

Library Foundations
University of Texas at Austin
Spring 2024
Dr. R. David Lankes
DRAFT Revised January 14, 2023

Course Information

Class day and time: Tuesdays 3:30-6:30
Class location: UTA 1.212

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. R. David Lankes
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Office Hours: 10:00-11:30 UTA 5.446

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the iSchool sits on indigenous land. We would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Indigenous land. Moreover, we would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to the Carrizo & Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Caddo, Tonkawa, Comanche, Lipan Apache, Alabama-Coushatta, Kickapoo, Tigua Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas, here on Turtle Island.

Course Description:

Library Foundations is intended as a gateway, or introductory course for students interested in the library field. Librarianship is a field that is rapidly evolving, and this course will introduce you to established structures and practices in the field as well as the directions in which we are moving. This course surveys the professional, social, ethical, and legal issues that affect information service professionals and organizations and prepares students for their graduate work here.

The course introduces:

- librarianship, libraries, and the library profession—past, present and future;
- a participatory perspective on information science;
- key components of the library and information field and its relationship to other professions;
- the skills and values of the profession;
- major issues facing the profession;
- the literature of librarianship and other cognate fields;
- the contexts in which library and information science professionals typically work; and
- the place of librarianship and other information professions in the evolving information infrastructure of the 21st century.

You will also learn about course options at the iSchool and get help in planning your

future direction, both in the program and as you begin your professional career. Above all, this course is designed to encourage you to think about the profession you are entering and to give you a foundation for the rest of your graduate study. While working towards these goals you will also get practice in analytical and critical thinking skills at the professional level; and the ability to communicate orally, in writing, and through various media.

Course Modality:

Classes will be a combination of lecture, speakers, and student-driven activities.

The class sessions will be semi structured. Some classes will begin with planned activities. These include: student lead conversations on the week's materials; presentations and interviews with librarians from the field; field trips; or other activities designed to engage the week's ideas. However, every class will have ample time for open discussion and questions.

Course Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will improve in both skills needed for and knowledge about the library and information professions.

Skill-Based Outcomes

Students will:

- Use the library catalog, print resources and commercial databases for basic information retrieval, as demonstrated through searching assignments.
- Select and apply appropriate oral and written communication methods, in both large and small group environments as demonstrated through class discussions, group assignments and written assignments.

Knowledge-Based Outcomes

Students will:

- Understand and apply the basic concepts and vocabulary of library and information science.
- Apply the ethics and responsibilities of information professionals to real-world situations.
- Identify and explore issues, opportunities or challenges appropriate to their area of interest of the library and information professions.
- Begin the process of professional networking and understand the issues in library administration through a personal interview.

Textbook Information:

Required Texts:

Lankes, R. D. (2016). *The New librarianship field guide*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
<https://worldcat.org/en/title/933446633> [text will be provided to students]

There will be additional readings assigned throughout the class.

Recommended Texts:

You will be citing works in the American Psychological Association style. While there are Web sites with APA citation information, many are incomplete and incorrect. The book, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition*, is what you want.

A good investment of your time to improve your writing is reading *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White (any edition). This short book will help you improve your writing; each time you read it, you'll learn something new.

Optional Textbooks:

Students who have not worked in a library before may feel overwhelmed at the start of their MSLIS program. Those wishing to gain a stronger understanding of libraries and librarians should read *Rubin R. Rubin R. G. & Alire C. A. (2020). Foundations of library and information science (Fifth). ALA Neal-Schuman.*

Class Topics:

The following is a list of topics we will cover in class. The depth will be adjusted to the class interest and need.

- Library Types and structure
 - Public, School, Academic, Special
- Reference and instruction
 - Information literacy
- Collection development and intellectual freedom
 - Data Librarianship and repositories
- Community engagement
 - Marketing and publicity
- Metadata and classification
 - Information organization and databases
- Technology (ILS Discovery Layer, Proxys)
- Standards and Ethics
- Library Associations
- Management
 - Staffing
- Digital libraries and digitization
 - Special Collections
- Leadership in Information Organizations
- Hot Topics
 - AI, Open Access, Open Educational Resources, wellness and Social Services, vocational Awe,
- Research Design and Evaluation
 - Evaluation and Assessment

Assignments:

Class Participation (10%) – This class is an experiential course. Students are expected to attend each class session and participate fully in all assigned work as well. There

are many small activities that students will participate in without a specific grade, but not participating in the activity will lower the Class Participation grade.

Weekly Reflections (20%) – Students will reflect upon readings, class discussions, class trips, and/or class speakers. At least one reflection is expected for each chapter in the Field Guide. These reflections will be uploaded to a Canvas discussion board and visible by the class. Weekly reflections are not about length (they average 2 to 3 paragraphs), nor repeating what was done in class. Instead, I am looking for your insights, opinions, and reactions.

Interview with a Library Administrator (20%) – Students will interview a library administrator and present their experience. Library administrators hold a management position at the library where they either head up a department, hold a director title, or manage other staff. School librarians are very much accepted as well as librarians from small one person libraries. These should be posted on Canvas site in the “Interview” Discussion Board. The write up is due March 12, but you should try to get the interview done by March 5th.

Poster Project (20%) – At the end of the semester students will be formed into teams and create a poster on a topic agreed upon in class. On April 23th, the teams will present the library to invited guests and the other students.

You Need a Graduate Degree for That Video (10%) – Students will create a video to answer the question “you need a graduate degree for that?” Be creative. Be funny. Check out YouTube (and we’ll show some in class) for inspiration. This assignment is due February 13th. If you wish to work with other students (up to 4) that is OK. Examples: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UhmYyDyzXDU>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GiJeN7-xKc>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SpxcmbxTBpg>

Leading a Class Discussion (20%) – Students will be put into teams and assigned a Chapter from the Field Guide. Their job will be to lead a class discussion on that chapter. The form of the discussion is completely up to the group. Be creative, be provocative, but get the class talking. After class, the team needs to post a summary of the method and results of the discussion in Canvas.

Other Course Policies

Attendance and Class Participation: Attendance during class is required. Necessary absences should be discussed with the instructor. Class participation includes both in-person participation and Canvas participation.

Grading:

Work is assessed using the following criteria:

- Following assignment directions;
- Accurate citation and quotation style, giving proper acknowledgement to all ideas not your own;
- Good organization, coherence, rhetorical structure;
- Good communication skills: grammar, style, spelling, clarity;
- Appropriate thoroughness and completeness for the assignment;
- Most importantly (at the graduate level): Evidence of analytical and critical thinking.

Important Note: This class is focused on participation and involvement. A single missed assignment could result in a failing grade for the class. It is important that students undertake all assignments.

Group Projects:

Students may be working in different groups throughout the semester. After any group project that results in a grade, the instructor may ask the individuals in groups to do a peer evaluation. The instructor may then use the results of these evaluations to raise or lower the grades of individuals within a group. This will allow the grade to more accurately reflect the contributions of individuals.

Procrastination and Late Work:

Late work will receive a grade penalty.

Resources

Style Manuals

Students will need to cite all sources for their essays in APA format. Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) offers a great overview on how to do this. <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl> Style manuals are located under Research and Citation.

Plagiarism

Using someone else's work in your own writing without giving proper credit is considered plagiarism, a serious form of academic dishonesty that can result in severe penalties. Copying someone else's work, buying a paper and submitting it as your own, copying and pasting text (even with changes), or borrowing images from an online source, are some examples of plagiarism. Even if you plagiarize accidentally, you can be held responsible and penalized.

Learning to cite sources appropriately is an important part of becoming a professional. When you are unsure about citation, you are encouraged to ask your instructor what is appropriate in the context of your assignment. Consultants at The [University Writing Center](#) can also help you determine whether you are citing sources correctly—and they have helpful guides online for using [direct quotations](#) and [paraphrasing](#). Reviewing those skills will help you feel confident that you are handling sources professionally in your writing.

Important University and School Information.

Accessible, Inclusive, and Compliant Statement:

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). Please refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://community.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A , please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Please see the university Canvas site for student policies and resources:

<https://utexas.instructure.com/enroll/TP964H>