Course Profile: Government Information Policies and Resources

Course Number: LIS 8110

Credits: 3

Prerequisite(s): LIS 6120

Rationale for Inclusion in Curriculum:

Governments and international organizations publish a multitude of materials that reflect or regulate our economic, legal and administrative life. As official publications emanating from these organizations, they are considered to be authoritative. This course, dealing with governmental publishing, serves as a logical extension of the general reference or specialized bibliography courses.

Learning Outcomes:

1. To develop an understanding of the structure, function, and document-generating processes of the main branches of the federal government, states, and municipalities.
2. To achieve a working knowledge of the bibliographic control, modes of procurement, handling, servicing, and collection building of official publications.
3. To provide an intensive experience in finding, analyzing, and interpreting information in the pivotal legislative, administrative, and statistical series and service.
4. To familiarize students with the technical terminology used in the legislative process, censuses, patents, and trademarks.
5. To develop an understanding of professional and governmental agencies in formulating policy.
6. To familiarize students with the problems of fugitive literature and the role of NGOs (Non-Government Organizations).
7. To make students aware that other countries, the United Nations, and other international intergovernmental agencies also have their own unique processes.

Competencies Expected:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Understand and maneuver pertinent bibliographic tools, official and commercial.
2. Outline the federal governmental publishing and dissemination system.
3. Identify the most important legislative, administrative, and statistical series for the purpose of information retrieval.
4. Trace the legislative history of either a federal or state law.
5. Use the various census reports.
6. Locate data in the major official statistical publications.
7. Differentiate the functions and publications of federal, state, and local governmental agencies.
8. Exploit the various non-print bibliographic data files and microform texts disseminated by governmental and commercial agencies.
9. Comment knowledgeably about federal government policies that affect the flow of information.

Content:
Government publishing and distribution; bibliographic control; public information services; structure of the federal government; the legislative process and the attendant documentary activity; the executive branch; the judicial branch; specialized agency-based information and document-producing activities; statistical services; patents and trademarks; the commercial publishers of government information; federal government information policy and as time allows at least reference to state and local governments, NGOs’ publications, and grey literature.

Course Methodology:
Lectures, discussions, readings, and written assignments including, but not limited to, reference questions and research papers.

Bases for Evaluation of Student Performance:
Evaluation is based on successful completion of assignments by assigned due dates.

Text: To be determined

Approved: 1/12
Updated: 8/13