“GENEALOGY INFORMATION SERVICES”
Simmons College
Graduate School of Library and Information Science
Office of Continuing Education
August 2011

COURSE SYLLABUS:

Instructor: Irene Hansen, Associate Lecturer, School of Library and Information Studies, 4262 Helen C. White Hall, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 600 North Park Street, Madison, WI 53706, Phone: (608) 354-5504.
E-Mail: ihansen@wisc.edu (preferred way to contact me).

Acknowledgement: I wish to thank Sarah Kirby of Illinois, for her invaluable advice from the perspective of a professional genealogist.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This four-week online course will prepare students to provide library and archival services to genealogists. Students will acquire a practical knowledge of genealogical users and resources, and explore related topics including reference, cataloging, collection development, digitization, outreach, and professional development.

EXPECTATIONS:
A pass/fail grade will be based on reading online material, participating in online discussions each week, and completing one short assignment.

READINGS:
There are NO required textbooks to purchase. There are links to all course readings on the course website. However, the following titles are recommended for further reading on your own:


In addition, the following titles are recommended as basic sources for your genealogical reference collection:


**ASSIGNMENT:**

**UPLOAD TO THE “ASSIGNMENT FORUM” BY WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2011, AT MIDNIGHT CENTRAL TIME.**

Using your local library or archives, create a pathfinder/guide to your library/archives’ genealogical collection; a genealogical subject (i.e. Hispanic genealogy; using census records, etc.); genealogical searching (i.e. using the
online catalog; navigating a genealogical website such as www.familysearch.org, etc.); or create a public program (i.e. a genealogical lecture; hands-on experience using a genealogical print or online source, etc). Feel free to complete an assignment that you or your local library or archives could use to help your patrons. Elaborate examples of genealogical pathfinders/guides can be found on the Allen County Public Library (Fort Wayne, Indiana) website: http://www.genealogycenter.org/Home.aspx under “Pathfinders.” Your assignment does not have to be as elaborate as these pathfinders/guides; they are simply examples; please create what you think will be helpful to your library or archives. Think of a pathfinder as a guide or handout for your patrons.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

WEEK #1:

Topics:

- Genealogical Research
- Genealogists as a User Group

Definition of “Genealogy” from Wikipedia:

**Genealogy** (from Greek: γενεά, genea, "generation"; and λόγος, logos, "knowledge") is the study of families and the tracing of their lineages and history. Genealogists use oral traditions, historical records, genetic analysis, and other records to obtain information about a family and to demonstrate kinship and pedigrees of its members. The results are often displayed in charts or written as narratives.

The pursuit of family history tends to be shaped by several motivations, including the desire to carve out a place for one’s family in the larger historical picture, a sense of responsibility to preserve the past for future generations, and a sense of self-satisfaction in accurate storytelling.

Some scholars differentiate between genealogy and family history, limiting genealogy to an account of kinship, while using "family history" to denote the provision of additional details about lives and historical context.

I. Genealogical Research: Names, Places, Dates, Context. Arranged by STATE and COUNTY; or <NAME OF> FAMILY as a SUBJECT.

   A. What is Genealogy?
   
   B. How Genealogists Undertake Research?
      1. What are Genealogists Looking For?
      2. Kinds of Genealogical Records
      3. Genealogical Research Process
      4. DNA and Genetic Genealogy
      5. Difficulties for Librarians and Archivists
      6. Helpful Hints for Librarians and Archivists
   
   C. What is Its Relationship to History, Scholarship, and the Latter-day Saints Church?
   
   D. Why is Genealogy Important to Libraries?

II. Genealogists as a User Group

   A. Who are Genealogy Users and How Do They Use This Research?
   
   B. Libraries, Archives and Manuscript Repositories
   
   C. Genealogical Organizations
      1. Genealogical and Historical Societies: National, State and Local
      2. Family Associations
      3. Hereditary Organizations
      4. Genealogy Journals and Newsletters
      5. Publishers and Book Dealers
      6. Family History Conferences and Fairs
   
   D. Why do We Know Comparatively Little about Genealogists as a User Group?
Week #1 READINGS:

Please read this week’s “NOTES,” plus ONLY 2 of the following articles marked with an asterisk (*):


Optional further readings:


**WEEK #2:**

**Topic:**
- Genealogical Reference Services

**III. Genealogical Reference Services**

- A. Entire Issues of Library Journals Devoted to Genealogy
- B. Top Reference Guides, How-To Books, and Finding Aids
- C. Children and Young Adult’s Genealogy
- D. Circulation and Interlibrary Loan
- E. Computer and Internet Genealogy
- F. Genealogy Reference Interview: Tips and Strategies
- G. Genealogy Correspondence and Research Services

**Week #2 READINGS:**

Please read this week’s “NOTES,” plus ONLY 2 of the following articles marked with an asterisk (*):


Optional further readings:


- “Church, Partners Open Online Archive.” Information Management Journal 41:4 (July/August 2007): 11.
WEEK #3:

Topics:
- Collection Development
- Cataloging a Genealogical Collection
- Digitization of Genealogical Materials

IV. Collection Development
- Genealogical Publishers
- Guides and “How To” Books
- Bibliographies, Directories and Indexes
- Genealogical Journals and Newsletters
- Internet and Computer Genealogy

V. Cataloging a Genealogical Collection (and Archival Description)
- Role it Plays in Mediating Access to Genealogical Materials
- Library and Archives Websites
- Grass-Roots Indexing Projects

VI. Digitization of Genealogical Materials
- Guest “Speaker” Michael Edmonds, Wisconsin Historical Society
- Examples of Digitization Projects

Week #3 READINGS:

Please read this week’s “NOTES,” plus ONLY 2 of the following articles marked with an asterisk (*):

☐ * Rick J. Ashton, “A Commitment to Excellence in Genealogy: How the Public Library Became the Only Tourist Attraction in Fort Wayne, Indiana.”


Optional further readings:


January 2006 by the Reference and User Services Association Board of Directors.

- **American Library Association.** *Guidelines for Preservation, Conservation, and Restoration of Local History and Local Genealogical Materials.* Genealogy and Local History Committee, History Section, Reference and Adult Services Division (now the Reference and User Services Association), American Library Association. Reviewed by the ALA Standards Committee and adopted by the Reference and Adult Services Division Board of Directors, June 1992.


- Cathy McCartney, “Letters to the Editor [Reply to Genealogy and the Economic Drain on Ireland: Unintended Consequences by Emily Heinlen; with Rejoinder].” First Monday v. 12 no. 3 (March 5, 2007).


**WEEK #4:**

**Topics:**
- Public Programming and Outreach
- Professional Development Opportunities

**VII. Public Programming and Outreach**
- A. Sharing Your Library Programs and Resources
- B. Family History Conferences and Fairs
- C. Family History Journals and Newsletters
- D. Teaching Genealogy
- E. Lock-Ins, Genealogy Nights
- F. Hooking Children and Young Adults into Genealogy
- G. Cultivating Donors of Genealogy Materials and Funds
- H. Hire a Professional

**VIII. Professional Development Opportunities**
- A. ALA, State and Local Library Associations; LSG & GENEALIB
- B. NGS, FGS, IFLA, State and Local Genealogical Associations
- C. Library School Courses and Workshops
- D. Professional Genealogists’ Organizations
- E. Other Educational Opportunities
Week #4 READINGS:

Please read this week’s “NOTES,” plus ONLY 2 of the following articles marked with an asterisk (*):

Tree.” About.com, Genealogy, 2011. 
http://genealogy.about.com/od/genealogists/qt/professional.htm


Optional further readings:


“NC State Time Machine Now Available as iPhone App.” *The Southeastern Librarian* 58:2 (Summer 2010): 7-8.


Pamela M. Rose, “Bet You Missed It.” *Against the Grain* 16:3 (June 2004): 89.


“10th Anniversary for Genealogy Fair is a Success.” *Southeastern Librarian* 56:2 (Summer 2008): 23-24.


NOTE: Presents a list of events relevant to library and information professionals from July to December 2003....Internet for Genealogy seminar of the Society of Genealogists; Seminar on the business aspects of indexing from the Society of Indexers.


REMINDER: ASSIGNMENT DUE WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2011, AT MIDNIGHT CENTRAL TIME. UPLOAD TO THE “ASSIGNMENT FORUM.”