusek.

The university’s Information Technology department provides step-by-step guides on how to use VSU’s email and other sources. The IT Help Desk is at <http://www.valdosta.edu/helpdesk/guides/> and their phone hot line is 229-245-4357.

Distance Learning Support

Ms. Shiloh Smith is the VSU reference librarian responsible for coordinating library services for off-campus VSU students. She may be reached by email at shismith@valdosta.edu or by phone at 229-245-3717. A revised online guide for distance education students is on the Odum Library Web site at http://www.valdosta.edu/library/services/revised_students.pdf. Ms. Smith has also agreed to act as an Embedded Librarian for your Capstone, so you should direct questions related to your research to her through your WebCT discussion boards.

Academic Dishonesty

"Valdosta State University expects that graduate students will pursue their academic endeavors and conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. All work that a student presents to satisfy course requirements should represent his or her own efforts, including appropriate use and acknowledgement of external sources."

Specific regulations related to student conduct and behavior are contained in the *Student Handbook*, *Student Code of Ethics*. Please acquaint yourself with the full VSU policy on academic dishonesty at <http://coefaculty.valdosta.edu/trout/eced4300/Academic%20Dishonesty.doc>.

Special Needs Statement

Valdosta State University is an equal opportunity educational institution. It is not the intent of our institution to discriminate against any applicant for admission or any student or employee of the institution based on the sex, race, religion, color, national origin, or the handicap of the individual. It is the intent of the institution to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent executive orders as well as the Title IX section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students requiring classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability should discuss this need with the professor at the beginning of the semester. Students not registered with the Special Services Program should contact Special Services in Nevins Hall, Room 2164, 229-245-2498 (tx).

Student Agreement

Enrollment in this class signifies that the student has agreed to abide by and adhere to the policies and regulations specified above. It is understood that the instructor may adapt or change this syllabus and the assignments contained within it according to circumstances that may arise during the course of the semester.