

**Course Number:** LIS 7140

**Title:** Advanced Reference Service Strategies

**Credits:** 3

**Prerequisite(s):** LIS 6010, LIS 6080, LIS 6120

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**Rationale for Inclusion in Curriculum:**

In any library setting, reference work is a complex activity that requires considerable knowledge and skills. This advanced course will focus on three key issues that are introduced in the basic reference course, including information needs and seeking behaviors, reference interview techniques, and bibliographic instruction (BI)/information literacy (IL).

**Competencies Expected:**

By the end of the course, students will be expected to:

1. Identify major theories concerning information seeking in context.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of people's information needs and seeking behaviors.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of reference interview techniques and skills used during in-person and virtual reference encounters.
4. Through role playing, demonstrate a proficiency in both on-site and virtual interviewing.
5. Identify the major components of adult learning.
6. Identify the appropriate bibliographic instruction/information literacy method for different clients.

**Content:**

In this course, the students will read and discuss literature on information needs and seeking behaviors of clients in various types of libraries and in the community. They will choose one specific type of library and design outreach programs for its clients and/or community. The students will focus on reference interviewing techniques, regardless of the type of reference (telephone, face-to-face, or virtual). They will be introduced to Dervin's sense-making model and Kuhlthau's information seeking theory. Students will get experience role-playing the reference interview using sense-making questions.

**Course Methodology:**

In today's information environment, librarians can no longer expect people to come to them. They need to understand what their clients or community need and determine the best way to reach out to them. In this course, students will be introduced to literature on human information behavior, including academics and people who use public libraries. Students will also learn to think about the community, whether it is an academic or public one, and how to reach out to the various members. The students will also learn about sense-making interview skills because reference service is key to satisfying clients' information needs.

**Bases for Evaluation of Student Performance:**

Students will write a paper on outreach programs they develop for a specific group of library clientele or their community, based on the literature regarding that group's information needs and seeking behavior. They will be evaluated on reference interviewing skills through role-playing. They will visit a library of their choice to assess the reference interview techniques used by the library staff and will write a paper on their experience that is based on the textbook used in the class. Points will be given for class discussion and active participation.

**Text:**

Radford, M. L. (2009). *Conducting the Reference Interview: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarian*,. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. New York, NY: Neal-Schuman Publishers.

**Approved in Principle: 9/09**