LIS 673: Library Use Instruction  
Fall 2010

Class Hours: Wednesdays 3:30 – 5:50p  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00-3:00p, Thursdays 5:00-6:00p and by appointment  
Credits: 3  
Prerequisites: LIS 652, or by permission  
Location: Pratt Manhattan Campus 613

**Bulletin Description:**

Examines the processes involved in the planning and implementation of a library use instruction program. The course also analyzes problems involved in introducing, financing, promoting and maintaining programs of instruction. Specific methodologies are used in providing instruction in all types of libraries together with evaluation procedures are investigated.

**Detailed Description:**

Education in libraries has focused extensively on: 1) bibliographic instruction (e.g., teaching patrons how to use the library resources), as well as 2) information literacy (e.g., teaching skills needed to evaluate and use information). This course will consider teaching and learning in these areas, but also ask student to think creatively and critically about new areas where teaching and learning could be applied. Essential questions include: 1) how can we make libraries more educational?, and 2) what methods are best used to achieve this goal? Students will engage in a design project to build a tool, service or curriculum to help libraries facilitate knowledge construction in twenty-first century communities.

**Course Objectives:**

- Think creatively about uses of instruction in libraries and where best to direct this effort.  
- Consider how to “make libraries more educational” and the ways to best do this (instruction, teaching, environmental factors, among others).  
- Be familiar with discourses on multiple literacies (information, media, visual) and have a sense of the role libraries play within their development.  
- Become familiar with topics essential to teaching and learning, particularly educational methods, learning theories, needs assessment, and evaluation.  
- Work collaboratively to design a product and teach the class to use this product.  
- Become familiar with the latest technologies, particularly with respect to: teaching research technologies, instructional technology/media, online learning and teaching with technology.  
- Thinking well beyond “library use instruction” and into such areas as creating educational programs within library contexts, youth outreach programs, and teaching to diverse learners.

**Course Schedule and Readings**

9/1 – Introduction
- Overview of the syllabus
- Assign weekly presenters of class readings and schedule brief lessons
- Post a photo of yourself and fill-out your profile on Moodle

9/8 – Instruction in Libraries? Let's back up for a second: What are we doing anyways?


Watch Video: David Lankes from Syracuse University on New Librarianship: [http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/blog/?p=854](http://quartz.syr.edu/rdlankes/blog/?p=854)

Further Reading:


Essential Questions:

Lankes (2010) offers his ideas on refocusing and recalibrating the work of librarians. He believes the mission of librarians is to “Improve Society through Facilitating Knowledge Creation in their Communities.” Do you agree with him? The New York Public Library has recently recast its mission: “The mission of The New York Public Library is to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge, and strengthen our communities.” Contrast with the quote from the NYTimes about the New York Public Library: “Libraries have had the same function for 5,000 years, Mr. LeClerc explained, as ‘storehouses of exceptionally important written documents.’ The New York Public Library’s fundamental responsibility to acquire materials, keep them and let people look at them, he said, remains the same.”

9/15- Conceptualizing Information Literacy


Essential Questions:

Elmborg discusses the ideas of the educator Paulo Freire (page 193):

Freire argues that Western education (especially American education) is guided by the ideology of capitalism, and that consequently, schools have developed a “banking concept” of education in which knowledge is treated as cultural and economic capital, and accruing knowledge equates to accruing wealth… This education trains students in the capitalist ethic, and they subsequently approach their education as consumers and passive receivers of knowledge rather than active agents shaping their own lives. Freire posits an alternative pedagogy, one designed to create “critical consciousness” in students. Rather than focus on knowledge acquisition, students identity and engage significant problems in the world. By developing critical consciousness, students learn to take control of their lives and their own learning to become active agents, asking and answering questions that matter to them and to the world around them.
Elmborg then asks his reader to think of information literacy instruction in terms of Freire’s critical pedagogy. He asks, “What is the role of the library in the Freirean vision of critical literacy? Is the library a passive information bank where students and faculty make knowledge deposits and withdrawals, or is it a place where students actively engage existing knowledge and shape it to their own current and future uses?” How would you respond to Elmborg’s questions?

9/22 - Learning Theories


Further Reading:


Essential Questions:

Learning theories abound and vary based on the aspects that the researcher (or researchers) think are most salient (e.g., Lave and Wegner place emphasis on the social and situated context). Consequently, one’s philosophy on how people learn affects his or her approach to instruction (if “instruction” or “teaching” even fits into that philosophy). Do any of the learning theories resonate with you? Would you attempt to create an instructional program using the concept of “the zones of proximal development” or “legitimate peripheral participation”?

In K-graduate education, it is fairly common for teachers to come up with a teaching philosophy. Do you have one (if you think you need one), and what is it?

9/29 - Teaching Methods I: Problem-based, Active and Cooperative Learning


Further Reading:
Essential Questions:

This week's readings discuss a variety of techniques for approaching instruction or teaching in libraries. Are there one or more perspectives that you gravitate towards? Why do you like or dislike the ones you have chosen?

10/6 – Teaching Methods: Democratic Discussion


Further Reading:


Essential Questions:

Brookfield and Preskill (2005) see that classroom-based discussion and democracy as inseparable because they both foster human growth, or the “development of an ever-increasing capacity for learning and an appreciation of and sensitivity to learning undertaken by others” (p. 3). Libraries too have been concerned with fostering democracy. Do you think libraries make use of democratic discussion, and if not, how might they attempt to use this method?

10/13- Community Involvement and Needs Assessment


Essential Questions:

In the first edition of Grassian and Kaplowitz’s book, they argue that some ways of uncovering if learning objectives are met:

How should someone who is IL [information literate] behave? For one thing, they would probably make more use of library resources than someone who is not IL. They might approach the reference desk more frequently. And they would make more use of remote access opportunities. Could we measure these behaviors? Probably we could if we have it some thought. (p. 137-138)

Do you agree with the authors? Should the outcomes of instructional activities be measured in terms of students’ behavior (either covert or overt behavior)?
LaFlamme argues that success of a community needs assessment should not be based on how efficient the process is, but rather that “it would strive to make the communities that the library serves more free” (p. 57). Can you imagine how such an approach could lead to greater community freedom?

10/20 – Curriculum


Essential Questions:

See the LMS.

10/27- Multiple Literacies I: Media Literacy and Visual Literacy

Design Project Proposal Due.


Review: Stay Free! High School Media Literacy Curriculum: http://www.stayfreemagazine.org/ml/

Essential Questions:

Hobbs (2001) suggests that media education programs may be better situated in after-school contexts (such as libraries) than in schools because “educators wonder how an average parent might respond if their tenth grade son or daughter came home from school talking about a classroom lesson which compared an episode of The Simpsons to a Mark Twain short story?” Given that libraries may be well positioned to undertake this “radical act” of media education, which includes “the analysis and creation of messages, away from the providing of answers and towards the process of asking questions,” what is your position on a few of the seven great debates that Hobbs describes? For example, do you think “should media production be an essential feature of media literacy education?”

11/3 – Multiple Literacies II: Emerging Issues and Trends


Watch: Merchants of Cool by PBS Frontline: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/

Watch: Digital Nation by PBS Frontline: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/digitalnation/

Essential Questions:

See the LMS.
11/10 – Youth Outreach

Burhanna, K. J. (2007) Instructional Outreach to High Schools: Should you be doing it? *Communications in Information Literacy, 1*(2).


*Essential Questions:*

This week’s readings focus on youth outreach within an academic and public library context. Burhanna (2007) discusses a high school outreach program at Kent State University. Do you think the approach of targeting instruction at the “top 50 feeder schools” is the best approach (p. 79). Why or why not? How do you think this approach contrasts with some of the youth outreach approaches that Dempsey (2007) discusses with respect to Latinas?

This week’s readings also discuss instruction and learning across various environments. Klopfer, Olwell, and Hudock (2005) document a program they created that joins college students with middle school students so that both groups learn how to become better researchers. The readings point to interesting opportunities when acknowledging and combining existing as well as emerging practices. Discuss which of the programs (or possibilities of a program) that you find most interesting and why?

11/17 – Diverse Learners


*Essential Questions:*

This week’s readings discuss teaching with technology and teaching within a diverse environment.

With respect to diversity, Tao (2005) discusses the challenges and strategies for creating a bibliographic instruction program for diverse students, which include international, multicultural, and non-traditional students. What are her recommendations and do you agree with them?

Isherwood offers a glum narrative of the modern university lecture hall in *A Single Man.* Do you find yourself identifying with the narrator, or repelled?

11/24 - No Class; Thanksgiving Holiday

12/1 - Instructional Technology and Media


Further Reading:


Essential Questions:

This week’s readings deal with instructional technology/media. Collins (1996) discusses issues to consider when designing an instructional environment. Libraries rely on instructional technologies to augment face-to-face instruction or act as stand-alone environments for helping students/patrons learn about something. Many of the issues he discusses could be applied to a face-to-face environment as well (as he alludes to several times in the article). Dede (2010) discusses the nation’s draft educational technology plan, and Shank & Bell (2007) discuss their idea of blended librarianship. Do any of the ideas presented here that resonate with you. Have you ever had a good learning experience (or bad one) assisted by technology? Have you taken an online course before, and if so, how was it?

12/8 – Evaluating Instructional Programs

Further Reading:


Essential Questions:

This week's readings discuss evaluation of instructional programs. Discuss an evaluation method or strategy that you would be interested in tying out in some context. Why do you think this method would work or why not?

12/15 – Design Project Presentations.

Design Project Documents are due.

Textbooks, Readings, and Materials

No textbook is required for this course. All readings are available online via Moodle. However, for further reading on the topic, the following texts are available from the PMC Library:


Course Requirements

Students’ course grades will be determined by performance on the following activities:

1. Class Participation (20%)
2. Weekly Responses (30%) – 11 responses required over the course of the semester
3. Brief Library Lessons (20%)
4. Design Project (30%)
   4a. Proposal (2-5 pages) (20%) – due Oct. 27
   4b. Design Document (15-20 pages) (50%) - due Dec. 15, last day of class
   4c. Presentation (30%) – present on Dec. 15, last day of class

Class Participation

Students are expected to be prepared and to contribute to class discussions each week with scholarly analyses and insights. In addition, each week one student or a team of two students will present their understanding of the readings to the class. This is an opportunity to consolidate your (or your team’s) understanding on a topic, to present your perspective, to make novel connections to other domains, and to relate the readings to real-world experience. Presenters may use the essential questions posed to guide their presentations (available via Moodle), or may choose their own direction in discussing the readings.
Presenters should be prepared to make around a 10-15-minute presentation, and conclude with some questions or issues they would like to discuss more thoroughly.

The schedule of presenters will be decided on the first day of class.

**Weekly Responses**

Each week, students are expected to write at least two paragraphs in response to the essential questions posted on Moodle. Students should respond to the question on Moodle by noon (at the latest) on the day of class (late responses will receive a reduced grade). Please do not bring in a hard-copy or email unless Moodle is unavailable. The purpose of these responses is to allow students the opportunity to reflect on the readings and share their reflections with the other members of the class. Students are encouraged to read the responses by their fellow classmates (this is, however, not a requirement). Based on interests, students may choose two weeks NOT to do a weekly response. This means by the end of the semester, each student should have posted 11 responses.

Please note that the instructor will refer to these responses during class discussion and may ask students to further clarify or expand on their response.

**Brief Library Lessons**

Each student will present one brief lesson to the class during the course of the semester. Your lesson will be no longer than 15 minutes in length. These lessons may be taken from real-life situations in a workplace or invented in response to an issue you noticed in a library or other information-seeking setting. You may also wish to create a lesson that will support your group project in some way.

**Design Project**

**Overview**

As an information professional in the twenty-first century, it is not simply sufficient to be able to teach individuals how to use the various aspect of the library. Rather, information professionals should take a leading role in improving society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities (Lankes, 2010). Your challenge is to design a tool, service, or curriculum that aims to do this, leading your patrons to greater empowerment and efficacy.

The second part of the assignment is to teach a lesson on how to use what you have created.

Groups should use this opportunity to be innovative and think creatively and critically about the role of instruction in libraries (What counts as instruction? Why do we need this?). Groups should aim to design a project that could be “picked-up” by an outside agency (a library, university, venture-capitalist, foundation, technology company, non-profit, think-thank, etc.) and fully implemented using your group’s design materials as a guide. In order to ensure innovativeness, teams should consider the work being done by outside agencies and ask: does our project have something to offer that these projects don’t? Why is our project innovative?

The class will be divided into design groups with around three to four members. Time will be provided in class for groups to meet; however, meeting out of class time may be required. Each group will be expected to deliver a project proposal, a project design document, and a presentation/lesson on the last day of class. Details on these aspects are below:

**Proposal**
The Proposal should be 2-5 pages and outline the idea for your project. The proposal should be considered a less fully-fleshed-out version of the project design document (see below). The instructor will provide feedback on the proposal which you can use in further refining your project.

**Design Document**

The project design document should be 15-20 pages (this page count can include figures, but not references or other appendices). The design document should address:

a) What is the purpose of your project?
   
   1) Why do we need it?
   2) How does this project help people more effectively deal with information?
   3) What educational or learning goals will motivate this effort, if any?
   4) What populations of users (if any) will be served?
   5) What type of community (if any) will be fostered by this effort?
   6) What role (if any) will librarians play in this project?
   7) What will be the size of this effort?
   8) What resources will be required?
   9) How will the project be assessed?

b) What are the features and functions of the project? Please be specific.

c) Include one or more prototypes of the project. These prototypes can come generated electronically (Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, Powerpoint, etc.) or by-hand (drawings on paper, etc.). These prototypes should strive to be more than sketches; they should be visibly assembled with care.

   i) Screen shots (if applicable): What would a user see when interacting with this system? What elements make up the user interface (if any)?

   ii) Diagrams: Illustrations that convey flows or networks of interaction.

   iii) Visualizations: How would you convey the design’s social and/or human interactions? Be creative.

d) Implementation: What do you think would be involved to make this design a reality? Provide estimations.

e) What does the literature and research on instruction in libraries offer in thinking about this project?

**Presentation**

Each group will get 30 minutes teach the class how to use this new filter, and a 10 minute question and answer period. Each group should:

a) Make it fun and educational! Be creative! We have all been subject to ill-prepared or low-energy presentations- avoid it!

b) Discuss the goals, why your project is needed, and what makes your project innovative.

c) Provide a way of demonstrating your project to the class. These may include electronic illustrations (Powerpoint), an interactive simulation, or large paper/drawing presentations. You may also want to consider handouts for the class.

**Assessment and Evaluation**
1. All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in the course.
2. Assignments must be turned in during class in hard copy (except for the weekly responses which should be completed on Moodle). Late assignments will receive a reduced grade.
3. Late papers will receive a grade but no comments.
4. Pratt policy: Students with extensive absences (three or more for any reason) will be required to drop the course.

**Pratt’s grading scale:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
<th>Maximum Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superior work:</td>
<td>A 4.0 (96-100)</td>
<td>A- 3.7 (90-95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good work:</td>
<td>B+ 3.3 (87-89)</td>
<td>B 3.0 (83-86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B- 2.7 (80-82)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginally satisfactory:</td>
<td>C+ 2.3 (77-79)</td>
<td>C 2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Failed:</td>
<td>F 0.0 (0-69)</td>
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**Policies**

All Institute-wide policies are listed in the Bulletin under “Community Standards,” which include policies on attendance, academic integrity, plagiarism, computer, and network use. Students who require special accommodations for disabilities must obtain clearance from the Office of Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. They should contact Mai McDonald, Disability Services Coordinator, in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Main Building, Lower Level: 718-636-3711.