

Syllabus
INF 382D: Introduction to Information Resources and Services
Spring 2011

Class: Monday, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM, UTA 1.502

Instructor: Bonnie Brzozowski (bonniesue.net, my personal website)

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:

Discusses major reference resources and techniques useful for providing information services in libraries and other information agencies. Includes: examination, evaluation, and use of reference materials; community information sources; introduction to online searching; reference interviews and search strategies; library instruction for end users; and communication processes. (Graduate standing)

Course Objectives:

1. You will gain the ability to use major types of reference sources effectively and become familiar with a wide variety of sources.
2. You will learn and demonstrate efficient search strategies.
3. You will learn to select the most appropriate sources to fill reference and information needs of typical library users.
4. You will understand proper and effective communication necessary for every reference interaction including how to deal with a diverse set of users with diverse needs.
5. You will learn how to ask questions and figure out how to get to the bottom of reference questions users may present to you in a reference interaction.
6. You will be able to efficiently and effectively evaluate reference sources for quality and usefulness.
7. You will be able to evaluate reference services and understand different models of reference service.
8. You will reflect on your experiences answering user questions and improve on your own service.
9. You will understand the importance of collaboration with your fellow students and colleagues.
10. You will be prepared for the rapid technological change affecting reference services and sources and be aware of innovations in the way reference services are provided.

Textbook and Readings

Two texts are required for this course:

Cassell, Kay Ann and Uma Hiremath, editors. *Reference and Information Services in the 21st Century: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-55570-672-2

Ross, Catherine Sheldrick, Kristi Nilsen, and Marie L. Radford. *Conducting the Reference Interview*. 2nd ed. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-55570-65505

Additional Texts (not required)

Bopp, Richard and Linda Smith, eds. *Reference and Information Services: An Introduction*. 3rd ed. Englewood, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 2001. ISBN: 1-56308-624-7. PCL: Z 711 R443 2001

Katz, William A. *Introduction to Reference Work: Basic Information Services, Volume I*. 8th ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2002. ISBN: 0-07-244107-0. PCL: Z 711 K32 2002

Katz, William A. *Introduction to Reference Work: Reference Services and Reference Processes, Volume II*. 8th ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2002. ISBN: 0-07-244143-7. PCL: Z 711 K32 2002

Additional Readings

****Click here**** (*Coming Soon!*) for a bibliography of additional readings that may be of interest

These journals may be browsed regularly to familiarize yourself with new reference sources and better understand trends and issues in the provision of reference services:

- [Booklist](#) – Reference Books Bulletin
- [Library Journal](#) – LJ regularly reviews reference sources and releases a yearly Reference Supplement w/ reviews, articles, and top sources of the year.
- [Reference & User Services Quarterly](#)
- [The Reference Librarian](#)
- [Reference Services Review](#)

Additional readings may be assigned as needed.

Blackboard

Blackboard will be used extensively in this course. All course materials will be made available through Blackboard. Any student that has trouble accessing this site should notify me immediately as important announcements and class discussions will be occurring there. Participation in Blackboard discussions will make up part of your Class Participation grade (see below).

Academic Dishonesty

The University of Texas' policy on academic dishonesty prohibits a number of behaviors including, but not limited to: "cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two classes without the prior permission of the instructor), or the attempt to commit such an act" (see [this page](#) for complete details). While students are asked to work in groups on several assignments throughout the course, students should not receive or provide major creative assistance or continuous minor support from others, student or not, with their assignments.

The UT-Austin Dean of Students Office recommends that all UT-Austin faculty include the following statement in their course syllabi: "Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from The University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, fellow students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced."

Grading

Assignments and Points

Internet Public Library (ipl2) Assignment	350 Points
Reference Source Exercises	250 Points
Electronic Index Presentation and Handout	150 Points
Class Participation	100 Points
Reference Evaluation Assignment	50 Points
Total Points	900 Total Points

Grading Rubric

850-900 points = A
800-849 points = A-
770-799 points = B+
730-769 points = B
700-729 points = B-
670-699 points = C+
630-669 points = C
600-629 points = C-

Requirements and grading rubric for each assignment may be found on the detailed assignment pages included in this syllabus. All grades will be posted on Blackboard.

Policies on Submitting Assignments

- Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of the class session when they are due.
- Assignments must be completed using a word processor and a paper copy will be submitted. No electronic submissions will be accepted unless otherwise stipulated or individually arranged.
- Please include your full name, name of the assignment, date, class title, and my name at the beginning top of each assignment.
- Please do not come to me with questions about assignments within 24 hours of the due date. You should start working on assignments well in advance and think through the issues and questions that may come up for you in working on an assignment.
- No assignment submitted more than one week after the due date will be accepted. Any assignment submitted more than one week after the due date will receive a grade of 0. For every 24 hours an assignment is late, a 15% penalty on the assignment will be assessed. The overdue clock begins at the beginning of the class (9:00 AM) in which the assignment is due.
- Please use the spell check and grammar check features of your word processor. Errors in spelling and grammar will result in lost points on your assignment.
- In terms of turning in assignments late, exceptions may be made in extenuating circumstances, but you must contact me in advance (at least 24 hours ahead of the class in which the assignment is due, but, again, I will understand extreme circumstances). In such circumstances, decisions on whether or not late work will be accepted and arrangements for when the work will be turned in will be made on a case-by-case basis. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to, death in the family, extreme illness, emergency situations, etc.

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471.6259 (voice) or 471.4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

Class Participation 100 Points

Students are expected to participate each week in class discussion and the discussion forums on Blackboard as well as contribute appropriately to group work and assignments. My highest expectation for this class is that we will have engaged, thought-provoking discussions about the future and current state of information services in the 21st century. A good rule of thumb is to make a thoughtful contribution to class each week. Occasionally I may ask that students post things to the discussion forums and you will be expected to post what is asked of you by the time and date assigned. Finally, this class does require group work and you are expected to cooperate fully with your group and do your share of the assignments. *A failing class participation score (less than 50 points) will drop your final course grade down a full letter grade (A to B, B to C, C to D, or D to F).*

Class attendance is expected and part of your class participation grade. I will not take attendance each week, but I will be aware of and take note of absences. Being absent for 3 or more classes consecutively or being absent for 4 classes in total over the semester will seriously affect your grade and you may need to consider dropping the class. I understand that sometimes there are extenuating circumstances, but please get in touch with me as soon as possible, if such circumstances arise and I will make considerations depending on your situation. When you must be absent, please do let me know via email or in-person at least 24 hours in advance.

Additionally, chronic tardiness and regular departure after the break is not acceptable and will also affect your participation grade. Please try to arrive at class on time.

Grading Rubric

90-100 points

Regular on-time attendance. Participates in class discussion regularly and frequently has thoughtful things to say relevant to the discussion topic.

80-89 points

Regular on-time attendance. Participates in class discussion regularly.

70-79 points

Regular on-time attendance. Rarely participates in class discussion.

60-69 points

Does not come to class regularly or on-time. Rarely contributes or does not contribute to class discussion.

59 points and below

Frequent absences and/or chronic tardiness. Does not contribute to class discussion. Being absent for 3 or more classes consecutively or being absent for 4 classes in total over the semester will seriously affect your grade and you may need to consider dropping the class.

NOTE: This is a failing class participation score. I reserve the right to take your final grade down one letter grade (A to B, B to C, C to D, or D to F), if you have a failing class participation score.

Internet Public Library (ipl2) Assignment

350 Points

This assignment was adapted with permission from an assignment created by Dr. Lorri Mon for use in Florida State University's LIS 5603 Intro to Information Services, Spring 2008 class

Ipl2 is a directory to reputable websites as well as an ask a librarian service – a place where anyone can submit questions virtually and receive an answer from a trained professional. In this assignment, you will be one of those trained professionals and answer one practice question and four of the general public's questions for ipl2. You will become more experienced with virtual reference services after completing this assignment. Here's some more info about ipl2 from their [About page](#):

“ipl2 is a public service organization and a learning/teaching environment. To date, thousands of students and volunteer library and information science professionals have been involved in answering reference questions for our Ask an ipl2 Librarian service and in designing, building, creating and maintaining the ipl2's collections. It is through the efforts of these students and volunteers that the ipl2 continues to thrive to this day.

In January 2010, the website 'ipl2: information you can trust' was launched, merging the collections of resources from the Internet Public Library (IPL) and the Librarians' Internet Index (LII) websites. The site is hosted by [Drexel University's College of Information Science & Technology](#), and a [consortium of colleges and universities](#) with programs in information science are involved in developing and maintaining the ipl2.”

It is important that you start ALL aspects of this assignment well in advance of the due date to ensure you can meet all of the requirements by the due date. Some aspects of the assignment do involve waiting on ipl2 administrators and staff, so be prepared and plan accordingly. On that note, I will be a bit more lenient with some of these due dates on a case-by-case basis, if necessary; however, the student must demonstrate that they have attempted to complete the section of the assignment in question in a timely fashion.

Please do not panic about this assignment – many details regarding it will be discussed thoroughly during classes, class email announcements, and class activities. If you ever have a concern, do not hesitate to contact one of the ipl2 administrators or myself. Attending classes regularly, as outlined in the Class Participation assignment, will help ensure success on this assignment. Further information to help you complete this assignment will be posted to Blackboard, as necessary.

Training and Practice Question, 50 Points
February 14

To get started, you must first go through the training process and receive approval from an ipl2 Reference Administrator to begin answering questions from the public. You must have ALL of these steps completed by **February 14**:

1. Read through the ipl2 Training Manual and complete the six modules:
<http://training.ipl.org/div/backroom/refvols/students/>
2. Get familiar with ipl2's resources: <http://www.ipl.org/>
3. Take the Training Manual Quiz:
<http://training.ipl.org/div/backroom/refvols/students/qrcquiz.html>
4. After you pass and complete the quiz, an ipl2 administrator will email you your login information so that you can access the practice questions.
5. Once you have your login info, submit a response to one question from the practice categories designated for our class (INF 382D), and then submit a self-evaluative [Practice Question Form](#).
6. You will receive personalized feedback from an ipl2 Administrator on your response and you will receive permission to start answering questions from ipl2 patrons based on your performance. Your response will be assessed based on your adherence to the ipl2 standards outlined in the

training manual and modules. You cannot receive this feedback if you do not fill out the Practice Question Form outlined in Step Five.

7. Submit a paper copy of the practice question and response as well as a print out (or, just copy and paste into a word processor) of the email from the ipl2 Administrator with the feedback you received at the beginning of class **February 14**.

Answer Four ipl2 User Questions, 200 points
March 7, March 28, April 11, April 25

Now that you've completed the training and received permission to start answering questions, you are ready to get started! Over the course of the semester, you will answer four questions from real ipl2 patrons that utilize the [Ask an ipl2 Librarian service](#). Use what you have learned over the semester to construct articulate, thoughtful answers using authoritative sources. Be professional and polite in your answer. Use reputable and freely accessible (when appropriate) sources to answer the question such as sources on the ipl2 website, sources we've discussed in class, and/or the sources listed in the Cassell & Hiremath text. Use [this webpage](#) as a guide to evaluating websites to determine reputability, if you are unsure. Record each question and response in a word processor and submit a paper copy at the beginning of class on the dates outlined below:

Question 1	March 7
Question 2	March 28
Question 3	April 11
Question 4	April 25

Reflective Essay, 100 Points
May 2

Submit a reflective essay via email to Bonnie (bonniesue.brz@gmail.com) by 12:00 PM, May 2nd. The essay must be 4-5 pages long (1000-1250 words), double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri font, with 1" margins (i.e. the standard Word doc or docx). Please make sure you've done the class readings and try to make connections between your experience/impressions to those readings, any other course readings, and/or class lectures in your essay.

Please cite sources appropriately using the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition. In the essay, consider and reflect on any or all of the below questions/topics:

- How did you approach the questions you answered? Why did you choose certain sources over other sources? How did you eliminate these other sources? Was anything about the questions unclear? Did you (or could you) make any assumptions about the asker? Were there any special considerations in terms of format, terminology, etc that you took based on these assumptions? In hindsight, would you have approached any of the questions differently? Is there anything you wish you could have asked the asker before responding? You don't need to discuss every question you answered unless you want to – feel free to just pick a few you're interested in discussing.
- What did you learn from this experience? Did you improve over time? Did your approach change over time? Have you grown personally and/or professionally throughout this experience? How so? Considering you will often not get feedback on your responses when/if you become a professional reference librarian, how will you assess yourself and improve in this context? How does a reference librarian know the answers he/she provides adequately address virtual users' needs?
- What are your impressions of the virtual reference format? Limitations? Advantages? Can you make any assumptions about the users of ipl2? Why would someone utilize ipl2's virtual reference service rather than their own local library's virtual reference service? Are there other ways librarians could be meeting users with information needs online? Describe them. Are there other examples of librarians trying to meet users where they are? Describe and compare them to ipl2. What sort of marketing considerations could libraries make to make themselves more visible to users with information needs?
- Why are information professionals necessary in the Google world? Or, perhaps they're not? What makes your answer better than an answer Google might have provided the asker?
- What is your impression of ipl2 as an organization? What might be important about their work? Is their model one that might have staying power considering the future of information/reference services? Do you envision virtual reference services as part of the information/reference services future? Why or why not?
- You can also talk about any preparation you may have done for this assignment, personal struggles or difficulties, and/or attitudes toward this assignment.

- It is not necessary to address all of the questions listed above, these are just some guidelines for what you could talk about. Please note that the grading rubric for the reflective essay provided below does score you on a discussion of your approach to the questions you answered over the course of the semester. Again, you needn't discuss every question; you may pick one or more to focus on.

Grading Rubric

Practice Question – 50 points

The answer is correct and complete and utilizes appropriate resources	20 points
The answer is well-constructed, well-communicated, and professional	15 points
The answer is cited fully and is appropriately formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style, 16 th edition	5 points
All assignment instructions are followed completely and correctly and ipl2 standards are adhered to.	10 points

Questions – 50 points each (4 x 50 = 200)

The answer is correct and complete and utilizes appropriate resources	20 points
The answer is well-constructed, well-communicated, and professional	15 points
The answer is cited fully and is appropriately formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style, 16 th edition	5 points
All assignment instructions are followed completely and correctly and ipl2 standards are adhered to.	10 points

Reflective Essay – 100 points

Student is thoughtful and reflective and makes connections to course content such as readings and lectures	40 points
Student provides an insightful analysis of their approach to their questions	20 points
Ideas are communicated articulately, essay is well-structured and free of grammatical and spelling errors	20 points
Sources are cited fully and appropriately using the Chicago Manual of Style, 16 th edition	10 points
All assignment instructions are followed completely and correctly	10 points

Practice Question (50 pts) + Question 1 (50 pts) + Question 2 (50 pts) + Question 3 (50 pts) + Question 4 (50 pts) + Reflective Essay (100 pts) = 350 possible points

Electronic Index Presentation and Handout 150 points

This assignment was adapted with permission from an assignment created by Dr. Lorie Roy for use in the UT iSchool INF 382D Fall 2010 class

For this assignment you will choose an electronic index from a list provided to you and prepare a presentation and handout demonstrating the index. You will demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of your chosen index as well as advanced search strategies. The assignment will help develop your reference source evaluation skills.

1. Choose an electronic index on the first day of classes, **January 24**, and sign up for your presentation. You will work in groups of two.
2. Explore your chosen index thoroughly and prepare to demonstrate the index to your classmates. Pretend your classmates are reference librarians learning about this database for the first time. Cassell & Hiremath, Chapter 17 is a good resource for what to include in your presentation.
 - a. Evaluate the index. Find articles and/or reviews written about the index (see C&H, pgs 339-341), if any exist, and compare assessments of the resource to your own. Compare your index to any other competing or complimentary indexes both electronic and

- print. Include information regarding scope, quality and accuracy of content, currency, authority, ease of use, arrangement and structure, format, and/or cost (see C&H, pgs 341-344). Explain what type of audience the database is appropriate for (e.g. academic or public library; scholarly or general audience).
- b. Learn how to become a power searcher of your electronic index. Be ready to demonstrate advanced search strategies. Look through the index's help and support materials and/or take any of the tutorials or webinars that might be offered. Base the searches you demonstrate during your presentation on hypothetical requests for information you might get on a reference desk of a library that would likely have a subscription to your index.
3. Prepare a 2-sided (i.e. two pages on one paper) handout (**50 points**) to pass out to your classmates that summarizes your presentation. Include a list of sources used in preparing your presentation and handout at the end of the handout. Include in-text citations when directly quoting or directly summarizing a source. Here are some guidelines for what to include in your handout:
- a. Basic info: group member names, date of presentation, name of index
 - b. Evaluative info: scope (including number and types of publications covered and not covered and depth of indexing), quality and accuracy of content, currency, authority, ease of use, arrangement and structure, format, purpose and use, cost, other resources that might be available, and/or any other strengths and weaknesses
 - c. Searching info: types of searches (e.g. basic and advanced), Boolean operators, thesaurus, and/or any searching tips
- NOTE: Its expected you will cover most, if not all, of the above info during your oral presentation.*
4. Give a 15-25 minute presentation (**100 points**) with your partner to your peers on the date you selected the first day of classes. Include a PowerPoint slideshow. Be sure to divide the presentation up equally so both you and your partner give about half of the presentation each; each person should do half of the index demonstration and half of the presentation. Have a backup of your slideshow with you, just in case – you will be deducted *50 points* if you do not have a slideshow regardless of excuse. Bring enough of your handouts to pass out to each student plus Bonnie (21 total; bring a few extra just to be sure). Allow for audience questions at the end of your presentation.

Presentation Tips

Being a good presenter requires practice and confidence. Thorough preparation can help with the confidence part, but for those of us (uh, all of us?) that undoubtedly get nervous before, during, and perhaps even after a presentation, confidence is easier said than done. Despite this, you really must hone these skills as you will likely be asked to give different forms of presentation throughout your career (e.g. classes and demonstrations). And, there's no time like the present! There is a lot of good advice out there on preparing for presentations included in the resources listed below. Your presentation skills will factor into your grade on the oral presentation portion of this assignment.

[Giving Effective Presentations](#)

[Talk Good: Giving Effective Presentations](#)

Presentation Zen Design: Simple Design Principles and Techniques to Enhance Your Presentations

APL: 658.452 RE (check the catalog, [FindIt](#)); UT: HF 5718.22 R49 2010 (PCL)

Confessions of a Public Speaker by Scott Berkun

APL: 808.51 BE (Faulk Central Library); UT: PN 4129.15 B47 2010 (PCL)

Grading Rubric

Oral Presentation – 100 points

Well-prepared, thorough, and thoughtfully approached presentation	50 points
All aspects of presentation are clear and well-structured (e.g. everything follows logically; slides are clear, uncluttered, and meaningful)	25 points
Presentation delivery-speaks loudly enough, makes eye contact, does not read directly from script entire time, stands up straight and doesn't fidget, etc.	20 points
All assignment instructions are followed completely and correctly	5 points

Handout – 50 points

Well-prepared, thorough, and thoughtfully approached handout	25 points
All aspects of handout are clear and well-structured (e.g. everything follows logically; handout is clear, uncluttered, and meaningful)	15 points
All assignment instructions are followed completely and correctly	10 points

Oral Presentation (100 pts) + Handout (50 pts) = 150 total points

Reference Sources Exercises 250 Points

Throughout the semester you will receive five different Reference Sources Exercises: Dictionaries & Encyclopedias, Ready Reference, Directories & Bibliographic Sources, Biographies & Government Documents, and Statistical & Geographic Sources. You will receive the worksheet the same day that I lecture on the topic. Students may work in groups of two and will receive part of class time to complete the exercise. The idea behind these exercises is to get you looking at sources, honing your search skills, and evaluating sources for quality.

You will use the sources we discuss during lectures and sources discussed in the class readings to construct your answers. Usually, at least two questions will require you to go to PCL Reference. I will make it clear which sources are to be used to complete the worksheets and the answer to each question will be within those sources; however, you may use other library resources and/or freely available web sources to answer a question, if you have difficulty locating the answer within the sources we discuss. When you use sources other than the ones I identify to complete the worksheet, you must explain why you used an alternative source and why you chose the particular source you cite. In the case of using a freely available web source to answer a question, you must explain why the source you chose is a reputable and/or authoritative one. Use [this webpage](#) as a guide to evaluating websites to determine reputability, if you are unsure. Please do not simply Google it or look something up on Wikipedia (unless explicitly asked in the worksheet). Think about the appropriate source to consult before searching for an answer. Cite each source used to answer a question at the end of each answer using the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition.

On the day the worksheet is due, you will submit a paper copy of your answers to me at the beginning of class. In your submitted copy, you do not need to worry about discussing the process of finding the answer to each question or anything

like that. Just be sure each question is answered completely and each source used is cited at the end of each question.

Grading Rubric

Each exercise = 50 points
50 points x 5 exercises = 250 total points

I will be grading on a question-by-question basis, so there is no hard and fast grading rubric here. In general, I will be grading to see that each answer to each question is correct and complete and utilizes appropriate resources; each answer is cited fully and is appropriately formatted according to the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition; and all assignment instructions are followed completely and correctly.

These exercises should not be a huge stressor for you! I would really like for you to just get your hands dirty exploring reference sources. If any question has become difficult for you and you have spent quite a bit of time on it, please let me know and I will help (and give the class a hint considering others may be having the same trouble!). I will ask you to tell me in detail what you have done to try to find the answer to the question you are having trouble with, so please do not approach me unless you are having genuine trouble.

Reference Evaluation Assignment 50 Points

This assignment was adapted with permission from an assignment created by Dr. Jeffrey Pomerantz for use in University of North Carolina's Fall 2005 INLS 501 Information Resources and Services class.

For this assignment you will pose two different questions to information professionals, one in-person and the other virtually (via email or chat). You will evaluate these interactions using the provided worksheet (one worksheet for each interaction). The idea is to get you thinking about what makes a good reference interaction, while considering everything you've learned in class regarding the reference interview and use of reference sources as well as your experiences responding to questions for ipl2.

Part 1, 25 points

1. Come up with a reference question and pose it to someone working on a reference desk in a library such as the Faulk Central Library, PCL, or Texas State Library & Archives. As long as you can be there in-person and the organization has staff personally available to satisfy library and/or information needs, you may take your question there. If you work somewhere on a reference desk, do not pose your question at that desk.

2. Fill out the Reference Interaction Assessment Form as fully and completely as possible. Turn in two Assessment Forms, one for each type of interaction, by **April 18**. Be prepared to discuss your interaction during class.

Part 2, 25 points

1. Come up with a different reference question than the one you used for the in-person interaction and pose it to a virtual library service. Again, this could be APL, UT libraries, or anywhere you can pose a virtual question (Library of Congress, for example). Do not use the same library you used for the in-person interaction. If you work for a virtual reference service, do not pose your question there. Do not use ipl2 for this assignment.
3. Fill out the Reference Interaction Assessment Form as fully and completely as possible. Turn in two Assessment Forms, one for each type of interaction, by **April 18**. Be prepared to discuss your interaction during class.

Some tips:

- Use a reference question that you may really have. Is there anything you've recently been thinking about that you'd like more info on? A subject you've been meaning to do some research on, but just haven't quite yet?
- This is meant to be an unobtrusive assignment. *Please do not identify the professionals that you work with by their first or last names at any point on the Assessment Form, on Blackboard, or during discussion.* Simply refer to the person you interacted with as he or she or the librarian, etc. Please do indicate the institutions to whom you posed your questions.
- Do not worry about being deceptive. While I'd rather you not announce that the reason you are posing your question is for a class assignment, you should certainly feel free to let them know you are an iSchool student, etc, if that ends up being useful or necessary information for the reference interaction.
- The last question of the Reference Interaction Assessment Form asks you to describe your interactions in detail including your own subjective commentary. While general impressions and observations are of interest, use the Ross, Nilsen, & Radford text when appropriate to help guide your commentary.

Reference Interaction Assessment Form

A. Approachability

1. How did the information professional identify him/herself? Wearing a nametag or other form of identification?

2. Were there physical barriers between you and the information professional?
Y _____ N _____

3. Was the information professional engaged in other work when approached?
Y _____ N _____

4. Describe what the information professional did when you approached him/her:

5. Did you have to wait before the information professional greeted you?
How long?
Y _____ N _____ Duration of wait:

6. How did the information professional greet you or acknowledge your presence?

7. Was the information professional focused completely on your question?
Y _____ N _____

8. Please rate the information professional's approachability according to the following scale. Please explain your rating of his/her approachability:
 - a. Very satisfactory
 - b. Somewhat satisfactory

- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat unsatisfactory
- e. Unsatisfactory

Explain:

B. Assessing the Information Need:

9. What was the information professional's first reaction to your question/statement?
10. Did the information professional attempt to clarify your need by asking questions?
Y _____ N _____
11. If so, were they open or closed questions?
Open _____ Closed _____
12. Did the information professional attempt to find out what you already knew about the subject?
Y _____ N _____
13. If yes, how (please describe):
14. Did the information professional's behaviors indicate enthusiasm for the information need?
Y _____ N _____
15. What was/were the behavior(s)?
16. Did the information professional's behavior indicate boredom or disinterest in the information need?

Y _____ N _____

17. What was/were the behavior(s)?

18. Please rate the information professional's verbal clarification of your needs on the following scale:

- a. Very satisfactory
- b. Somewhat satisfactory
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat unsatisfactory
- e. Unsatisfactory

Explain:

C. Active Search Behaviors:

19. What was the information professional's first behavior in answering the information need?

20. Did the information professional explain what he/she was doing as he/she conducted the search?

Y _____ N _____

21. Did the information professional point to/toward resources?

Y _____ N _____

22. Was more than one resource offered or suggested (i.e. websites, bibliographies, encyclopedias, etc.)?

Y _____ N _____

23. Did the information professional offer any instruction on how to use any resources mentioned or suggested?

Y _____ N _____

24. Did the information professional physically accompany you to the appropriate area or source?

Y _____ N _____

25. Did the information professional just give call numbers to you?

Y _____ N _____

26. Please rate the information professional's active search behaviors on the following scale:

- a. Very satisfactory
- b. Somewhat satisfactory
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat unsatisfactory
- e. Unsatisfactory

Explain:

D. Follow-up Behaviors

27. Did the information professional check with you to see if the recommended resource(s) were relevant and/or appropriate?

Y _____ N _____

28. Did the information professional encourage you to return if the information was not pertinent or unclear?

Y _____ N _____

29. Please rate the follow up behaviors on the following scale:

- a. Very satisfactory
- b. Somewhat satisfactory
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat unsatisfactory
- e. Unsatisfactory

Explain:

E. Accuracy of the Search

30. Was the information professional able to provide satisfactory resources to answer the question?

Y _____ N _____

F. User Satisfaction:

31. Based on this reference interaction, would you be willing to return to the same individual for additional information needs?

Y _____ N _____

G. Use this space (and additional sheets, if necessary) to record the interaction, as it occurred, step-by-step. Please include commentary:

Grading Rubric

Reference Interaction – 25 points

Record of the interaction with commentary (Section G, Assessment Form) is thorough and thoughtful	13 points
Assessment Form is filled out completely and thoughtfully	7 points
All instructions are followed completely and correctly	5 points

In-person reference interaction (25 points) + Virtual reference interaction (25 points) = 50 total points