IRLS562 Public Libraries Practice and Administration

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COURSE NAME, NUMBER AND PREREQUISITES:

IRLS 562 Public Libraries Practice and Administration

[Prerequisite: IRLS 504 or consent of the instructor.]

Instructor: Seavey

The Professor, speaking at Southern Illinois University, November, '0

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A word of advice here. Read the whole syllabus now. If there is critical information in here somewhere, and you miss it because you did not read this thing, guess who's fault it is?

"Practice and Administration" -- a tall order, to be sure. According to SIRLS directives about this course: "Focuses on issues related to the management of information resources, services, organizations, and environments, with an emphasis on planning, evaluating, and strategizing." I think we can manage that.

In one sense no course can ever be quite the same as working in a public library. That being said every public library is a different experience. No two communities are the same, no set of users is the same, and practice varies wildly from library to library. What I am aiming at here is things about which you will have to think as professional librarians potentially running your own library, or participating in a management team running one. This is truly a case of "Context is Everything" (one of the professor's maxims about libraryland.)

A Tentative Schedule

I have things noted in weeks here. Think of this as a once-a-week class that meets at 8 a.m. on Thursday. In fact, that is when the lectures will pop up on D2L. I don't expect you to be sitting at your computer at 8 a.m., but I would think that by Sunday evening you had best have the lecture read. Hence, Week 1 starts Thursday, January 15, 2009. Week 2 starts Thursday, January 22.(of course I will be in Denver at the ALISE meeting, but there will still be a class) Etc. Etc. I say tentative because I have rarely been able to stick to a syllabus in my life. Who knows what we'll get going on?

When in doubt as to what is going on check the SIRLS calendar at http://www.sirls.arizona.edu/calendar or the UA calendar at http://catalog.arizona.edu/calendar/0809cal.html paying particular attention to such things as drop and add dates.

Spring break is March 14-22 and there will be no class that week.
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<td>February 4: Week 4: Context II: Local Government Organization and Boards of Trustees.</td>
<td>February 11: Week 5: Context III: Standards and their impact By now I had best see at least a draft of your context questions</td>
<td>February 18: Week 6: Managing IT: Software, Hardware, Filters, and Other Vexatious Issues. Final context question due</td>
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<td>March 25: Week 10: Evaluation II: Services Two Thirds exam due</td>
<td>April 1: (hmm. April Fool's Day. What can I dream up for this?) Week 11: Evaluation III: Overall</td>
<td>April 8: Week 12: Public Libraries and Hard Times</td>
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<td>April 15: Week 13: Users: Different Folks, Different Strokes</td>
<td>April 22: Week 14: Open Forum</td>
<td>April 29: Week 15: Final Considerations Final Exam posts</td>
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**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

**REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:**

**Text and Readings**

The text for the course will be Introduction to Public Librarianship, (New York : Neal-Schuman Publishers, ©2004) by Kathleen de la Peña McCook. As of this writing there are used copies on Amazon, which is where I recommend making your purchase. Do not pay more than the new list price of $65.00. Some book dealers have some nerve.

Other readings will all be online, either in a database available through the UofA library at [http://www.library.arizona.edu/search/articles/](http://www.library.arizona.edu/search/articles/) or [http://sabio.arizona.edu](http://sabio.arizona.edu) or simply floating on the web.

Electronic resources you should either sign up for, or bookmark, as we will be paying a lot of attention to current thinking in public libraryland:

- [http://lists.webjunction.org/publib/](http://lists.webjunction.org/publib/) (PUBLIB email discussion list)

We will introduce other electronic places to visit as the course develops.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

There will be two papers assigned and due during the semester. There will be a final exam. The papers are explained, at length, below. See the schedule below for due dates. Everything but the final will be due while class is in session.

There will also be some ungraded homework involved.

The Context Paper.

The first chunk of the course deals, as you have doubtless noticed, with the context in which a public library has to operate. There are two parts to the assignment. I have established on the D2L Discussion Board, a "Student Forum." I will not look at the Student Forum under any circumstances. The first part of the assignment involves the class working out six questions to be asked of a public library director (or maybe branch head- we'll see how jammed up things get at the director level.) The questions must address the contextual issues raised in the first part of the course. After the class comes up with the six questions, you will submit them to me and I will say yes, no, maybe, depending on what you come up with.
For the second part of the exercise each student, as an individual will find a director, or branch head, and interview them using the six questions posed by the entire class. All six questions must answered. Given the answers received you will then tell me:

1. How did the answers differ from your expectations?
2. Do what extent do contextual issues affect service?
3. Would you work with the same restrictions?
4. Any further thoughts on the topic?

The Two Thirds Exam/Paper

Or, the course up to now. This is basically a series of short essay answers to topics suggested by the course thus far. As usual I am looking for critical thinking and analysis of what you see, not just a reporting of facts. What does it all mean?

The Final

The final exam will be due during exam week- I'll post it with the last class. It will cover the whole semester.

COURSE, SCHOOL, AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Academic Code of Integrity

Students are expected to abide by The University of Arizona [Code of Academic Integrity. 'The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student's submitted work must be the student's own.' If you have any questions regarding what is acceptable practice under this Code, please ask an Instructor.

Accommodating Disabilities

The University has a [Disability Resource Center. If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the Disability Resource Center and request that the DRC send me, the Instructor, official notification of your accommodation needs as soon as possible. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate.

Assignment Policies

<Put your own material for the stuff in red>

- **How to submit your assignments**: How do you want students to submit assignments? Do you want them to include any particular identifying information on their assignments? Will assignments be returned to them, or will they just see a posted grade? Anything else that they'd need to know?
- **Assignment due dates**: Since the Course Schedule section (above) will spell out specific due dates, this section is used to describe any late penalties and any particulars about exactly when items are due (e.g. "Surface-mailed assignments must be postmarked no later than the stated due date.")
- **Writing style**: Are students supposed to use any particular writing style, such as APA or Chicago Manual? Are there any on-line writing resources that might be helpful to your students as they prepare their assignments? What if English is not their native tongue...is help available to them?
- **Late Policy**

Incompletes

The current Catalog reads

The grade of I may be awarded only at the end of a term, when all but a minor portion of the course work has been satisfactorily completed. The grade of I is not to be awarded in place of a failing grade or when the student is expected to repeat the course; in such a case, a grade other than I must be assigned. Students should make arrangements with the instructor to receive an incomplete grade before the end of the term ...
If the incomplete is not removed by the instructor within one year the I grade will revert to a failing grade.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: 1. Late material will be graded down at the rate of 10% of the grade per day late. Which means that a paper that would normally grade a 90 is a day late, the grade is 81. If two days late the grade is 72. After that you don't want to think about it. If, and only if, you let me know beforehand that there are going to be problems we can make adjustments. Problems do not include vacation, family reunions, or trips to concerts. I can be flexible, but remember you are a student in graduate school.

2. I expect submitted papers to be written in clear, concise, and grammatically correct English. Material not meeting these standards will be redone until they do so, losing points along the way. Instructions on What a Paper Should Look Like are posted in the content area of D2L. Do not fail to heed this document. All material will be submitted in electronic format. Standards for submission are in the box below. Kindly read them and follow directions. My inclination towards mercy on this topic is not what it used to be.

Standards for Submitting Material in Electronic Format

In order to facilitate the whole process of grading and returning papers, quizzes, and anything else, in electronic form the following standards should be followed. If material is not submitted according to these standards it will arrive back in your lap with no grade assigned. I will accept submissions written in Word, or WordPerfect, and saved as .doc, .wpd, or RTF files. If you are going to use anything else, check with me first. Do not write papers in HTML- I think I said that somewhere already.

1. Formatting Your Submission

Word processed papers are the only kind I will accept. The following standards apply.

A. Margins.
   Top and bottom margins: 1 inch.
   Left and right margins: 1.25 inches, or as close as you can get. This largely has to do with what I can see on a screen. Trifocals and old age are not necessarily compatible with teeny tiny print.

B. Type Size.
   Type size should be 12 points. I don't care about font, but have mercy on my trifocals and set it at 12 points. I recognize that larger point sizes are a way of artificially lengthening your paper, and will automatically reset anything larger than 12 points back to the required size. Please do not use the Courier or sans serif typefaces.

C. Heading. The heading of all submissions should include the following information:
   Your name
   The title of the paper, or whatever.
   The class for which the paper has been written.
   The name of the professor for whom the paper has been written.
   The semester in which the paper has been written.
   The word processor and version in which the paper is written.

   Hence:

   Another Country: Searching for the Southwest United States
   Your Name
   9450, Spring, 2008
   Professor Seavey
   WordPerfect version 11

I don't care if it is centered like, that, or in that particular order, but the information elements should all be present.
2. Checking Your Submission

A. Spell Checking.
Most, if not all, current word processors have a built in spell checker. Use it. Spell check dictionaries are not always comprehensive, so if the spell checker complains about a word that seems legitimate to you, have a dictionary handy just to make sure you have it correct. If my spell checker complains about something in your submission, that is what I do... if it is a word that does not exist, or is spelled wrong, woe be unto you, as I will knock off points.

B. Proof Reading
The spell checker only catches spelling errors, it doesn't care about context. So if you are thinking "too many" and write "two many," the spell checker won't catch it. The prof once wrote a lengthy explanation of a statistical technique called "factor analysis," and distributed it to a doctoral seminar. Everybody was fascinated with my somewhat peculiar explanation of "factory analysis." The point is, read your paper, and see if it makes sense. Or have your significant other read it, or your next door neighbor. Most folks, after they have read their own work once or twice, see exactly what they want to see, not the mistakes.

C. Grammar Checking
Most word processors have a grammar checker. I have mixed feelings about these because most of them are set to something akin to standard business English usage, which may not be appropriate for academic papers. Word underlines things that it does not like in green. I at least look at those bits and see if I can figure out the nature of the complaint. The use of "that" and "which," in my work has improved considerably since I started using this.

3. Naming Your Submission

Filenames.
The name of your submission will be your last name, and only your last name. Modifications are acceptable only where two classmembers share a common last name. In that case the form of entry will be: last name first initial: seaveyc, rather than just seavey. Note that capitalization is not necessary. Do not worry if you wind up sending in more than one thing with the same file name. The professor is old enough to understand folders, sub-directories, and tree structures. Trust me, I can keep all this stuff separate.

B. Extenders.
Most wordprocessor (in fact most current programs) assign an identifier, known as a file extender, to files processed by that program. The file extender identifies the type of file to the user- human or computer-trying to look at the contents of that file. Some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>File Extender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word for Windows</td>
<td>.doc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excel (a spreadsheet)</td>
<td>.xls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WordPerfect (most recent version)</td>
<td>.wpd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lotus Organizer</td>
<td>.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Joint Photographic Experts Group graphics file</td>
<td>.jpg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The program you are using will assign the file extender. Make sure that this is so. Experiment with whatever you are using and if file extenders are not assigned, ask the prof for advice.

That, I think, should do it. If there are questions, let me know.

3. Papers may be written in either Word or WordPerfect. I can translate pretty much any other wordprocessor, although if you are not using Word or WP please check with me first- send me a test file just to make sure I can translate before we get into difficulties. If you are using Microsoft Works, please try and find something else. For reasons known only to Bill Gates, Works is difficult to translate.
HOW TO WRITE FOR THIS COURSE

Pay attention to What A Paper Should Look Like. Citation style is up to you, although I should tell you that I am not fond of APA.

Otherwise:

"Say a thing in one sentence as straight as it can be made, and then drop it." William James

I expect that papers for a graduate level course will be written as if for publication. Not only must the basic facts of the subject be mastered, and all the relevant sources explored, but the text must be written clearly:

1. Who, what, where, when, and exactly how much must always be obvious. Know what you wish to say, and say only that; define new terms or new uses of old ones.

2. Avoid ambiguity. "You can't put too much water in a nuclear reactor."

3. Link sentences and paragraphs logically and intelligibly. The reader shouldn't have to rearrange your ideas to make sense out of them.

4. Sentences should not be so long that the reader loses his or her way. Otherwise you are likely to lose the readers attention, as so often happened with the prose of 19th century essayists such as Oliver Wendell Holmes, who was not only a doctor, professor, and novelist, but also the father of the famous Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. (an intriguing character who combined the ideals of New England humanism with the prejudices of the upperclass, wealthy society in which he moved)...and before you know it you will have wandered very far afield. For practice, read lots of Jesse Shera. Or Barbara Kingsolver.

5. Avoid irrelevant or tangential topics. Stick to the point. [see number 4]

6. No obstacle should come between you and your reader. When revising, imagine the reader over your shoulder and apply the rules listed above before typing your final product.

GRADING:

Grading Students will be evaluated on the following:
The context paper 40%
The Two Thirds Paper/Exam: 20%
The Final Exam: 30%
Class Participation: 10%. By this I mean informed conversation on the discussion board. Simply saying "I agree" to somebody else's post is not informed conversation.

All material will be graded on a numerical basis. The following standards apply in assigning final grades:

A= 90-
B= 80-89
C= 70-79

Numerical scores are not rounded up when computing grades.

A word on grading.
This is graduate school. Simply doing the work on time in a reasonable fashion earns a grade of "B." The grade of "A" is reserved for work that shows evidence of going beyond the mere requirements of completing the assignment. In graduate school a grade of C is basically a failure. Critical thinking is a must. Please pay attention to the instructions on submitting papers in electronic format down below. My tolerance level for ignoring these instructions is considerably less than it used to be. Participation in class discussion sessions is essential.

INSTRUCTOR NAME AND CONTACT ADDRESSES:
Communications

There is an internal email system in D2L or you may use seavy@email.arizona.edu.
Guided exploration

Click a term to initiate a search.

Audience
- for Students (92)
- for Faculty (28)
- for Alums (24)
- for Staff (17)
- for Prospective Students (7)
  more...

Course
- IRLS417 (2)
- IRLS418 (1)
- IRLS432 (1)
- IRLS470 (2)
- IRLS488 (6)
  more...

People
- Adjunct Faculty (152)
- Faculty (150)
- Staff (17)
- Friends (6)

Semester
- Fall 11 (29)
- Summer 11 (27)
- Spring 11 (30)
- Winter 10 11 (1)
- Fall 10 (20)
  more...
Task
- Choosing Courses (27)
- Advising (5)
- Applying (5)
- Registering (2)
- Submitting Final Paperwork (2)
- more...

Topic
- Index (33)
- Masters (33)
- Research (20)
- Knowledge River (16)
- News (14)
- more...

Related categories

Course: IRLS562
People: Adjunct Faculty » Seavey
Semester: Spring 10

Guided keyword

Search More options

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