LAS POSITAS COLLEGE

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Course Outline for LIBR 6

RESEARCH IN SPECIAL SUBJECTS

Effective: Fall 2016

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:
LIBR 6 — RESEARCH IN SPECIAL SUBJECTS — 0.50 units

Introduction to college library research techniques in a specific subject area. Focus on campus and remote use of subject databases, emphasis on discipline specific physical and electronic resources, search strategies, evaluation of relevant resources, distinction between scholarly journals and popular magazines, discussion of plagiarism, and bibliographic citation of materials.

0.50 Units Lecture

Grading Methods:
Pass/No Pass

Discipline:

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	9.00
Total Hours:	9.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:
Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:
   A. Locate LPC Library homepage and identify subject specific resources and databases;
   B. Identify and locate subject appropriate open web resources.
   C. Contrast and compare resources and databases to determine most appropriate resources for topic;
   D. Use subject specific databases proficiently;
   E. Formulate effective research strategies for locating magazine, journal, newspaper articles, poetry and/or literary criticism on a selected topic in LPC discipline-specific databases;
   F. Distinguish between popular magazines and peer-reviewed journals;
   G. Evaluate articles using assessment techniques such as abstracts, controlled subject vocabulary, date, and relevancy rating to determine the best articles;
   H. Demonstrate the ability to cite information;
   I. Explain ethical, social, and legal issues concerning plagiarism; and
   J. Develop and modify effective search strategies to compile a bibliography on a chosen topic using a standard citation style.

V. CONTENT:
   A. Specialized Databases
      1. Introduction
         a. Subject-specific resources and databases on LPC Library homepage
         b. Identifying and locating subject specific resources on the open web.
      2. Research applications
         a. Uses, commonalities, and differences
         b. Scope and coverage
      3. Search strategy
         a. Articulate a problem, issue, or research question
         b. Identify appropriate search terms
         c. Develop and modify effective search strategies
      4. Search techniques
         a. Use Help screens to discover search options for each database, including toolbars, basic and advanced search screens, refining search options.
         b. Use limiters and expanders, Boolean operators, truncation, wildcards, and proximity searching to narrow or broaden searches.
         c. Search by publication, subject terms, cited references, and images
         d. Recognize results list features, such as persistent link to searches, print/e-mail/save options, browsing cited references, detailed citation features, and HTML and PDF full-text features.
   B. Popular Magazines and Peer-Reviewed Journals
      1. Differences between the two
      2. Limit search to scholarly or peer-reviewed journals.
   C. Evaluation Criteria

1. Determine appropriateness of publication to the topic.
2. Ascertain authority of author by looking at other articles on the topic.
3. Use of evaluation tools: abstracts, controlled subject vocabulary, date, relevancy rating.
   D. Plagiarism
1. Define plagiarism
2. Ethical, social, and legal issues
   E. Citation Style
1. MLA, APA, and other citation formats
2. Use of bibliographic citation composer
   F. Bibliography
1. Functions
2. Types (annotated, works cited, bibliography, reference list)

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:
A. **Demonstration** -
B. In-class hands-on skill work
C. **Lecture** -
D. Written assignment
E. Group work with discussion

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Discussion 1. Compare and contrast the differences and commonalities between a general database (ex. Academic Search Complete) and a subject specific database (ex. Ethnic NewsWatch) on selected topics. 2. Determine which specialized subject specific database one would use to find alternative views on a topic (ex. racial profiling). 3. Compare and contrast the differences and commonalities between two different subject specific resources on the same subject (ex. Bloom's Literary Reference Online and Literature Resource Center).

B. Demonstration 1. Formulate search strategy 2. Demonstrate retrieval of relevant articles C. Written Assignments 1. Write citations for the selected materials (encyclopedias, articles, open web sources). 2. Prepare a bibliography on the assigned topic.

VIII. EVALUATION:
A. **Methods**

1. Papers
2. Projects
3. Group Projects
4. Other:
   a. Methods
1. Skill demonstration in class: for example, find articles on specific topics using appropriate search strategies and databases.
2. Group presentation: for example, present reasoning for choosing a database for a particular topic.
3. Final project: written bibliography of articles found in a specific academic area
4. Demonstrate search strategy, discuss sources chosen for bibliography and review citation and bibliographic format for correctness.

B. **Frequency**

1. Frequency of Evaluation
   a. In-class evaluation of open web and database search strategies
   b. In-class evaluation of selected materials on an assigned topic.
   c. End of class final project: bibliography.

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:
1. Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers.* 7th ed., The Modern Language Association of America, 2009.
2. American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.* 6th ed., American Psychological Association, 2010.
3. Hacker, Diana, and Barbara Fister. *Research and Documentation in the Digital Age.* 6th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.
4. Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference.* 8th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:
A. Student I.D. card
B. GoPrint Card