LIS 2970   Special Topics: INFORMATION RESOURCES, SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY FOR AN AGING WORLD

An online-only course - Fall Term 2012

This term-long, 3-credit online-only course will focus on collection development, reference, and education services for older adults, and their professional and family caregivers. The course will cover the critical evaluation of materials in print, non-print, and electronic formats, and a discussion of information services provided by healthcare organizations, community agencies, medical center and hospital libraries, public libraries which serve an aging population, and academic libraries and centers serving students in the helping professions.

This course is especially appropriate for those interested in working in medical and public libraries, healthcare organizations, community agencies, and academic libraries with students and faculty interested in the helping or service professions, especially in fields that focus on older people.

INSTRUCTOR

Instructor: Ellen Detlefsen
                 Email: ellen@sis.pitt.edu
                     Telephone office hours: Thursdays, 10am – noon [Eastern Time] at 412-624-9444

CALENDAR

Class materials, in the form of a PowerPoint® slide set and an MP3 file, will be distributed via Blackboard/CourseWeb on Thursday afternoons.

The first four sessions provide a general background in gerontology, geriatric medicine, and the demographics of aging, with an emphasis on understanding user information behavior and information needs, including the information needs of both the older adults and those of their family and professional caregivers.

A second set of four sessions provides a general background to the problems and issues of information services to an aging population, with a special emphasis on issues in collection development and the use of information technologies by and for this population.

The next four sessions focus on some sub-populations of older adults, and their specialized information needs, including minority seniors, those in institutions, those with chronic diseases, the disabled, those with mental illness, and those who are dying.

The final three sessions focus on the site visits, the collections development projects, and the future.

Aug. 30th   Session 1   Introduction; class logistics; terminology
Sept. 6th   Session 2   Demographics and stereotypes
Sept. 13th   Session 3   Information behaviors of older adults and their caregivers
Sept. 20th   Session 4   Information services for older adults; specialized libraries, centers and collections.

Sept. 27th   Session 5   Choosing and evaluating materials for older adults
Oct. 4th   Session 6   Materials in print formats, audio-visual formats and realia
Oct. 11th   Session 7   Materials in electronic formats, and on the Web/Internet
Oct. 18th   Session 8   The use and development of specialized information technologies for older adults

Oct. 25th   Session 9   Materials and services for community-dwelling older adults
Nov. 1st   Session 10   Materials and services for intergenerational communities
Nov. 8th   Session 11   Materials and services for older adults from special populations (those living with chronic diseases and mental illness, those living in institutional settings; those with disabilities, minorities; rural elders, etc.)
Nov. 15th   Session 12   Materials and services for those at the end of life and their caregivers

Nov. 22nd   NO CLASS: Happy Thanksgiving!

Nov. 29th   Session 13   Site visit reviews
Dec. 6th   Session 14   Collections development projects wrap-up
Dec. 13th   Session 15   The future for information services for older adults and their caregivers

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance via the weekly use of materials provided through CourseWeb; new materials will usually be posted on Thursday afternoons.

2. Readings as assigned

3. Active participation in the class Discussion Boards
- Ongoing discussion of terminology
- Weekly online discussions of the "clipping of the week"
- Weekly online discussions of the "reference question of the week"
- Monthly "book discussion" sessions

4. Seven written exercises
- An introductory post
- Postcard post
- Advertisement post
- Book review
- Movie review
- Collections development project
- A site visit

READINGS

Readings will be taken from web-based sources, and will include the professional and popular literature in gerontology/geriatrics and the literature of library and information science, as well as examples of materials designed especially for an aging population.

DISCUSSION BOARDS

- Ongoing online discussion of terminology

  There will be a term-long discussion board on which you are invited to post any "terms" that refer to older individuals, aging as a process, etc. The goal of this discussion is to create an inclusive list of the terms, words, phrases, etc. that are in common use to describe the subjects of our class.

- Weekly online discussions of the "clipping of the week"

Each week, a clipping from the popular press on a subject associated with aging will be posted to a DB for your comments/thoughts/discussion.

- Weekly online discussions of the "reference question of the week"

  Each week, a real-life reference question will be posted; you are invited to post possible search strategies that could be used to answer the question.

- Monthly online "book discussion" sessions

  Four books will be discussed online: one each in September, October, November, and December. All are available (in various formats, new and used) from online vendors, libraries, and bookstores.

- September: David Snowdon. *Aging with Grace: What the Nun Study Teaches Us About Leading Longer, Healthier, and More Meaningful Lives.* Bantam, 2002.
  ISBN-10: 0553380923   ISBN-13: 978-0553380927

- October: Howard S. Friedman, Leslie R. Martin. *The Longevity Project: Surprising Discoveries for Health and Long Life from the Landmark Eight-Decade Study.*
  Hudson Street Press, 2011.
  ISBN-10: 1594630755   ISBN-13: 978-1594630750

- November: Neenah Ellis. *If I Live to be 100: Lessons from the Centenarians.* Three Rivers Press, 2004**.**
  ISBN-10: 1400051428   ISBN-13: 978-1400051427

- December: Jane E. Brody. *Jane Brody`s Guide to the Great Beyond A Practical Primer to Help You & Your Loved Ones Prepare Medically, Legally, & Emotionally for the End of Life.* Random House, 2009.
  ISBN-10: 1400066549   ISBN-13: 978-1400066544

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Introductory post: due by September 6th

   Please provide a 300 word "autobiography," and attach or include a photo. Links to a personal homepage are also desirable! Finally, post your score from

the *"What's Your Aging IQ?"* test, and answer these two questions: *why am I interested in older people?* and *why am I taking this course?*

2. Postcard post: due by September 20th

    You will receive a postcard, sent by snailmail; please study the image on the postcard and post your reactions to the image on the Discussion Board for this assignment. In a posting of no more than 250 words, please discuss your initial reaction <u>and </u>your thoughts about the image after having looked at it for a day or two. Please find the image in an electronic format, or scan it, and post the image with your commentary.

3. Advertisement post: due by September 27th

    Find an advertisement from a medical or professional journal that shows an older individual, and comment (in a posting of no more than 250 words) on the presence or absence of stereotype in that image. Please do not duplicate an image that a classmate has already posted.   Please find the image in an electronic format or scan it, and post the image with your commentary.

4. Book review: due by October 11th

    Please choose and read a book that is currently in print (a work of non-fiction, a novel, a children's title, etc.) that presents a picture of aging. Please do not choose a title that another classmate has selected, as this is a "first come, first served" process; please email Ellen Detlefsen with your choice and a running list of choices will be posted! Reviews should be no more than 250 words, and should include a bibliographic citation, an evaluation, and a recommendation for library or information center purchase, as well as information about the author's qualifications.

5. Movie review: due by November 1st

    Please choose and ~~watch~~ view a film that presents a picture of aging. It can be a Hollywood production, a foreign flick, or a made-for-TV movie; it can be fictional or documentary, classic or contemporary. Please do not choose a title that a classmate has selected, as this is a "first come, first served" process; please email Ellen Detlefsen with your choice and a running list of choices will be posted! Reviews should be no more than 250 words, and should include a bibliographic citation, an evaluation, and a recommendation for library or information center purchase.

6. Site visit and report: due by November 29th

   In consultation with the instructor, and by no later than September 27th, choose a library or information service targeted to older individuals, family caregivers, or health professionals serving older clients. After October 11th, please make arrangements to interview the librarian or information specialist in charge. In a short paper of no more than 5 pages, including any images, handouts, etc., describe the physical facilities, users, services, staffing, collections, publications, etc. This paper is to be submitted electronically to be shared with the class.

   Each member of the class will do one visit. There is to be no overlap of sites among members of the class; this is a "first come, first served" process, so please email Ellen Detlefsen with your choice, and a running list of choices will be posted! You may choose your site from a wide array of settings—public libraries, medical libraries, academic libraries whose students are in geriatric service majors, social service agencies, individual information brokers, etc. Feel free to choose a site or individual near where you live or work, but please do not choose any site where you now work or are an intern, or have worked, interned, or site-visited in the past. The site visit reports will be shared electronically and discussed in Session 13.

7. Collections development project: due by December 6th

   You will be assigned a particular type of site or center serving a senior population, and you will be given a hypothetical budget. Please plan a "day one" or "opening day" collection of materials to stock the site. Each classmate will have a different site. Class members will present their model collections electronically in session 14.

A note on Citations: Please choose and use a standard citation style and style manual whenever you cite the work of another person.

A good choice for those interested in medicine or gerontology is the *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals*, which may be found at http://www.annals.org/cgi/content/full/126/1/36 . Additional information can be found in the NLM publication entitled *Citing Medicine: the NLM Style Guide for Authors, Editors, and Publishers (2nd ed.).*
http://web.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/bv.fcgi?call=bv.View..ShowTOC&rid=citmed.T

OC&depth=2   You may also want to look at this resource from the Medical Library Association: http://www.mlanet.org/publications/style/index.html

Those with an interest in academic libraries or academic centers may want to look at the APA style requirements: http://www.apastyle.org/
http://www.apastyle.org/spelling.html
http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html

Those who are more interested in public libraries and community agencies may find to use the classic *Chicago Manual of Style*:
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html

A Note on Grading: My grading practices are grounded in the pragmatic notion that, in a professional school, the instruction should be provided in a manner that prepares students to enter the profession with enthusiasm for the field and a realistic skill set for their first professional position. In real terms, this means that I grade student work with a professional metric that emphases meeting expectations rather than achieving a certain numerical score or letter grade:

++ = extra credit *(extra-ordinary work)*
$\sqrt{+}$ = Excellent *(outstanding insight into subject matter; exceptional clarity of presentation)*
 $\sqrt{}$ = Good *(fulfills all course requirements; competent treatment of subject matter; clear presentation*)
$\sqrt{-}$ = Fair *(partial understanding of subject matter; presentation does not conform to instructions or is hard to follow)*
$\sqrt{--}$ = Poor *(poor understanding of subject matter; confusing presentation; assigned work is partly incomplete)*
Ø = Fail *(lack of basic understanding of subject matter; assigned work is not turned in)*

A note on Plagiarism: Plagiarism will not be tolerated. For an explanation of what constitutes plagiarism, see the University of Pittsburgh policy and procedures statements at http://www.pitt.edu/HOME/PP/policies/02/02-03-03.html . The result of plagiarism on any assignment will be a $\sqrt{--}$ or "poor" grade for at least that assignment. If the plagiarism is found to be a repeated offense, the grade for the course will be an "F."

A note on Deadlines and Late Assignments: Assignments must be submitted by noon (Eastern Time Zone) on the day they are due. Assignments that are submitted after the due date will be noted as late and will not be eligible for a check-plus, unless the instructor determines that extenuating circumstances apply. If extenuating circumstances interfere with your ability to submit an assignment on time (e.g. serious illness, bereavement, accident, an "Act of God"), it is your responsibility to contact the instructor as soon as possible. You may need to submit corroborating documentation if you are claiming extenuating circumstances.

A note on Special Needs: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.
If you need to miss a class for a religious observance, please notify the instructor in advance and make arrangements for the material that you may miss.

A note on Language Courtesy and Inclusive Language: Gender-inclusive language is required in all course work. The use of respectful language in any situation is not a matter of political correctness, but one of simple courtesy.

A note on Nondiscrimination: As a professor at the University of Pittsburgh, I value equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic/cultural diversity. Be assured that I will promote a safe and conducive environment for learning. In accordance with University policy, I will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, disability, or status as a veteran. In addition to the University's policy, and within the bounds of the course, I do not discriminate on the basis of political creed. This means that you do not have to agree with me in order to do well in this course. So long as you demonstrate an understanding of the course material, you are under no obligation to agree with it. I also make every effort to avoid discrimination on the basis of class or income. If there is something I can do to make the class more hospitable, please let me know. *[adapted from Prof. Connie Oxford's WS 0500 Intro to Feminist Studies syllabus]*