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**LIBS 414/514
Reference and
Information
Services**



The University of Idaho in statewide cooperation with
Boise State University — Idaho State University — Lewis-Clark State College

Course Guide

Independent
Study | in Idaho

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Library Science 414/514

Reference and Information Services

University of Idaho
3 Semester-Hour Credits

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LIBS 414/514: Reference and Information Services

3 Semester-hour Credits: U of I

Syllabus

Welcome!

Whether you are a new or returning student, welcome to the Independent Study in Idaho (ISI) program. Below, you will find information pertinent to your course including the course description, course materials, course objectives, as well as information about assignments, exams, and grading. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the ISI office for clarification before beginning your course.

Policies and Procedures

Refer to the ISI website at www.uidaho.edu/isi and select *Students* for the most current policies and procedures, including information on setting up accounts, student confidentiality, exams, proctors, transcripts, course exchanges, refunds, academic integrity, library resources, and disability support and other services.

Course Description

LibS414/514 focuses on the delivery of reference services in school and public libraries and the evaluation, selection, and collection of reference resources, both digital and in print. Research projects required for graduate credit.

Prerequisite for LibS514: Permission [contact the ISI Office].

Required: Internet access, library visit

LibS 414: 14 graded assignments, 13 ungraded quizzes, 1 proctored exam

LibS 514: 14 graded assignments, 13 ungraded quizzes, 1 proctored exam

- Students will need access to the Internet to take this course. They will need to consult web resources, either available through the University of Idaho Library or through the Internet.
- Students will be required to visit and report on a large or moderately large library for Lesson 12. If that is not possible, an accommodation will be worked out between the student and the instructor.
- Students in LibS 514 will demonstrate what they have learned by conducting a thorough literature review.
- All lessons should be submitted before taking the exam.

Course Materials

Required Course Materials

Cassell, Kay A., and Uma Hiremath. *Reference and Information Services: An Introduction*, 4th edition. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 2018. ISBN-13: 978-0-8389-1568-4
https://www.alastore.ala.org/SearchResult.aspx?search_api_views_fulltext=9781555708597

Note: Although the page numbers may be off a little, the third edition of the textbook will also work. 2013. ISBN-13: 978-1-55570-859-7

Additional course reserve readings as required: visit <http://www.lib.uidaho.edu/services/reserve/> to search by course number. Readings are indicated by title and author for each relevant lesson.

Students will also need to be able to access library databases available through the [University of Idaho Library](#). Students can use the same login credentials that they use for BBLearn to access library resources; if access issues arise, contact either the instructor or the Reference Desk at libref@uidaho.edu or via other [contact methods](#).

Course Delivery

All ISI courses are delivered through BbLearn, an online management system that hosts the course lessons and assignments and other items that are essential to the course. Upon registration, the student will receive a *Registration Confirmation Email* with information on how to access ISI courses online.

Course Introduction

Reference work is a central feature of librarianship. The reference librarian often is the public face of the library and needs the knowledge and skill to help the library user find the information he or she needs. In this Internet age, the reference librarian needs to be a teacher showing library users how to become effective information seekers.

The reference librarian also needs to have the proper tools, and the knowledge to use them effectively. Since the early days of modern librarianship, building an effective reference collection has been a critical skill of the reference librarian; as technology advances, collection development of reference works must include considerations for print as well as electronic and web-based resources.

Course Objectives

- Equip students to think, talk, and write about reference work as a librarian.
- Familiarize students with the basic concepts and skills needed to provide good reference service.
- Familiarize students with printed and online reference resources.
- Teach students to select, evaluate, and use basic reference sources.
- Teach students to use computers in reference work.
- Equip students to teach both library literacy and general information literacy.

Lessons

The *Important Terms* section and the lectures will inform students about what they should seek to learn and what they might expect to see on the comprehensive exam. In addition, the quizzes found at the end of Lessons 2–13 will help students review important material covered in earlier lessons, and are intended to help students prepare for the comprehensive exam. The quizzes are not graded, but they are reviewed by the instructor.

Online Databases

Students will be expected to explore and gain experience using various online databases. Access is available to students enrolled in Independent Study in Idaho through the [University of Idaho Library](#). Students can use the same login credentials that they use for BBLearn to access library resources; if

access issues arise, contact either the instructor or the Reference Desk at libref@uidaho.edu or via other [contact methods](#).

Additional Work for LibS 514 Students (Graduate Credit)

Most of the lessons contain additional assignments for students in Libs 514. The assignment in Lesson 14 requires students in LibS 514 to prepare a thorough literature review demonstrating their knowledge and skill.

Lessons may include the following components:

- Lesson Objectives
- Assigned Reading
- Important Terms
- Lecture
- Written Assignments
- Quiz

Study Hints:

- Keep a copy of every lesson submitted.
- Complete all reading assignments.
- Set a schedule allowing for course completion one month prior to your personal deadline.
- Web pages and URL links in the World Wide Web are continuously changing. Contact your instructor if you find a broken Web page or URL.

Refer to your Registration Confirmation Letter for further details on your instructor's lesson guidelines and requirements. Also refer to the ISI Policies and Procedures for information on submitting lessons to your instructor.

Exams

- You must wait for grades and comments on assignments prior to taking subsequent exam.
- For your instructor's exam guidelines, refer to the **Course Rules** in BbLearn.

Refer to Grading for specific information on assignment/exam points and percentages.

Proctor Selection/Scheduling Exams

The final exam requires a proctor.

To submit your *Proctor Information Form* online, visit the ISI website and select *Forms, Proctor Information Form*. Submit this form at least two weeks before your exam. Refer to *Students, Assignments and Exams* on the ISI website for information on acceptable and unacceptable proctors.

Grading

The course grade will be based upon the following considerations:

Lessons	Points
Lessons 1-12	120 (10 points each)

Lessons 13-14	40 (20 points each)
Comprehensive Exam	40
Total Points	200

180–200 = A
 160–179 = B
 140–159 = C
 120–139 = D
 119 and lower = F

Academic Honesty Policy

Please note that Independent Study Courses follow the [University of Idaho guidelines on academic honesty](#); plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. The first incidence will result in a grade of zero for the assignment and a warning; the second incidence will result in automatic failure of the course. If, after completing the assignment for Lesson 1, you are not sure what academic honesty is, please contact the instructor.

The final course grade is issued after all lessons and exams have been graded.

Refer to the ISI Policies and Procedures for information about confidentiality of student grades, course completion, time considerations, and requesting a transcript.

About the Course Developer

Kristin Henrich is Associate Professor and Reference & Instruction Librarian at the University of Idaho, with liaison responsibilities to the College of Art & Architecture. Previously serving as the Reference Coordinator for the UI Library, she has a Master of Library Science (MLS) degree from Indiana University and has taught ISI courses since 2014.

Contacting Your Instructor

Instructor contact information is posted on your BbLearn site under *Course Rules*.

Please copy the ISI office at indepst@uidaho.edu when corresponding and submitting lessons by email to your instructor.

Disability Support Services

Refer to the ISI Policies and Procedures for information on disability at the Center for Disability Access and Resources (CDAR).

Lesson 1

Introduction to Reference and Information Sources

Objectives:

- Students will be able to define reference within the context of librarianship, and articulate its importance in providing service to patrons
- Students will be able to identify reference sources and services
- Students will be able to articulate the general responsibilities of a reference librarian, and identify tasks in their own positions that may fall under the umbrella of reference work

Readings: Cassell, Chapter 1
Cassell, p. 461. Table 22-1. Models of Reference Service

Important Terms:

- Reference service
- Reference desk
- Roving reference
- Tiered staffing model

Lecture: Overview of Reference Services

Reference service is defined as “information consultations in which library staff recommend, interpret, evaluate, and/or use information resources to help others meet particular information needs” (RUSA, 2008)[1]. These consultations can be formal or informal, in-person or virtual, brief or lengthy, and can vary widely in complexity. Very simply, reference service is the human gateway connecting patrons to the resources and services that a library offers.

Reference services originated in the public library in the mid-1800s as a response to an increasingly literate populace who sought guidance from librarians in using libraries; over time, reference services moved to university and school libraries as curricula became more research-based as opposed to textbook-based. Reference services have evolved over time, serving new populations with new technologies, but the benchmark function of reference service-teaching patrons how to use the library and its resources-has remained the same.

Depending on the size, type, and scope of the library in question, reference work may be provided by a dedicated staff person, or by someone who has many different job duties. At a small rural public library, one staff person may be responsible for circulating items, answering reference questions, maintaining the collections, and managing the budgets. A school library media specialist may perform all these duties, in addition to other responsibilities such as collaborating with teachers and administrators to meet curricular needs, assessing collections and services, and fulfilling administrative and leadership tasks. Reference desk staffing at a large university may be provided by dedicated reference librarians, who often provide other public services such as bibliographic instruction or specialized outreach.

Just as there are many job titles that include providing reference service as daily responsibilities, there are many different models of how a library can provide reference services to their patrons. These are chosen based on the available reference staff, the goals and vision of the department or library, and the needs of the patron. The most familiar and most widely used model of providing reference services is a staffed reference desk, where patrons may interact with reference librarians in-person or virtually.

These traditional desks offer immediate assistance to patrons, some with the option of additional follow-up with a subject specialist at a later time. Another model of reference service is roving reference, which may be used independently or, more commonly, in conjunction with a traditional reference desk. In this model, librarians move throughout the floor or floors of the building, seeking patrons needing immediate, point-of-need assistance. Roving reference can be useful in cases where patrons may be reluctant to visit the reference desk, as in large libraries where the desk may be on a different floor, or in university libraries where students may be hesitant to approach a reference desk if they perceive they may be bothering the librarian on duty. A third model of reference service is the tiered or referral staffing model, in which questions are triaged at a central service point and those not able to be answered by paraprofessionals or student workers are referred to a reference librarian. In this model, patrons may not follow up with a librarian, or there may be a delay in response. As a result, tiered reference service is not very common, but when used are most often found in universities, where service points may be combined and questions may range broadly in complexity.

Assignment for LibS414 & LibS514:

1. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Review

- Review the University of Idaho Expectations regarding academic honesty:
<http://www.uidaho.edu/DOS/academicintegrity/Student%20Resources/universityofidahoeexpectations>
- Complete Modules 6.4-6.8 of the University of Idaho's Information Literacy Tutorial:
http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/info_literacy/modules/module6/6_4.htm
- Take a screenshot of your completed Self-Quiz in Module 6.8; include with assignment submission

2. Write a one-page biographical essay discussing your experience with librarianship, your experience with reference or information services, why you are taking this class, and what you hope to learn from the experience.

Quiz

1. Define a reference source.
2. What is the difference between a ready reference question and a research question?
3. Based on the Chapter 1 reading, what are the tasks expected of a reference librarian? If you have experience providing reference, are there any tasks you feel are expected that are not listed?