

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE
MLIS 7422 Programming for Children and Young Teens
Syllabus—Fall Semester 2007
Three Credit Hours

Instructor:

Anita Ondrusek, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
MLIS Program
Valdosta State University
Office Phone: 229-333-5860
E-mail: alondrus@valdosta.edu

Catalog Description

An overview of the nature, philosophy, design and delivery of library programs for youngsters from birth through early teens. Includes principles of planning, implementing, promoting, and evaluating programs for this age group. Emphasis will be on creative arts including storytime and storytelling, puppetry, reading incentive programs, and other age-specific activities.

Course Outcomes

Each student will demonstrate the ability to:

- Create library programs for young audiences aligned with principles of child development, ethnic diversity, and special (physical or psychological) needs
- Conduct a community analysis to assess local needs, tastes, and resources pertinent to developing library programs for children and young teens
- Design program presentations based on a variety of creative arts techniques
- Deliver or perform program presentations in a style attractive to young audiences
- Describe a physical environment conducive to conducting or hosting programs for youngsters
- Engage with other participants or stakeholders (e.g., colleagues, parents, care-givers or child care agencies, other professionals involved with child welfare) in program planning and implementation
- Evaluate a library program for children and young teens based on audience needs and interests in consort with the goals of the library

Textbooks

There is no required textbook for this course. Here are some recommendations from the instructor.

If you are completely new to children's librarianship, you may find this book helpful:

Steele, Anita T. *Bare Bones Children's Services: Tips for Public Library Generalists*.
American Library Association, 2001. ISBN: 0838907911 (Paperback)

If you joined this class to gain experience in storytelling, this book is highly recommended:

Haven, Kendall, and MaryGay Ducey *Crash Course in Storytelling*. Libraries Unlimited, 2007.
ISBN: 1-59158-399-3 (Paperback)

There are many books listed on the Pathfinder located on the course WebCT site entitled “Programming for Children and Young Teens: Where to Find Ideas and Techniques.” You may want to spend your textbook money on one of those works.

Instructor Availability & Support

Dr. Ondrusek checks her e-mail and telephone messages at least once daily throughout normal business hours (M-F, 9-5). By institutional policy, instructors are asked to communicate with students online through VSU accounts (WebCT/Vista and BlazeNet e-mail). If you are registered for the course as a non-degree student, a BlazeNet account will be assigned to you for this semester. All discussion posts and assignment submissions for this online course must be sent via WebCT/Vista.

Attendance

This is a Web-delivered course, with no required face-to-face meetings. Several meetings will require synchronous online sessions using Live Classroom. All Live Classroom sessions will be archived (recorded) and will remain available on the WebCT course page for the duration of the course.

Course Activities Overview

Field Observations

Select two settings where children or young teens gather. **No classroom observations.** One of those settings must be a library (public or school). If you pick a school library, arrange for permission to observe with the librarian and principal in advance. Make sure that you will get to see the children interacting – not the librarian teaching a lesson. Your second observation should be in a place where you can observe less conspicuously and see more spontaneous behavior. You might consider a playground, skate park, birthday party, sports practice, shopping mall, toy store, scout meeting, family outing, etc. Spend at least one hour total in each setting. Expect to return to a setting or choose another setting if you don’t gather enough information to complete your observation notes.

Describe and illustrate the age group(s) you observed and what you noticed about their behaviors from a developmental perspective. What stages of child development were most apparent to you? If you observed two different age groups, what contrasts did you see? If you observed the same age group in two different settings, how did behaviors compare? Use the notes from the Field Observation folder on WebCT and from the reading you did to support your comments. This is **not** to be a description of the library. However, you are encouraged to relate how the physical aspects of the library where you observed appeal to youngsters at various levels of development.

Edit your notes and illustrations into a presentation of at least 10 frames, no more than 20 frames. The opening frame must display your presentation’s title and your name. Submit as an attachment to the Field Observation Discussion board.

Creative Program 1

Think of this project as “Every Child Is a Star” – a program that gives each youngster in the audience a chance to create something that can be displayed in the library, at home, or in the community (e.g., making a craft, constructing a puppet, drawing a picture, contributing to a group mosaic or collage, creating a diorama).

Select an age group. Your activity must be drawn from an idea you discovered in a resource recommended on the MLIS 7422 Pathfinder (the bibliography on the website), and it must be based on a story or theme appropriate to that audience. Base your activity on the level of dexterity, cognition, and attention span that a child in this age group can handle.

Using Powerpoint, create a slide show to demonstrate how you would introduce, sequence, and direct this activity and what materials will be used. **Include an illustration of what you want the child to create.** Have a child (or children) from your targeted age group actually do the project and take a picture of the end product. The opening frame must display your presentation’s title, target age of audience, and your name. Be prepared to present your Powerpoint to your classmates on Live Classroom. A copy must also be submitted to Dr. Ondrusek.

Creative Program 2

Think of this project as “You Are the Star” – a program that you would dramatize for your audience (e.g., telling a story in costume, drawing while you tell the story, incorporating props or puppets or a magic act into the story, etc.).

Select a foundation for your activity – either an individual story, a pending holiday, a values theme (e.g., sharing, helping others, making friends), or a literary genre (e.g. mysteries, folktales, fantasy, historical fiction, biography, animal stories, travel, etc.). Decide upon the age of the audience and gear your selection to that age group. As in Program 1, your activity must be drawn from an idea you discovered in a resource recommended on the MLIS 7422 Pathfinder (the bibliography on the website).

You will be expected to either perform or re-create your performance for your MLIS 7422 classmates on Live Classroom. If you are telling a story live, prepare a Powerpoint as a backdrop. If you conducted the activity with children, use pictures or video that show us your performance techniques. The opening frame must display your presentation’s title, target audience, and your name. A copy must also be submitted to Dr. Ondrusek.

Community Analysis Report and “Dear Stakeholder” Letter

You will conduct a community analysis with an emphasis on data pertaining to children using a local geographic area such as the town or county where you reside. Atlanta residents may choose to focus on the neighborhood served by their local public library. Specific instructions will be provided in the Community Analysis folder on the WebCT course site.

Combining what you learned about the demographics of, and services for, children in your Community Analysis, compose a letter to a community stakeholder (e.g., the mayor, a performer, a pediatrician) or stakeholder group (e.g., better business bureau or child services agency) in which you ask for sponsorship for a special program that your research shows will fill a particular need among children in your community. The program must be one that could be carried out by a youth librarian. The proposal should be realistic in its goals, but also innovative or imaginative. Describe the “main event” of your program and how you expect children to benefit overall.

Assignment Calendar

- Week of:** **Activities:**
- Mon. Aug. 13 Getting to Know You Discussion Board
Post a creative “short” introducing yourself to your classmates – something that would appeal to children (e.g., a poem, drawing, or song about you).
Attach a photo of yourself, if possible.
- Mon. Aug. 20 Child Development Lecture and Demonstration
Tune into the Live Classroom session (date and time to be announced).
View the follow-up materials posted in the Child Development folder.
- Mon. Aug. 27 Programming for Children
View the Powerpoint presentation. Post comments and questions.
- Sep. 1 - 3 Labor Day Weekend
- Tues. Sep. 4 Field Observation Prep
View examples. Start observing, if possible. Post comments and questions.
Read and heed guidelines for observations.
- Mon. Sep. 10 Field Observation Project
Continue observations. Continue posting comments and questions.
Field Observation Powerpoint due Friday, Sep. 21.
- Mon. Sep. 17 Let’s Talk to Some Children’s Programmers
Tune into the Live Classroom session featuring children’s librarians.
Date(s) and time(s) to be announced.
- Mon. Sep. 24 Creative Program 1 Prep
View examples and demo slides. Start planning your program.
Read and heed guidelines for Creative Program 1.
- Mon. Oct. 1 Creative Program 1 Development & Practice
Arrange these among yourselves.
- Mon. Oct. 8 Creative Program 1 Performances
Present to your classmates on Live Classroom.
Dates and times TBA.
Peer evaluation of one performance due ASAP.
- Mon. Oct. 15 Fall Break (Sat, Oct. 13, to Tues., Oct. 16)
GA COMO (Wed., Oct. 17, to Fri., Oct. 19)
- Mon. Oct. 22 Community Analysis Prep
View background materials.
Read and heed guidelines for your Community Analysis.
- Mon. Oct. 29 Community Analysis Project
Conduct your analysis (this can be done mostly online).
Community Analysis Report due Friday, Nov. 2.

- Mon. Nov. 5 Dear Stakeholder Letter
Write to a community leader or group proposing sponsorship of a children's program to be implemented by the youth librarian.
Attach to the to Dear Stakeholder discussion list by Friday, Nov. 9.
- Mon. Nov. 12 Creative Program 2 Prep
View examples and demo slides. Start planning your program.
Read and heed guidelines for Creative Program 2.
- Mon. Nov. 19 Creative Program 2 Practice Sessions
Arrange these among yourselves.
- Nov. 21 – 25 Thanksgiving Break
- Mon. Nov. 26 Creative Program 2 Performances (begin this week)
Present to your classmates on Live Classroom.
Dates and times to be announced.
- Mon. Dec. 3 Creative Program 2 Performances (finish this week)
Present to your classmates on Live Classroom.
Dates and times to be announced.

Graded Course Requirements

As a student in this class, you are expected to: (1) read or view all assigned background materials; (2) participate in class follow-up activities; (3) submit creative projects using Powerpoint or a comparable multimedia substitute approved by Dr. Ondrusek; (4) present two creative programs to the class using a virtual format; and (5) submit all projects on time and according to the format designated by the instructor.

Observation Presentation	15%
Creative Program 1	25%
Creative Program 2	25%
Peer Evaluation	5%
Community Analysis Report	20%
"Dear Stakeholder" Letter	10%

Grading

Your final grade will be one of these letter grades:

Exceptionally exceeds minimum standards	A
Exceeds minimum standards	B
Meets minimum standards	C
Barely meets minimum standards	D
Fails to meet minimum standards	F

On individual course requirements, the instructor may assign plus and minus grades using this numerical scale:

A = 4.0 A minus = 3.7 B plus = 3.5 B = 3.0 B minus = 2.7 C plus = 2.5 C = 2.0

Technical Requirements

All class materials will be placed on a password-protected Web site using the Vista/WebCT course management program. If you are a new Vista user, go to the Vista help pages at <http://www.valdosta.edu/vista/>. On the right margin are “Self Help” links. View the “Getting Started” tutorial first. Then return to the Vista page and login using your BlazeNet email ID and password.

To meet all class requirements, you should be prepared to: (1) create Powerpoint slide presentations – samples and production tips will be provided; (2) view all Powerpoints placed on the course WebCT site – if your personal version of Powerpoint is a lower version, you will need to install the free Powerpoint 2007 viewer on your computer; (3) participate in Live Classroom sessions – login links and instructions will be available through your WebCT course homepage; (4) locate additional course readings using the GALILEO databases and download or print these out - this requires the Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer; (5) check discussion groups as needed; and (6) keep electronic backup copies of each assignment and project you submit.

Documents other than the Powerpoint presentations must be submitted using a word processing program compatible with Microsoft (MS) Word. The preferred document format is **MS Word 2007**. If you are using WordPerfect or a lower version of MS Word, save your documents in Rich Text Format (rtf). Documents that can not be opened on VSU equipment will be returned to you for re-formatting. Pasting your text into an e-mail is not an acceptable solution and will not be accepted by Dr. Ondrusek.

The university’s Information Technology department provides step-by-step guides on how to use VSU’s email and other sources. The IT Help Desk is at <http://www.valdosta.edu/helpdesk/guides/> and their phone hot line is 229-245-4357.

Distance Learning Support

A VSU reference librarian, Ms. Shiloh Smith, is responsible for coordinating library services for off-campus VSU students. She may be reached by email at shismith@valdosta.edu or by phone at 229-245-3717. An online guide for distance education students is on the Odum Library Web site at http://www.valdosta.edu/library/services/revised_students.pdf.

Academic Dishonesty

"Valdosta State University expects that graduate students will pursue their academic endeavors and conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. All work that a student presents to satisfy course requirements should represent his or her own efforts, including appropriate use and acknowledgement of external sources."

Specific regulations related to student conduct and behavior are contained in the *Student Handbook, Student Code of Ethics*. Please acquaint yourself with the full policy at <http://coefaculty.valdosta.edu/trout/eced4300/Academic%20Dishonesty.doc>.

Special Needs Statement

Valdosta State University is an equal opportunity educational institution. It is not the intent of our institution to discriminate against any applicant for admission or any student or employee of the institution based on the sex, race, religion, color, national origin, or the handicap of the individual. It is the intent of the institution to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent executive orders as well as the Title IX section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students requiring classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability should discuss this need with the professor at the beginning of the semester. Students not registered with the Special Services Program should contact Special Services in Nevins Hall, Room 2164, 229-245-2498 (ttv).

Student Agreement

Enrollment in 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 semester.

Acknowledgments

Many of the activities for this course were adapted with permission from the Youth Services course syllabus prepared by Denice Atkins (University of Missouri) and the Library Programming for Children and Young Adults course syllabus prepared by Dr. Pat Feehan (University of South Carolina). Many thanks to these colleagues for sharing their exceptionally creative teaching activities with the Valdosta State MLIS students.