

**SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES**  
University of Alberta

**LIS 525**  
REFERENCE SERVICE THEORY AND FIELD EXPERIENCE  
Winter 1998

**Instructor**

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**Office Hours**

Room 3-15.

Tuesdays, 12:00-1:00; Wednesdays, 11:00-12:00; or by appointment.

**Calendar Description**

Comprehensive examination of the reference interview, measurement and evaluation techniques for reference service, and related administrative concerns. Extensive field experience.

**Objectives**

Upon completion of the course, a student should be able to:

- Articulate various theories and philosophies of reference service and the methods used to deliver service, including bibliographic instruction.
- Describe theories and principles of the reference interview, with an emphasis on interpersonal and communication skills, and question negotiation techniques.
- Demonstrate an understanding of reference interview techniques, by applying them in a field experience.
- Compare various methods for measuring and evaluating reference service and its components.
- Formulate administrative principles and issues associated with the provision of reference service.

**Content**

This course is designed to help students develop an understanding of the theory and practice of reference interviewing and reference service, in various organizational settings. In the first weeks of the course, reference theory and interviewing are explored in regular classes. The middle weeks are devoted to the field experience and include biweekly progress meetings. In the remaining weeks, a variety of reference service issues are examined in regular classes.

*Students are advised that the School is unable to guarantee field placement for all students, and that normally placement is not permitted with a library where a student is or has been employed in a reference capacity.*

**Methods**

Lectures, readings, class discussion, role-playing, and field experience.

**Course Relationships**

LIS 501 through LIS 506, plus two electives, are prerequisites.

**Assignments**

1. Class report on reference interview articles	10%
2. Reference interview role-playing	10%
3. Field experience	
a. learning plan and student profile	ungraded
b. daily journal	15%
c. participation in progress meetings	15%
d. assessment of field experience	20%
4. BI Presentation	30%

The specifics of each assignment are distributed in class on individual assignment sheets, as well as discussed in class.

**Inclusive Language and Equity**

The Faculty of Education is committed to providing an environment of equality and respect for all people within the university community. Accordingly, staff and students should adhere to the principles of inclusive language so that students' experiences and views are treated with equal respect and value in reaction to their gender, racial background, sexual orientation, and ethnic background.

**TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE  
WINTER 1998**

Jan 07	Course introduction Reference service theory Discussion of first assignment
Jan 14	No class
Jan 21	Reference interview and communication skills Class reports on reference interview articles
Jan 28	Preparation for field experience (January 26 to March 9)
Feb 4	Information literacy & user education Measurement & evaluation techniques
Feb 11	Progress meeting 1 - library goals and objectives - reference philosophy and policies - annual report
Feb 18	No class (Reading Week)
Feb 25	Progress meeting 2 - organizational structure - physical layout, signage - job descriptions
Mar 4	No class
Mar 11	Progress meeting 3 - staff evaluation policy, forms - staff training policy, continuing education policy - reference service evaluation policy and procedures
Mar 18	5 BI Presentations
Mar 25	5 BI Presentations
Apr 01	Future Trends
<b>Deadlines</b>	
Dec 01	Request for Field Placement
Jan 14	Learning plan and student profile for host agency
Jan 14	Deadline for first contact with host
Jan 21	Class reports on reference interview articles
Jan 21	Deadline for first meeting with host
Jan 26	Field Experience begins
Feb 04	Report on role-playing (video equipment available in Rm. 3-17, Jan 21-Feb 4)
Mar 09	Field Experience ends
Mar 18	First round of BI presentations
Mar 25	Second round of BI presentations
Mar 25	Assessment of Field Experience & Journal