

School of Communication & Information

Department of Library & Information Science

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

4 Huntington Street New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1071

**SYLLABUS**

**Reference Sources and Services**

**17:610:540:01**

**Spring 2020**

**Thursday 3:10pm – 5:50pm**

**Revised Spring 2020**

**Professor**: **Diana Floegel**, MLIS, Dept. of Library & Info Science

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**Class Site:** Canvas: <https://rutgers.instructure.com/courses/30163>

**Location**: SC&I 304

**Office Hours:** By appointment

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# Description:

This course focuses on the full range of information resources studied and used in applied contexts, placing emphasis on access to information through reference tools and the use of information by individuals acting within information spaces and structures. Important considerations are an analysis of strategies for searching and evaluating various information resources and comparisons among different types of resources. Emphases will be placed on research tools, communication, information services, policy development, evaluation, and social justice related to libraries and reference work.

**Pre-Requisites:** None

# Learning Objectives:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the development of reference service and the basic concepts.
2. Use reference service guidelines and policies as appropriate.
3. Articulate and model the critical functions of the reference interaction, the interpersonal dimensions, and questioning strategies.
4. Analyze the impact of information technologies on reference services (networking, online sources, the Internet and social software, Web 2.0).
5. Discuss criteria to be used in evaluating reference sources and collections.
6. Identify selection principles and evaluation tools involved in building a reference collection.
7. Identify principles involved in providing reference sources for particular users in specific settings.
8. Use a simple search strategy in providing reference assistance using a variety of formats.
9. Use various reference sources to find answers to reference questions.
10. Understand how reference work contributes to holistic library services in a variety of information institutions.
11. Articulate and discuss structural inequities in libraries as they relate to reference services.

# Organization of the Course:

This course consists of lectures, discussions, exercises and class activities. Students are expected to do all assigned readings, to examine reference materials as assigned, to come to class prepared to discuss readings, assignments, and to actively participate. Active participation includes, but is not limited to the following:

being informed by assigned readings and demonstrating this by contributing to class discussions, asking relevant questions or challenging points raised in class and suggesting new ways of looking at things.

# Assignments and Criteria of Assessment:

Participation and Attendance 10%

Resource Assignment 25%

Interpersonal Communication Paper 25%

Reference Consultation 25%

Reference 2.0? 15%

Total 100%

# Required Textbooks:

Cassell, K.A. & Hiremath, U. (2018). *Reference and Information Services: An Introduction.* 4th ed. New York: ALA/Neal-Schuman.Please consult with the professor about using an earlier edition. C&H is available at the RU Bookstore and purchase from an online source.

Ross, C.S. Nilsen, K. & Radford, M.L. (2019). Conducting *the Reference Interview.* 3rd ed. New York: Neal-Schuman. Please consult with the professor about using an earlier edition. This book is required and is available at the RU bookstore and online.

Additional Readings: are listed in the course schedule or will be assigned in class. These will be found on Canvas. Copies of textbooks are on reserve at Alexander Library.

# Assignments:

## Resource Assignment (25%)

This assignment will help us think about who *creates* and *structures* some of the most common information resources used in reference work in a variety of types of libraries. Please select one database that is relevant to your interests and/or the type of institution you work in or plan to work in. Collect the following information about the database and its contents:

* The *organization* that funds the database
  + Who holds positions of power (e.g., CEO, manager) in that organization and, if the information is available, in the actual database?
* The *types of materials* indexed by that database
  + E.g., Types and examples of the journals, newspapers, magazines, images, sound files, etc. available in the database; this does not need to be exhaustive, but it should give a general overview
* Look into *three contents* (e.g., three specific journals, three newspapers, or a combination of different types of content) indexed by the database, and determine who maintains control of those resources (e.g., editors, editorial boards, producers, CEOs)
* The *structure* and *features* of the actual database, which may include its subscription cost, its searching capabilities, its language(s), etc.

Create a report that lists this information (you may write in bullets or paragraph form, and you may include images such as screenshots if desired). Then, write a short (1-2 page) critical reflection of your database and its contents. This reflection should include:

* Whose perspectives are represented and whose are neglected in terms of who creates/controls the database?
* Whose perspectives are represented and whose are neglected in terms of the databases’ contents AND who creates/controls that content?
* Who may be able to access the database?
* Who may be able to use the database given its features?

**DUE:** 2/27/20 on Canvas

## Reference Consultation (25%)

For this assignment, you will search for and evaluate sources that address an information need from one of your classmates. This is meant to provide you with some experience from the *librarian perspective* of the reference encounter. You will write a brief (5-6 page) report describing:

1. Your **initial interaction, or “reference interview,”** with your classmate. This may include a critical reflection on how you communicated and what you may do differently in future interactions.
2. Your **search process** (e.g., what resources did you use, what search terms did you use, and what were the results?). You MUST use at **least two scholarly databases** (e.g., available through Rutgers libraries) and **two non-scholarly sources** (e.g., news, community-created resources, popular sources, fiction) to find materials. This should be an honest account of your experiences, including any trouble you faced and any revisions you had to make to your strategy.
3. Attach a list of **five scholarly sources** and **three non-scholarly** sources that address your partner’s information need. Please create an annotated bibliography; your annotations should explain *why* you selected each article.

Note that you are not creating a report *about* your classmate’s topic; rather, you are engaging in a search process to find resources that they may then use to create their own report, essay, etc. You will have time in class to conduct a reference interview with your partner. Please share a copy of your final bibliography with your partner; you may do so in whatever format you both prefer.

**DUE:** 3/5/20 on Canvas

## Interpersonal Communication in the Reference Encounter (25%)

The purpose of this assignment is to provide you with some experience with reference interactions from the *user perspective* of the reference encounter. In this assignment, you will formulate a reference question that is based upon a genuine area of interest that you want to know more about related to a personal interest or a work assignment. You will then choose four (4) different libraries that have a reference department or librarian-staffed virtual reference service, and you will ask the same question 4 times (one time at each library) as a “surrogate user” in four different ways: in person, by phone, by email and by live chat. An analysis of the interactions will result in a 5-7-page double-spaced paper. The paper should proceed as follows:

1. Divide the paper into subheadings (e.g., Interaction 1: Face-to-Face) and provide an analysis for each interaction, including:
   1. What, if anything, was successful about this encounter?
   2. What, if anything, was unsuccessful about this encounter?
   3. Was the format efficient (e.g., did you receive an accurate or satisfactory answer in a reasonable time frame)?
   4. How would you evaluate the quality of the interpersonal interaction? How did the librarian make you feel?
   5. Were you satisfied with each service, and would you use it again?
   6. What, if any, recommendations would you make to improve each reference service?
2. Within your subheadings or in a separate section, be sure to provide some comparisons between:
   1. The various formats and what they afforded or constrained.
   2. The various librarians and how your interactions with them differed. What do you think contributed to these differences?
      1. **Please note that you should not identify the library you used or the librarian you interacted with.** Doing so would be a privacy violation.
3. The final part of your analysis should be a personal reflection on which format you most liked and why and which you would choose for your next reference question and why. **It is required that you cite assigned readings that connect to your experience** **throughout the paper**. However, please feel free to bring in other relevant literature as you see it. Provide a list of cited references in APA style.

**DUE:** 4/16/20 on Canvas

## Reference 2.0? (15%)

This final assignment considers *whether* libraries should adopt certain digital technologies to supplement reference services. With or without a partner (your choice), you will select a technology and prepare a PowerPoint presentation (~10 minutes) that addresses potential benefits and consequences of ways in which libraries may use your technology. Note that benefits and consequences do not necessarily form a binary, but instead often overlap given contextual factors. You will have time to discuss with your partner in class, and you’ll present during our last class meeting.

**DUE:** 4/30/20 (present in class, PowerPoint on Canvas)

# Class Policies:

## Class Assignments:

All assignments are to be uploaded to Canvas by the beginning of class (Thursdays, 3:10pm) on the day they’re due. Please use .doc, .docx, .ppt, or .pptx file extensions; no PDFs (otherwise, I can’t sufficiently comment on your hard work!).

## Due dates:

I am flexible with due dates. If you need to turn in an assignment late, please let me know via email, in my office, or before or after class. You do not need to tell me why, just let me know when it will be reasonable for you to turn it in.

## Logging into RU Restricted Materials from Home:

Some assigned materials to examine or search may be RU restricted. For example: *Choice Reviews, Booklist, Library Journal,* and *ARBA online* are all considered **online journals.**

To access them:  
1. Start from the Rutgers University Libraries (RUL) homepage at [www.libraries.rutgers.edu](http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu)  
2. Click on the "Journals" tab and enter the name (e.g., Choice)  
3. Click on the title of the journal, which will bring you to the record page. Sometimes there are multiple entries for the name so you may have to click around a bit. It is also recommended that you look for the entry that has the "Rutgers Digital Library - ONLINE" listed underneath the title as it is probably the most recent edition. You can also limit the results to only online ones using the filters to the left ("RU-ONLINE" is under "Library").  
4. To access online materials, click on the blue link under "Online Access" on the record page. Sometimes there are multiple links. This should bring you to the resource. You may have to login/signon with your NetID and password.

## Attendance Policy:

Attendance at all class meetings is required unless excused. A student who must be absent from a class meeting still has certain responsibilities:

* To inform the professor in advance, or if advance notice is not possible, as soon after the absence as possible (by email).
* To obtain notes, handouts, etc. from a classmate.
* To understand that participation points may be deducted for unexcused absences, coming late to class, or leaving class early.

Guidelines for All Written Work:

Papers will be prepared in APA (*American Psychological Association*) Style (6th edition). Although APA requires an abstract, for this course, no abstracts are required. Title pages are also not required. A heading with your name, the date, and the course section will be fine. Check out Purdue Owl for all of your APA needs: <https://bit.ly/2uyze7X>

* Assignments are to be typed in 12-point type, double spaced with 1” margins on all sides of the paper, with pages numbered.
* Underline or put all *titles of books or databases in italics*.
* Submit assignments to Canvas on the day it is due by class time, 3:10pm.
* Late papers will be marked down unless the student has obtained prior permission for an extension from the professor.

## Expectations between the students and instructor:

Together, we’ll complete a “participation contract” so we understand what we would all like to achieve throughout the course. Always, everyone must be mindful of *respecting themselves, their classmates, and their instructor*.

## Respect:

**Students are expected to treat others in the classroom with respect and dignity.**It is my intent to serve students from diverse backgrounds and experiences including addressing your learning needs in and outside of class. Such diversity includes gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. The diversity students bring to the classroom should be viewed as an asset to our engagement with the course materials. If there are any ways that I can improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other student groups, please let me know.

## Academic Integrity:

The consequences of scholastic dishonesty are serious and can result in dismissal from the MI program. Be extremely careful and properly cite from the sources you directly quote or paraphrase. Please read the Rutgers’ academic integrity policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

When in doubt, cite your source, including any images you may use.

## Cell Phone Policy:

Cell phones are to be set to vibrate or turned off during class unless you are using your phone to take notes. If you are using your phone to take notes, please inform instructor.

## Laptop Policy:

Students are encouraged to bring laptops/tablets to class to take notes, refer to electronically stored readings, etc. We will complete in-class activities that require laptops. The instructor will notify students in advance of these activities and will make accommodations for any students who do not have access to a laptop. Browsing the web, social media, gaming, YouTube, etc. are distracting to other students and the professor and, as such, are prohibited.

## Student Agreement:

Attendance at this class signifies that the student has agreed to abide by and adhere to the policies and regulations specified above. It is understood that the instructor may adapt or change this syllabus and the assignments contained within it according to circumstances that may arise during the course of the class.

# Students with Disabilities:

Students with documented disabilities should present their Letters of Accommodation at the beginning of the semester. Others who do not have documented disabilities but believe they need accommodations should speak with the instructor and/or Assistant Dean Kevin Ewell.

Students with documented disabilities who need accommodations in this class should arrange these through the [Rutgers Disabilities Services Office](http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/) (<http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>). You can also speak with a SC&I adviser about your disability by visiting the Office of Student Services in the SC&I Building, Room 214 or calling them at 848-932-7500 (dial 2 as your menu choice).

# Student-Wellness Services:

*What this is:* The Rutgers University Student Assembly (RUSA) has assembled the following information on student mental health and wellness services at Rutgers and asked that it be included on all course syllabi.

[Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services](http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/) **(CAPS)** (<http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/>)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students’ efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

[Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance](http://vpva.rutgers.edu/) **(VPVA)** (<http://vpva.rutgers.edu>)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

[Disability Services](https://ods.rutgers.edu/) **(ODS)** (<https://ods.rutgers.edu>)

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854

The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources.

[Scarlet Listeners](https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/scarletlisteners)(<https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/scarletlisteners>)

(732) 247-5555

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

[“Just In Case” Web App](http://health.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/57/2015/01/concerned.html)(<http://health.rutgers.edu/wpcontent/uploads/sites/57/2015/01/concerned.html>)

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

# Rutgers University Libraries and Information Literacy Instruction:

<http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/>

**School of Communication and Information:** [comminfo.rutgers.edu](http://www.comminfo.rutgers.edu)

# SYLLABUS

(Subject to Adjustments)

**Course Outline, Required Readings and Assignment Calendar. Readings and assignments listed next to each day should be completed *by that day* (e.g., read Brook et al. by 1/23/20).**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week | Topic | Readings and Assignments |
| Week 1 1/23/20 | Introduction | **Readings:**  Brook, Ellenwood, & Lazarro (2015): In pursuit of antiracist social justice: Denaturalizing whiteness in the academic library (Canvas)  Sweeney (2012): How to read for grad school (Canvas) |
| Week 2 1/30/20 | RU Libraries Introduction  Virtual Reference | **Guest Speaker: Laura Costello, Virtual Reference Services Librarian**  **Readings:**  Shachaf & Horowitz (2006): Are virtual reference services color blind? (Canvas)  Shachaf, Oltmann, & Horowitz (2008): Service equity in virtual reference (Canvas)  **Textbooks:**  Ross, Nilsen, & Radford: Ch. 4 & 6 |
| Week 3 2/6/20 | Bibliographies/  Bibliographic Networks  Selection & Evaluation | **Readings (Choose one):**  Mehra & Elder (2018): Benefits to collection development librarians from collaborating with “community-embedded” librarians-in-training (Canvas)  Sandy et al. (2017): Intersectionality in LGBT fiction (Canvas)  **Textbooks:**  Cassell & Hiremath, Ch. 1, 4, 18 |
| Week 4 2/13/20 | Ready Reference, Dictionaries, Encyclopedias | **Readings (Choose one):**  Carr (2011): Questioning Wikipedia (pp. 191-201) (Canvas)  Gruwell (2015): Wikipedia’s politics of exclusion: Gender, epistemology, and feminist rhetorical (in)action (Canvas)  **Textbooks:**  C&H: Ch. 5, 6, 7  **\*\*Bring laptops to class for Ready Reference Activity** |
| Week 5 2/20/20 | Reference Interactions | **Readings (Choose one):**  Sweeney & Cooke (2018): ‘You’re so sensitive!’ How LIS professionals define and discuss microaggressions online (Canvas)  Gibson & Kaplan (2017): Place, community, and information behavior: Spatially oriented information seeking zones and information source preferences (Canvas)  Kumbier & Starkey (2016): Access is not problem solving: Disability justice and libraries (Canvas)  **Textbooks:**  C&H: Ch. 2  RNR: Ch. 1, 2, 3 |
| Week 6 2/27/20 | Classification  Indexes and Full-Text Databases | **Readings (Choose one):**  Adler (2016): The case for taxonomic reparations (Canvas)  Drabinski (2013): Queering the catalog (Canvas)  Olson (2009): The power to name: Representation in library catalogs (Canvas)  **Textbooks:**  C&H: Ch. 3, 8  **Assignments:**  **DUE!** [**Resource Assignment**](#_Resource_Assignment_(25%)) **uploaded to Canvas.**  Come to class with your topic for your Reference Consultation. We’ll partner-up and you’ll conduct your “reference interviews” today.  **\*\*Bring laptops to class for Index/Database activity** |
| Week 7 3/5/20 | Readers’ Advisory | **Guest Speaker: Dr. Emil Lawrence, Asst. Professor @ SC&I**  **Readings:**  Kingston (2018): History’s been hijacked: The perpetuation of white supremacist ideology in history-based fiction  Lawrence (Unpublished—DO NOT SHARE): Oppressive tastes in the public library: An Eatonian intervention  McGrath (2019): Comping white  **Assignments:**  **DUE!** [**Reference Consultation**](#_Reference_Consultation_(25%)) **uploaded to Canvas.** |
| Week 8 3/12/20 | Management & Assessment | **Readings (Choose one):**  Alabi (2015): Racial microaggressions in academic libraries: Results of a survey of minority and non-minority librarians (Canvas)  Cooke (2017): Managing diversity (Canvas)  Tewell (2019): Reframing reference for marginalized students: A participatory visual study (Canvas)  **Textbooks:**  C&H: Ch. 20, 21  RNR: Ch. 8 |
| Week 9 3/19/20 | SPRING BREAK! | **Relax** |
| Week 10 3/26/20 | **NO CLASS, DIANA AT iCONFERENCE** | **Keep relaxing** |
| Week 11 4/2/20 | Geographical, Biographical, Health, Law, & Business Resources | **Readings:**  Noble (2011): Geographic information systems: A critical look at the commercialization of public information  **Textbooks:**  C&H: 9, 10, 11  RNR: 5, section 5.9 |
| Week 12 4/9/20 | Government Information | **Guest Speaker: Dr. Kay Cassell**  **Readings:**  Jaeger & Bertot (2010): Transparency and technological change: Ensuring equal and sustained public access to government information  **Textbooks:**  C&H: Ch. 12 |
| Week 13 4/16/20 | Using the Web for Reference  Information Literacy | **Readings (Choose one):**  Noble (2018): *Algorithms of oppression* (Excerpt on Canvas)  Spiel, Keyes, & Barlas (2019): Patching gender: Non-binary utopias in HCI (Canvas)  Hardy (2019): Queer information literacies: Social and technological circulation in the rural Midwestern United States (Canvas)  Martin & Steinkuehler (2010): Collective information literacy in massively multiplayer online games (Canvas)  **Textbooks:**  C&H: Ch. 13, 16  **Assignments:**  In class, you’ll meet with a partner to discuss your Reference 2.0? topic and presentation.  **DUE:** [**Interpersonal Communication Paper**](#_Interpersonal_Communication_in) **uploaded to Canvas** |
| Week 14 4/23/20 | Librarians and Libraries in the Media  Youth Services | **Guest Speaker: Michelle Biwer, MLIS, Branch Manager and Teen Services Librarian**  **Readings:**  Kurz (2012): Missing faces, beautiful places: The lack of diversity in South Carolina picture book award nominees (Canvas)  Schlesselman-Tarango (2016): The legacy of lady bountiful: White women in the library (Canvas)  Stauffer (2016): This work calls for men: The social construction of professionalism and professional education for librarianship (Canvas)  **Assignment (toward participation grade)**:  Come to class prepared to discuss an example of fictional media content (e.g., fictional books, television, movies) where libraries, librarians, or other information professionals play a prominent role. Content should be from 1990 or later. |
| Week 15 4/30/20 | Moving forward | **Readings:**  Cooke (2017): Becoming new storytellers: Counter-storytelling in LIS (Canvas)  Cooke (2018): Leading with love and hospitality: Applying a radical pedagogy to LIS (Canvas)  Ettarh (2014): Making a new table: Intersectional librarianship (Canvas)  **Textbooks (skim):**  C&H, Ch. 19, 23  **Assignment:**  **DUE:** [**Reference 2.0? Presentations**](#_Reference_2.0?_(15%)) (present in class, upload PowerPoint to Canvas) |

**Have a great summer!**