



School of Information Sciences

Course Profile: Advanced Reference Service Strategies

Course Number: INF 7140

Credits: 3

Prerequisite(s): INF 6010; INF 6080; INF 6120

Rationale for Inclusion in Curriculum:

In any library setting, working with users is a complex activity that requires considerable knowledge and skills. This elective course focuses on understanding users and their communities, connecting and communication skills of successful professionals, and teaching approaches for working in conjunction with library users. This course expands on key issues for the information professional, including information needs and seeking behaviors, the reference interview, information literacy instruction, and the professionalization of the reference and instructional librarian.

Learning Outcomes:

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

1. Formulate an understanding of user's information needs and seeking behaviors;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of community assessment;
3. Evaluate reference interview techniques and communication skills used during physical and digital reference encounters;
4. Identify and argue appropriate outreach and information literacy methods for varied users and user groups;
5. Examine varied professionalization strategies for reference and instructional librarians;
6. Evaluate own professional development through self-assessment.

Content: In this course, students will consider the reference environment, both physically and digitally, especially as in today's information environment information professionals cannot expect library user's to come to them. Therefore, students will gain an understanding of human information behavior, with a focus on information seeking in context and information sources. Students will also consider the communicative strategies and social aspects of information in order to connect to users and communities through library outreach and teaching methods. And students will consider the professional requirements of the reference and instructional librarian and will explore professionalization strategies for career development.

Course Methodology: Class sessions may include some or all of the following: Readings, class discussions, lectures, small and large group work, role-playing, library site visits, analysis of library/reference encounters, self-assessments.

Basis for Evaluation of Student Performance: Evaluation may consist of some or all of the following: Class participation and attendance, library site visits and analysis, reference interview role playing and analysis, systematic literature review writing, outreach plan reporting, subject guide development, self-assessment analysis.

Text: To be determined.

Approved: