Class Meetings:

We will meet in Benilde Hall, Room 1 (Oakdale Campus) from 5:30 to 9:30 PM on the following days:

- Monday, January 23
- Monday, February 6
- Wednesday, February 22
- Monday, March 13
- Monday, March 27
- Monday, April 10
- Monday, May 1

Professor’s Information:

Name: Kevin Rioux, PhD
Phone: 718-990-1458
Email: riouxk@stjohns.edu
Office: Augustine Hall 415, Queens campus
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3:00 to 6:00 PM
Thursdays, 1:00 to 4:00 PM
Phone appointments are also available

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the principles and practices of contemporary reference services, with a particular emphasis on developing basic information retrieval skills. We will examine the scope, organization, and evaluation of widely used print and electronic information sources. We will also cover end-user needs, including models of information seeking behavior, barriers to information access, and development of information literacy skills. We will explore techniques for successful interviewing and query negotiation, and discuss the organization and management of information services in a variety of settings, including service policies, staffing, and evaluation.
Course Objectives:

DLIS Objectives Met by the Course:

- To understand the role of the library in society, including awareness of trends in the library/information profession in general, and trends that specifically affect reference service;
- To know and apply principles for identifying, evaluating, selecting, utilizing and maintaining appropriate information resources;
- To comprehend and apply principles and practices for the organization of information resources for effective retrieval;
- To develop and apply principles and practices for assessing the informational, cultural, educational, and recreational needs of diverse audiences, including special users, and the skills to provide information resources appropriate to those needs;
- To utilize new automated techniques and technologies available in the administration and provision of the aforementioned services.

Specific Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to identify and describe:

- Philosophies and organizational models of information/reference services;
- Types of resources and their use (e.g. dictionaries, indexes, etc., in print and digital form);
- Information seeking behaviors and the reference process;
- Techniques of reference interviewing;
- Methods of measuring the relevance and efficacy of reference processes;
- Methods for selection and evaluation of reference resources.

Required Texts:

ISBN: 1590280369
Available from the St. John's University Bookstore website and from Amazon.com

Students are to read and complete exercises from this text according to the course schedule.

ISBN: 0195189981
Available from the St. John's University Bookstore website and from Amazon.com

Students are to read assigned chapters from this text according to the course schedule in advance of each class session. These readings are designed to complement both the theoretical and practical components of the course, and will serve as a starting point for class discussions.
Supplemental Course Materials:

The instructor may assign additional readings from the professional and research literature over the course of the semester. These readings may be distributed in class, via email, or via a post on St. John's Central.

To facilitate class discussion, the instructor will supplement lectures with PowerPoint presentations, which will be posted on St. John’s Central by the afternoon of each class meeting. You may want to print these presentations out and bring them to class.

Internet Resources:

The following links are clickable.

St. John's Central
St. John’s University Library
The University of Texas Libraries
Citation Style Guide (St. John's University Library)

Assignments and Grades:

- Reference Question Sets: Completion of a series of five reference exercises is required. Each exercise will deal with a specific type of print and/or electronic reference source. These exercises are designed to encourage hands-on exploration of a variety of resources and to provide students with opportunities to practice the strategies necessary for effective use of sources. Question sets will be distributed via email. Instructional details will be included on each question set. Students are to turn in paper copies of these assignments in class on the due dates indicated.

- Pathfinder/Service Learning Project/Presentation: Students will prepare a pathfinder for a homework help web site. This is a cooperative project of The New York Public Library, Brooklyn Public Library, Queensborough Public Library, and the NYC Department of Education. The site is designed to aid K-12 students located homework-related information in library collections, databases, and on the Web. After the pathfinder has been completed, students will present it to the class as an HTML document. Some reflective comments on the experience of preparing the pathfinder are expected. Students are to submit a copy of this document to the instructor on the due date. Additional information about this project will be distributed in class.

- Homework/Participation: Students will complete a series of search exercises that accompany the Hartman & Ackerman text. In many instances, we will start work on these exercises in class. You may or may not finish them in class. Students are to submit
copies of this assignment to the instructor in class on the due date. Participation will be assessed according to: 1) regular attendance; 2) active participation in discussions; 3) evidence of prior thought applied to a given problem or issue; 4) integration of readings, concepts, and class discussion.
- Final Exam: A final exam will be distributed to students via email. This will be a do-it-at-home open-book essay exam. Students will complete the exam and return it to the instructors via email.

You can earn up to 100 points for each of the assignments in this course. Grades will be based on this range:

- A (95-100), 4 quality points = Superior; exceeds course requirements; demonstrates the ability to integrate concepts covered in class sessions and readings, think abstractly, logically, critically, and ethically about issues; analyze problems objectively, and (importantly) communicate in a clear and concise manner.
- A- (90-94), 3.7 quality points = Very good; exceeds course requirements, but may include presentation problems, unclear writing, or other mistakes.
- B+ (88-89), 3.3 quality points = Good; meets course requirements; demonstrates the ability to understand concepts covered in class sessions and readings, apply concepts to practical problems, and communicate clearly and concisely.
- B (85-88), 3 quality points = Good; meets course requirements, but not at the quality of higher grade levels.
- B- (80-84), 2.7 quality points = Good; meets course requirements, but not at the quality of higher grade levels.
- C+ (78-79), 2.3 quality points = Weak; acceptable on a limited basis for graduate credit.
- C (70-77), 2 quality points = Quite weak. Needs improvement.
- F (below 70) = Failure; does not meet course requirements.

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<tr>
<th>Quiz/Exam/Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reference Question Set 1</td>
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<td>Reference Question Set 2</td>
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<td>Reference Question Set 5</td>
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Homework/Participation 1 4%
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Homework/Participation 3 4%
Homework/Participation 4 4%
Homework/Participation 5 4%
Homework/Participation 6 4%
Pathfinder/Service Learning Project/Presentation 16%
Final Exam 10%

Course Schedule:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Information Sources Discussed</th>
<th>Text Chapters/Assignment Due Dates</th>
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| 1    | Monday, January 23 | • Introductions  
• Course Overview  
• Reference Service  
• Source Evaluation | • Dictionaries  
• Encyclopedias | Readings:  
• Mann: 1, 3  
• H&A: Preface, 1, 2, 11, Appendix C |
| 2    | Monday, February 6 | • Subject Headings & Search Strategies  
• Web Resources | • Library Catalogs  
• Almanacs  
• Yearbooks  
• Handbooks | Readings:  
• Mann: Preface, 2, 4, 5  
• H&A: 3, 8  
|              |                  | Due:  
• H&A homework for Unit 1  
• Question Set 1 | | |
| 3    | Wednesday, February 22 | • Electronic Resources  
• Understanding Users | • Indexes and Abstracts  
• Directories | Readings:  
• Mann: 12, 14, 15  
• H&A: 4, 5, 6  
|              |                  | Due:  
• H&A homework for Unit 2  
• Question Set 2 | | |
| 4    | Monday, March 13 | • Information Seeking  
• Geographical Sources | | Readings: |
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Monday, March 27</td>
<td>• The Reference Interview</td>
<td>• Mann: 10, 13</td>
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<td>• H&amp;A: 7, 9, 12</td>
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<td>Question Set 3</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Monday, April 10</td>
<td>• Government Resources</td>
<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>• Mann: 9, 11</td>
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<td>Question Set 4</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Monday, May 1</td>
<td>• Information Literacy &amp; Instruction</td>
<td>Readings:</td>
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<td>• Organization and Management</td>
<td>• Mann: 6, 7, 8,</td>
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<td>Appendix (Wisdom)</td>
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<td>Question Set 5</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Monday, May 8</td>
<td>• Reference Service Ethics</td>
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<td>• Reference Service Evaluation</td>
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**Course Philosophy and Expectations:**

By virtue of your successful application to a graduate program, you have demonstrated that you are a mature adult and have the intelligence and motivation to take responsibility for your
continuing education. As such, I will consider you a new member of our profession, and will encourage you to identify yourself as such. As a graduate-level instructor in a professional program, I will expect you to act as a professional and take a leading and active part in your education. This is particularly important for the compressed nature of the Oakdale course schedules, which require students to be somewhat more resourceful and independent learners. It is your responsibility to keep up with assignments, successfully deal with technology challenges, and to organize your schedule to meet course requirements as well as meet responsibilities of family and employers.

Other assumptions:
- Adults learn best through actively participating in their own education.
- People best clarify their ideas and understanding of concepts and issues through reading, thoughtful discussion, and clear writing.
- Professional preparation is a primary framework for this course.
- Each student is a college/university graduate well-prepared for advanced scholarship.

**Keeping in Touch and Keeping Up with Course:**

**Email:**
- Email is the preferred out-of-class communication method.
- I will only contact you via your St. John’s University email account.
- Get into the habit of checking your email at least once a day.

**St. John’s Central (SJ Central):**
- St. John’s Central is the online course management and portal software application used by SJU. It also serves as your SJU email client. In this course you will be required to log onto the course SJC site to post responses to questions, to keep up with course developments, and download course documents.
- To access the LIS 205 SJC site, log into St. John’s Central [https://cpprod.stjohns.edu/cp/home/displaylogin](https://cpprod.stjohns.edu/cp/home/displaylogin), then click on the “My Courses”. Then simply choose the LIS 205 link.

**Communicating with the Instructor:**

I’m happy to talk with you about any questions or ideas or feedback you may have about the course or about any general topics about our field, our program, etc.

The best way to reach me is by email (riouxk@stjohns.edu). I check my email often, and I will try to get back to you on the same day that you contact me. If I cannot answer your question in one day, I will let you know when I can get back to you with an answer.

You can contact me by phone as well, but I may not get back to you as quickly.

Feel free to come by during office hours. If you can’t make it during those times, we can certainly work out another time.
General Requirements for Written Assignments:

Fr. Donald Harrington (the President of St. John's University) has made it a objective for graduates of this university to be known as good writers. Because of this institutional objective, and because this graduate program emphasizes the professional nature of our field (in which written communication is so important) I expect your written work to be professionally produced and presented. In general, your written assignments should adhere to the following requirements:

• Writing should be clear and concise, with a quality that is on par with that of college/university graduates.
• Papers should be double-spaced.
• Unless the assignment asks for your personal opinion (in which case you may use “I”), papers should be written in the third person.
• The document should be free of punctuation, spelling and grammar errors.
• Documents should be properly indented and spaced.
• Use adequate sections headings, use tables, figures and appendices where appropriate; use bold, italics, and underlining where appropriate.
• Papers should be word-processed using a standard 12-point font size.
• Standard serified fonts should be used (e.g., Times, Times New Roman, Palatino, etc.).
• Standard margins should be used (e.g., 1.25” left, 1.25” right, 1” top, 1” bottom).
• Each page should be numbered.
• Include a bibliography of all citations on a separate sheet. You must use the American Psychological Association’s (APA) style guide (http://www.apastyle.org/) which is available in print and electronic formats (and is available at most academic libraries).
• Note that ALL submitted papers should be double-spaced.
• Include a separate cover page that includes your name, the name of the course, the assignment title, and the assignment due date.
• Simply staple your documents in the upper left hand corner. Binders, report covers, folders, etc., are not necessary. Please don’t include them.

Failure to comply with these requirements will negatively affect your grade.

Policy on Assignment Due Dates:

Late assignments will be accepted only in the most extraordinary circumstances. They may receive lower grades.

Policy on Incompletes:

Incompletes will be considered only in the most extraordinary circumstances.
**Policy on Academic Integrity:**

SJU’s Academic Integrity policy can be found here:  
[http://new.stjohns.edu/academics/provost/excellence/integrity/plagiarism.sju](http://new.stjohns.edu/academics/provost/excellence/integrity/plagiarism.sju)

This policy will prevail in any case of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty. Please make sure you understand what plagiarism is.

Any student submitting an assignment that contains plagiarized material, or other violations of SJU’s academic integrity policy will receive a failing grade for the course, and may be subject to additional academic penalties as set forth in the Student Handbook, which can be found at [http://new.stjohns.edu/campus/handbook](http://new.stjohns.edu/campus/handbook)

**ADA Requirements:**

Students needing special academic accommodations should contact the Office of Student Life. For more information go to:  
[http://new.stjohns.edu/academics/undergraduate/bulletin/university/support/disabilities.sju](http://new.stjohns.edu/academics/undergraduate/bulletin/university/support/disabilities.sju)

**Code of Conduct:**

In the classroom, I expect all students to maintain the code of student conduct outlined in the SJU Student Handbook.

In particular, I would like you to:

- Refrain from talking during instructor lectures and student presentations.
- Be respectful of each other and of guest speakers.
- Please turn off your cell phone during class time.
- Please clean up after yourself if you bring food to class.

*This syllabus is subject to minor updates and improvements.*