Instructor:
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University of Maryland, College Park
301-405-6573
bstjean@umd.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: How can we best help people with their needs for information? In this course, we will focus on the skills needed to successfully interact directly with individuals from diverse populations in the course of helping to fulfill their needs for information. We will approach this topic from a number of different directions, including information professional practice and information behavior theory. The course will touch on the following topics: collection development, reference services, user education, information literacy, search strategies, and policies and ethics of the information profession.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an appreciation of the role of institutions in generating and disseminating information to users.
2. Demonstrate awareness of the core values, ethics, social responsibilities, and information policy issues that affect the profession and users' lives and the roles of professional associations in supporting them.
3. Analyze the effect of technologies on resources, service delivery, and uses of collections and information resources.
4. Explain the role of information services in supporting the lifelong learning of diverse populations.
5. Analyze models and theories of user behavior and understand how they can inform the practice of serving the information needs of users from diverse populations.
6. Apply concepts, principles, and techniques of reference and user services that provide access to relevant and accurate recorded knowledge and information to various user groups.
7. Apply methods of interacting successfully with individuals of various groups using current media (face-to-face, e-mail, Web, instant messaging, etc.) to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance on their use of recorded knowledge and information (e.g., conduct successful reference interviews).
8. Explain techniques to identify, locate, evaluate, and synthesize information from various sources for use by diverse user groups.
9. Demonstrate an understanding of concepts, issues, and methods related to the evaluation, selection, and “weeding” of resources.
10. Develop policies and procedures designed to assess and serve the information needs of diverse user groups.
11. Create experiential learning experiences for user education, including development of training materials, presentations, and use of media.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS: The primary methods of instruction for this course will include lecture, guest speakers, course readings, and presentations and online discussion relevant to course readings. You will be expected to have read the assigned readings in preparation for each class meeting. Additionally, you will be expected to actively participate in online discussion boards.
READING MATERIALS: There is one required text for this course:


NOTE: An electronic version of this text can be accessed **free of charge** through our course Canvas site. Alternatively, it can be purchased through Amazon.com (either as a paperback or for Kindle): [http://www.amazon.com/Librarians-Guide-Online-Searching-Edition/dp/1610690354](http://www.amazon.com/Librarians-Guide-Online-Searching-Edition/dp/1610690354)

Additional assigned readings are available through our class Canvas site.

The following books have been placed on reserve in McKeldin Library for your use:


Although it is not required for this course, you may wish to browse through some of the following relevant journals/magazines and/or sign up to receive automatic alerts as new issues come out:

**Information Behavior/General:**

- [Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (JASIS&T)](http://journals.annualreviews.org/content/journal/jasis)
- [Library & Information Science Research (LISR)](http://www.lisr.org/
- [The American Archivist](http://www.annualreviews.org/content/journal/jaah)
- [Journal of Information Science (JIS)](http://jis.sagepub.com/
- [The Information Society](http://www.theinformationsociety.com/
- [Information Processing & Management (IP&M)](http://www.ipmjournal.com/
- [Journal of Documentation (JDOC)](http://www.jdoc.org/
- [Information Research](http://informationr.net/ir/)
- [First Monday](http://www.firstmonday.org/)

**Searching:**

- [Online: Exploring Technology & Resources for Information Professionals](http://www.onlinerepository.org/)
- [Information Today](http://www.infolit.org/
- [Searcher: The Magazine for Database Professionals](http://www.searchermagazine.com/)
- [Online Searcher: Information Discovery, Technology, Strategies](http://www.onlinesearcher.com/
- [Library Journal](http://www.libraryjournal.com/)

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COURSE POLICIES:

**Course Participation:** Students are expected to actively participate in online class sessions and on the class discussion boards in Canvas. Each student needs to make a *minimum of two (substantial) posts* to the relevant Canvas discussion board(s) every week, in addition to those specifically required in association with particular assignments. Posts regarding weekly readings are due the day after the close of the week (e.g., posts regarding Week 1 readings are due by 2/2). Participation forms an integral part of your own learning experience, as well as that of your classmates. Your participation in online discussions will count for 10% of your final grade. Course participation grades will take into account both the quantity and quality of your contributions to online discussions; however, the quality of your contributions (whether questions, viewpoints, responses to others’ questions, etc.) to a meaningful, ongoing discussion will be much more heavily weighted. All discussions should remain professional and respectful at all times.

**Written Work:** All written work should be proofread and revised as necessary before you submit it. Use Times New Roman 12-point font and one-inch margins. All documents should be single-spaced. Be sure to organize your papers, using section and subsection headings to identify portions of your work. Use APA Style for in-text citations and reference lists. There are many resources about APA style available on the Internet. See, for example, [http://www.lib.umd.edu/ues/guides/citing-apa](http://www.lib.umd.edu/ues/guides/citing-apa) and [http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx](http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx).

**Submitting Assignments:** Each assignment must be submitted by 11:59 PM on the indicated due date through our Canvas site ("LBSC602"). Please submit only one file per assignment (Word or pdf format for papers; PowerPoint for presentations).

**Late Work:** Unless you are facing an emergency situation AND you request an extension from me at least 48 hours in advance of the due date, late work will automatically be graded down by one step (e.g., an A- will become a B+) for each day that it is late. Assignments more than seven days late will not be accepted.

**Academic Integrity:** The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at the University of Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit [www.she.umd.edu](http://www.she.umd.edu). To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, remember to type and sign the Honor Pledge on all examinations and assignments: “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).” When submitting an assignment electronically, there is no need to sign the pledge – your submission of the assignment with this sentence included implies your signature.

All assignments in this class must reflect your own original work. You must cite and properly attribute any material quoted or paraphrased from some other source. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating, buying assignments, submitting the same paper more than once, forging signatures, submitting fraudulent documents, facilitating the academic dishonesty of others, etc. Infractions may result in a penalty, such as a failing grade on a specific assignment or for the entire course or even expulsion from the University. Please read and adhere to the University of Maryland Code of Academic Integrity ([http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf](http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf)). You may also find this Office of Student Conduct definition of academic dishonesty to be helpful: [http://osc.umd.edu/OSC/AcademicDishonesty.aspx](http://osc.umd.edu/OSC/AcademicDishonesty.aspx).
Syllabus Change Policy: This syllabus is subject to change with advance notice. If a change becomes necessary, I will e-mail all of you to let you know.

Student Course Evaluations (CourseEvalUM): Toward the end of the semester (Tuesday, April 28th through Wednesday, May 13th), you will have an opportunity to evaluate this course. Your participation in these evaluations is integral to the success of our school. Your feedback will remain completely confidential and will be immensely valuable in improving our school’s teaching effectiveness and learning environments. Beginning April 28th, please go to https://www.courseevalum.umd.edu/ to complete your evaluation of this course. If over 70% of the students in the class complete their evaluation, you will be able to access the aggregate results through Testudo (if you have completed all of your course evaluations).

Special Accommodations: If you need any accommodations due to a disability, please first register with the Disability Support Service (DSS) office (http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/) and file any required documentation, and then contact me as early as possible in the semester to let me know. We can then work with DSS to determine how to best accommodate your needs.

Academic Assistance: Learning Assistance Service (http://www.counseling.umd.edu/LAS): If you’re experiencing difficulties in keeping up with the academic demands of this course, please consider contacting the Learning Assistance Service, 2202 Shoemaker Building, 301-314-7651. Their educational counselors can help with time management, reading, math learning skills, note-taking and exam preparation skills. All of their services are free to UMD students.

EVALUATION:

Your final grade will be calculated based on the weighting of course assignments shown in the following table. Please note that revision and resubmission of assignments for the purpose of obtaining a higher grade will not be permitted. Also, you will not be allowed to drop any of these grades. All assignments must be submitted through our class Canvas site (‘LBSC602’) by 11:59 PM on the due date indicated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Course Participation</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Library/Information Center Visit Report [Individual]</td>
<td>February 16, 2015</td>
<td>Check-off</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-P</td>
<td>User Instruction Assignment: Proposal [Team]</td>
<td>March 2, 2015</td>
<td>Check-off</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Search Strategy Assignment [Individual or Team]</td>
<td>March 14, 2015</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>User Group Information Behavior Profile [Individual or Team]</td>
<td>March 23, 2015</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>Reference Interview Practicum [Pairs]</td>
<td>April 6, 2015</td>
<td>Check-off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>User Instruction Assignment: Executive Summary (5-ES); Presentation (5-Pr); Pathfinder (5-Pf) [Team]</td>
<td>May 4, 2015</td>
<td>30% (total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-Ev</td>
<td>User Instruction Assignment: Self, Peer, &amp; Team Evaluations [Individual]</td>
<td>May 11, 2015</td>
<td>Check-off</td>
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Please see the last few pages of this syllabus for specific instructions regarding each of the assignments. The weighted average of your grades on all of the assignments (including your course participation grade) will be converted to a letter grade according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted Average</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>97.0 and above</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>94.0-96.9</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90.0-93.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87.0-89.9</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>84.0-86.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>80.0-83.9</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77.0-79.9</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>74.0-76.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>70.0-73.9</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>67.0-69.9</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>64.0-66.9</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>60.0-63.9</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 60.0</td>
<td>F</td>
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## COURSE SCHEDULE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment / [Posts] Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/26 – 2/1</td>
<td>Course Overview/ Evolving Landscape of Librarianship and Information Services</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Posts by 2/2: Introduce yourself... and Posts re: Week 1 readings]</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/2 – 2/8</td>
<td>Information Services and Information Professionals</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Posts by 2/9: Posts re: Week 2 readings and Start to form teams]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Assignment / [Posts] Due</td>
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<td>Week</td>
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<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Assignment / [Posts] Due</td>
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<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Assignment / [Posts] Due</td>
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<td>3/16 – 3/22</td>
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<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Assignment / [Posts] Due</td>
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| 9    | 3/30 – 4/5 | The Reference Conversation      | **Required:**  
**Recommended:**  
[Posts by 4/6: Your audio/video file for Assignment 4a. Reference Interview Practicum and Posts re: Week 9 readings]                                                                 |
| 10   | 4/6 – 4/12 | Policies and Ethics              | **Required:**  
B.1: Core Values, Ethics, and Core Competencies  
B.2: Intellectual Freedom  
B.3: Diversity  
B.4: Equity and Access  
B.5: Libraries and the Public Good  
B.8: Services and Responsibilities of Libraries  
[Posts by 4/13: Paragraph or two about Assignment 4a Reference Interview Practicum and Posts re: Week 10 readings] |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scholarly Communication and Open Access</td>
<td><strong>Readings</strong></td>
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**Recommended:**  
**Guest Talk:** Terry Owen, Digital Scholarship Librarian, University of Maryland Libraries (pre-recorded)  
**Required:**  
**Recommended:**  
|       |       |                                            | **Assignment / [Posts] Due**                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 12   | 4/20 – 4/26 | Effects of Technology on the Information Professions | **Required:**  
**Post by 4/27: Posts re: Week 12 readings** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment / [Posts] Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/27 – 5/3</td>
<td>Final User Instruction Assignment components due</td>
<td><strong>5. User Instruction Assignment:</strong> Executive Summary (5-ES); Presentation (5-Pr); Pathfinder (5-Pf) due by 11:59 PM on Monday, 5/4</td>
<td>NOTE: Please upload all of these through Assignments in Canvas.</td>
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<td>[Please also post your presentations and pathfinders on the relevant discussion board in Canvas by 5/4]</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>5/4 – 5/10</td>
<td>Final User Instruction Assignment: Comments/ Questions/ Evaluations</td>
<td>[Post questions/comments for classmates’ regarding their presentations and pathfinders by Thursday, May 7th]</td>
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<td>[Respond to classmates’ questions/comments regarding your presentation and pathfinder by Monday, May 11th]</td>
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<td><strong>5. User Instruction Assignment: Self, Peer, and Team Evaluations (5-Ev)</strong> due by 11:59 PM on Monday, May 11th</td>
<td>NOTE: Please be sure to upload this through Assignments in Canvas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignment 1: Library/Information Center Visit Report [Individual]

Due Date: February 16, 2015 (Check-off)

Visit a library or other information center. If you are undecided about what type of library to visit, public libraries have a broad range of programs and services and are available to all members of the community. At the beginning of your field trip, it is recommended that you introduce yourself to a librarian and indicate why you are there.

1. Observe the library environment – is the building centrally located, a pleasant place in which to be? Within the library, is locating services (e.g., children's services, reference services, public access computers, circulation services, etc.) easy to do? Are books, journals, films, etc. easily accessible?

2. Observe library users and what they are doing (e.g. attending programs (what programs?), using reference services, working on public access terminals, looking for specific book titles or journals, browsing, etc.). What are their ages? How diverse a group do users appear to be?

3. Observe library staffing. Are librarians and/or other staff readily available to users? Does there appear to be sufficient staff or are library users waiting for service in some areas? If the latter, what types of services are users waiting for?

4. Be an information user. You may wish to have a question in mind before your visit to the library. After your visit, assess how satisfied you were with your ability to access information – did the information you found meet your needs?

5. Check the library's website. How useful an information resource is it in terms of information about the library and its programs, access to library collections, connection to databases for reference use, etc.?

6. Overall, what was positive in the environment and activities you observed? If there were negative observations, how would you suggest they be corrected?

Prepare a 1-page (single-spaced) paper, responding briefly to each of the above questions. Please submit your 1-page paper through the Canvas Assignments section. Also, please post a 1-paragraph entry about your experience conducting your library/information center visit to the relevant discussion board in Canvas no later than Monday, February 23rd.
Assignment 2: Search Strategy Assignment [Individual or Team]

Due Date: March 14, 2015 (10%)

For this assignment, you will write about the search strategies you (or your team) used to locate sources you need for assignment 3 – your user group information behavior profile. Begin this assignment by drafting a search strategy that reflects how you plan to go about gathering the information you needed. This plan should include both the names of the information resources you intend to consult, as well as the ways in which you plan to interact with these resources. Then carry out this search strategy, adapting it as necessary as your search evolves. Please be sure to use at least two library databases as part of this assignment.

Write a 2- to 3-page single-spaced paper (for an individual) or a 5- to 6-page single spaced paper (for a team), in which you:

1. Describe the information need and the context surrounding this need.
2. Delineate the initial search strategy that you (or your team) developed, indicating the information resources you intended to consult and how you intended to interact with each resource. Also, provide a rationale for your plans.
3. Recount how you actually carried out your search, describing and explaining how and why your search adhered to and/or deviated from your initial plan. Be sure to also describe any non-search activities in which you engaged in an attempt to further your progress.
4. Evaluate your search process – talk about how you might carry out this search if you were to repeat it – which of your strategies would you keep, which would you adapt (how?), and which would you discard?
5. Discuss the usability and/or usefulness of the information resources you used. How might their usability and/or usefulness be improved? Please provide specific, concrete suggestions.

In addition, please post a paragraph or so about your experiences completing this assignment to the relevant discussion board by Monday, March 16th.

Rubric:

I. Description of Information Need (10 points)
   ● Has the student/team described the information need?
   ● Has the student/team explained the context surrounding this information need?

II. Initial Search Strategy (15 points)
   ● Has the student/team described the initial search strategy that they developed?
   ● Has the student/team provided a rationale for their plan?
   ● Has the student/team included a list of the information resources they intended to use?
   ● Has the student/team described how they were planning to interact with these information resources?

III. Search Process (20 points)
   ● Has the student/team recounted how they actually carried out their search?
   ● Has the student/team explained how their search evolved and how and why it adhered to and/or deviated from their initial plan?
   ● Has the student/team included any non-search activities they carried out in the process of completing this assignment?
IV. Evaluation of Search Process (25 points)
● Has the student/team discussed what went well and what did not go so well during their search?
● Has the student/team described how they would conduct this search if they were to carry it out again?

V. Evaluation of Usability/Usefulness of Information Resources (20 points)
● Has the student/team talked about the usefulness and usability of the different information resources they used in the course of their search?
● Has the student/team suggested ways in which the usability and/or usefulness of the information resources they used might be improved? Have they provided specific, concrete suggestions?

VI. Overall Writing Quality (10 points)
● Is the writing clear, organized, and easy-to-understand?
Assignment 3: User Group Information Behavior Profile [Individual or Team]

Due Date: March 23, 2015 (25%)

For this assignment, you will research what has already been learned about the information behavior of the audience you have selected for your user instruction assignment (assignment 5), and consider the implications of these findings for information professionals who assist this user group with their information needs.

Each team member needs to identify at least three papers that report results from empirical studies of the information behavior of your selected population. After carefully reading these articles, prepare a paper(s) of approximately 3 to 5 single-spaced pages (for an individual) or 8 to 10 single-spaced pages (for a team), containing the following sections:

- Introduction: Who is your selected user population? What motivated you to select this particular population?
- Literature Review: What have we already learned about the information behavior of this population?
- Implications: How might these findings be used to inform/improve the practices of information professionals who assist individuals from this population with their information needs?
- Potential Significance/Impact: Why are the implications that you’ve identified important? What might be the impact if information professionals adapt their practices to better suit the population(s) with whom they work?
- Ideas for Future Research: What else do we need to know about the information behavior of your selected population? How would having this knowledge potentially improve our ability to assist this population with their information needs?
- References: Please provide a list of your references, using APA style.

After you have completed your paper (but no later than March 30th), please post a couple of paragraphs summarizing what you have learned about the information behavior of your selected population and how this knowledge might impact your development of a user instruction session and pathfinder for them.

Rubric:

I. Introduction (10 points)
- Has the student/team described their user population?
- Has the student/team explained their motivation for selecting this user population?

II. Literature Review (20 points)
- Has the student/team provided a synthesized discussion of the findings from at least three empirical studies of the information behavior of their selected population?

III. Implications (25 points)
- Has the student/team included a discussion about how the findings from their selected articles might be used to inform or improve the ways in which information professionals go about helping members of this population with their information needs?
IV. Potential Significance/Impact (20 points)

● Has the student/team explained why the implications they have identified are of potential significance?
● Has the student/team discussed the potential impact(s) of information professionals learning from these empirical findings and using this knowledge to adapt the ways in which they assist this population with their information needs?

V. Ideas for Future Research (15 points)

● Has the student/team discussed what else we still need to know about the information behavior of their selected population?
● Has the student/team explained how having this information could lead to an improvement in how we help this population with their information needs?

VI. Overall Writing Quality (10 points)

● Is the writing clear, organized, and easy-to-understand?
● Has the student/team included a references list, using APA-style citations?
Assignment 4a: Reference Interview Practicum [Pairs] and Assignment 4b: Reference Services Comparison Paper [Individual]

Due Dates:
   Assignment 4a: April 6, 2015 (check-off)
   Assignment 4b: April 13, 2015 (25%)

Assignment 4a: Reference Interview Practicum [due April 6]

Purpose & Background:
The reference interview is one of the key activities of an information professional, regardless of the setting (e.g., libraries, archives, special information environments.) Developing the skills needed to engage in and complete a successful interview with a patron requires practice. The purpose of this exercise is to provide the opportunity to develop those skills through a role-playing activity, simulating the reference interview experience in a way that allows for feedback and peer review and that will help to prepare you for real-life reference services interactions.

Instructions:
Working in pairs, students will role-play two reference interview interactions, each taking on the role of information professional during one of the interactions and the role of customer during the other interaction. By March 23rd, I will e-mail each student a scenario to use when they assume the role of the customer. The scenario will include a question to pose to your partner, a description of the actual information need you have, and a description of the broader context surrounding your information need. Using the reference conversation/interview skills you’ve learned through readings and class discussions, the student role-playing the information professional should try to assist the customer with his/her true information need. Each interaction should entail a 5- to 10-minute question/answer session. Please conduct these interactions synchronously, and in a way that enables you to record yourselves. Following each interaction, please discuss with your partner what worked well, what did not work so well, what you learned, what you would do differently another time. These discussions do not need to be included in your recording; however, you can include them if you would like.

By April 6th, each team should post a video (preferably) or audio file of their interactions to the relevant discussion board. Additionally, each student should post a paragraph or two reflecting on their experiences with their role-plays.

During the following week (4/7 – 4/13), each student should view two other team’s videos (or listen to their audio files) and provide feedback to those teams. Feedback should consist of constructive feedback regarding team members’ performance based on:
- Application of best practices in the provision of reference service as found in the readings
- Construction of the simulated questions and answers
- Demonstration of effective communication skills as performed

NOTE: The purpose of this assignment is to gain an understanding that the question asked is often not an articulation of the actual information need. The goal of these role-plays is to elicit the customer’s actual information need, rather than simply answering the first question that he/she poses to you.

NOTE: This part of the assignment will not be graded, but rather will serve as practical experience (along with instructor feedback and peer review) as preparation for part b.
Assignment 4b: Reference Services Comparison Paper [due April 13]

**Purpose & Background:**

Asking and answering questions is a key activity of all information professionals that occurs in a variety of settings. Librarians and archivists continue to provide reference services in-person and via telephone, as well as via email, discussion forums, and chat services. In addition, a variety of free or fee-based question and answer services have cropped up in non-library or archive settings, such as ChaCha, Yahoo! Answers, and a variety of specialized online communities. It is important to recognize how these services are similar or different in order to know when one is more appropriate than another, as well as how to effectively interact when using different media. The purpose of this assignment is to get you thinking about the similarities and differences among these services so that you can effectively navigate and participate in them.

**Instructions:**

The following steps should be completed:

1. For this assignment, you will pose a reference question via three different services. Your question may relate to a paper you are writing or a personal information need. It should be something you are genuinely interested in. It should not be a ready reference question that can be answered by Googling. It should be a question (or series of questions) that is likely to lead to a reference interview or at least some back-and-forth with the answerer. When developing your question, also make sure you have a scenario of why you need the answer.

2. Decide on three different types of reference services to which you will pose your question. Make sure all three are significantly different services. A small list of the different services available is provided below to get you started, but please feel free to try something not listed here.

3. Ask your question of all three services. Feel free to ask your question multiple times if your initial experience doesn’t give you much to talk or write about. You can play around with more than just three types of services, but you should end up focusing on just three in your write-up. Otherwise, you won’t have enough space.

4. Write a 5- to 6-page (single-spaced, 12 point font) paper comparing your experiences with the three different services. Your write-up should state the question you posed, identify the three services you used and how the interviews unfolded, and compare the overall interactions, drawing attention to the similarities and differences among the services and across your experiences. *Your paper should consider how the underlying platform and nature of the service impacted the experience.* You should relate your experiences to several concepts from the readings (e.g., approximately three to six references to class readings we’ve covered or perhaps pertinent readings from another class). You should consider things like the level of interaction and negotiation of the question, the quality and timeliness of the response, your overall satisfaction with the answer, the enjoyability of the interaction, etc. Try to do more than simply state the obvious. You may supplement your own experience with the experiences of others that you may have observed in the same setting if desired, although this is not required. At least 2.5 pages should be dedicated to the comparison, so don’t spend too much space discussing the nuances of what you did. Instead, spend the space analyzing your experiences and comparing and contrasting them, focusing on how the medium affected each experience.

5. In addition to uploading your paper (as described above), please post a few paragraphs regarding your experiences with this assignment to the relevant discussion board on our Canvas site by Monday, April 20th.
**Example Q&A Services:**

You may want to familiarize yourself with a broad array of question-answering services before settling on the ones you will use for your assignment. Be sure that the services you select are appropriate for the question you plan to ask. A few examples of different services include (but are certainly not limited to):

- Face-to-face interaction at the reference desk of a public library, UMD academic library, or archive.
- Telephone interaction via a library telephone reference service (e.g., Enoch Pratt in Baltimore at 410-396-5430 see [http://www.prattlibrary.org/locations/infoservices/index.aspx?id=7644](http://www.prattlibrary.org/locations/infoservices/index.aspx?id=7644); Montgomery County Public Libraries Ask-a-Librarian Telephone Reference 240-777-0001; McKeldin Library 301-405-0800
- Asynchronous interaction via a library or non-library service (e.g., Internet Public Library at [http://www.ipl.org/div/askus/](http://www.ipl.org/div/askus/); Yahoo! Answers (http://answers.yahoo.com/); A specialized online help-based community; or another service – see Yahoo's list of Ask-an-Expert services at [https://answers.yahoo.com/](https://answers.yahoo.com/)
- Mobile phone Q&A services (e.g., ChaCha – see [http://www.chacha.com/](http://www.chacha.com/))
- Any other platform you want to try (e.g., posting your question on Facebook or Twitter in a status feed)

**Rubric:**

**I. Description of the information need/reference question(s) (10 points)**

- Has the student described his/her information need?
- Has the student explained for what purpose this information was needed?
- Has the student provided the specific reference question(s) he/she posed to the three services he/she elected to consult?

**II. General description of the three services selected (10 points)**

- Has the student provided general descriptions of each of his/her three selected services?

**III. Description of the student’s interactions with each of the three services selected (20 points)**

- Has the student described his/her interactions with each of his/her three selected services?

**IV. Comparison/Contrast of the three selected services (30 points)**

- Has the student provided an in-depth analysis of the similarities and differences between each of the three services they selected?
- Has the student discussed how the underlying platform and the nature of each service impacted his/her experiences?
- Has the student evaluated his/her interactions with each of the services, as well as the quality and the timeliness of the responses provided by each of them?
- Has the student assessed each of the services in terms of how much he/she enjoyed interacting with them and how satisfied he/she felt with the responses received?
V. References to the literature (20 points)
  ● Has the student referenced relevant course readings in his/her discussion of his/her experiences with the various services they consulted?

VI. Overall Writing Quality (10 points)
  ● Is the student’s writing clear, organized, and easy-to-understand?
  ● Has the student included a references list, using APA-style citations?
Assignment 5: User Instruction Assignment

Due Dates:

- **5-P. Team Proposal:** March 2, 2015 (check-off) [Team]
- **5-ES. Executive Summary (10%); 5-Pr. Presentation (15%); 5-Pf. Pathfinder (5%):** May 4, 2015 (30% total) [Team]
- **5-Ev. Self, Peer, & Team Evaluations:** May 11, 2015 (check-off) [Individual]

The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience with preparing and presenting a user instruction session targeted to a particular audience, as well as creating a relevant pathfinder.

You will work in teams of 3 to 4 students for this project. As a team, choose a topic and identify an audience for your presentation. For example: “information literacy for college freshmen” or “finding reliable health resources for women diagnosed with breast cancer” or “understanding personal digital archives for senior citizens” or “job seeking for low income job seekers.” Teams can choose whatever topic and user group they would like; however, their proposal must be approved before they begin.

Deliverables:

- Team Proposal (check-off)
- Executive Summary (10%)
- Presentation (15%)
- Pathfinder (5%)
- Self, Peer, and Team Evaluations (check-off)

I. Team Proposal (check-off) [Due March 2, 2015]

Each team will prepare a 1-page proposal that lists the team name, the project name, the members of the team, and your proposed topic and audience. Also, please explain the team’s interests and goals in selecting this topic/audience and delineate the roles that each of you will take on in the completion of this assignment. In addition to uploading this 1-page document to the Assignments section of our Canvas site, please also post one paragraph describing your proposal to the relevant discussion board by Monday, March 9th.

II. Executive Summary (10%) [Due May 4, 2015]

Each team will write a 5-page executive summary on the information seeking behaviors of the audience they chose for their user instruction presentation. Paper will include an explanation of why the team selected this particular audience, a brief literature review (cite at least 6 to 10 empirical studies related to your selected audience’s information behaviors), an analysis of the implications of the chosen user group’s information needs, and a discussion of why the team chose to do the presentation and pathfinder the way they did.

III. Presentation (15%) [Due May 4, 2015]

Each team will present a 20-minute instruction session on the use of library and Internet resources on the team’s topic. Please be sure to practice your presentation several times and then video (preferably) or audio tape your final version of your presentation. Next, upload your video (or audio) file to the relevant discussion board on our Canvas site. Your “audience” (your classmates) will watch your recording and post their questions and comments for you by May 7th. Your team needs to respond to these questions/comments by May 11th.

* Make sure that your presentation is built around the information needs/behaviors of your chosen audience. *

IV. Pathfinder (5%) [Due May 4, 2015]

Each team will create a one-page pathfinder consisting of at least 10 resources, including databases, books, journals, and Internet resources. Teams are encouraged to be creative with the layout and presentation of their pathfinder. Pathfinders can be in static form (such as a pdf) or they can be in digital form (such as a website, LibGuide, or Pinterest board). Please post your completed pathfinder to the relevant discussion board on Canvas. Your “audience” (your classmates) will take a look at your pathfinder and try it out, and then post
questions and comments for you by May 7th. Your team needs to respond to these questions/comments by May 11th.

V. Self, Peer, and Team Evaluations (check-off) [Due May 11, 2015]
Each student will evaluate themselves and their peers on the following items:

- creativity
- resources chosen
- presentation skills
- contribution to the team/project

Please also evaluate the performance of your team as a whole. What did you learn? How well did you work together?

These evaluations will be taken into consideration by the professor when grading the various elements of this assignment.

Rubrics:

II. Executive Summary (10%)
- Has the team described their selected audience and topic and explained why they chose to focus on this particular audience and topic? (15 points)
- Has the team provided a brief literature review referencing at least 6 to 10 sources that discusses empirical findings relating to the information behavior of their selected audience? (20 points)
- Has the team described the potential implications of these findings for the design of their user instruction presentation and pathfinder? (25 points)
- Has the team explained how the findings from the literature and their implications informed their design of the user instruction presentation and pathfinder? (30 points)
- Is the summary clearly written and easy to follow and understand? (10 points)

III. Presentation (15%)
- To what extent did the presentation take into account the user group and the information needs and information seeking behaviors of that particular group? (40 points)
- How well did the team present, both individually and as a team? (20 points)
- How well did the team make use of (and stick to) their allotted time? (10 points)
- How well did the team engage their audience? (20 points)
- How well did the team respond to questions and comments from the audience? (10 points)

IV. Pathfinder (5%)
- How relevant and comprehensive are the resources included in the pathfinder? (30 points)
- To what extent do the format and presentation of the pathfinder take into account the user group and the information needs and information seeking behaviors of that particular group? (40 points)
- What degree of creativity is exhibited in the look and/or functionality of the pathfinder? (20 points)
- How clearly laid out and easy-to-use is the pathfinder? (10 points)
## Course Overview

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<th>Wk</th>
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<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Review</th>
<th>Discuss (post to discussion boards regarding...)</th>
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<td>1/26-01</td>
<td>Course Overview/ Evolving Landscape of Librarianship and Information Services</td>
<td>See Syllabus</td>
<td>Week 1 Slides</td>
<td>Introduce yourself... (by 2/2) Week 1 Readings (by 2/2)</td>
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<td>Information Services and Information Professionals</td>
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<td>Week 2 Readings (by 2/9) Start to form teams (by 2/9)</td>
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<td>The Concept of Information</td>
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<td>Week 7 Slides Guest Talk: James Patrick Timony</td>
<td>Week 7 Readings (by 3/16) Paragraph re: #2 Search Strategy Assignments (by 3/16)</td>
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<td>Reference and Information Services</td>
<td>See Syllabus</td>
<td>Week 8 Slides Guest Talk: Megan Dwyre</td>
<td>Week 8 Readings (by 3/30) Two paragraphs re: #3 User Group Information Behavior Profile (by 3/30)</td>
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<td>Final User Instruction Assignment components due 5/4</td>
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<td>Post #5-Pr file and 5-Pf link/file to Discussion Board (by 5/4)</td>
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<td>Final User Instruction Assignment: Comments/ Questions/ Evaluations</td>
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<td>Pose questions/comments for your classmates regarding their presentations and pathfinders (by 5/7) Respond to questions/comments from your classmates regarding your team's presentation and pathfinder (by 5/11)</td>
<td>#5-Ev due 5/11</td>
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*** Spring Break ***