Instructor: Betsy Van der Veer Martens (“Doc Martens”)  
Office location: 130 Schusterman Center (Tulsa campus)  
Telephone: 918-660-3376  
Email: bvmartens@ou.edu  
(note: email is the best way to reach me; I will always try to respond within 24 hours so if you don’t get a reply, please feel free to re-send and/or remind me!)

COURSE STRUCTURE AND POLICIES

Catalog Description:  
Historical, sociopolitical, technological, fiscal and organizational factors affecting special librarianship. Emphasis on institutional analysis, planning, and evaluation.

Course Goal and Student Learning Objectives:  
GOAL: The goal of this course is to help enable students to understand and master the four key Special Libraries Association (SLA) professional competencies for information professionals. Professional competencies relate to the practitioner's knowledge of information resources, access, technology and management, and the ability to use this knowledge as a basis for providing the highest quality information services to a specific organization. (The SLA competencies are available at: http://www.sla.org/content/learn/members/competencies/index.cfm.)

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:  
Upon completion of this course, you will be expected to be able to understand and undertake key activities related to managing a special library organization, its information resources, its services, and associated information tools and technologies.

SKILL OBJECTIVES:  
In addition to achieving these primary substantive objectives, the course is designed to assist students in developing and enhancing the following specific skills:

* Writing clear and convincing memoranda  
* Analyzing organizational case studies  
* Practicing purposeful environmental scanning  
* Designing, developing, and disseminating a budget  
* Designing, developing, and disseminating a strategic plan  
* Designing, developing and disseminating a proposal for a new information product

TEACHING/LEARNING METHODS:  
The course will be delivered using the course website at Desire2Learn (http://learn.ou.edu).

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READINGS:  
The LIS 5023 textbook (Library & Information Center Management by Moran and Stueart, 2007, Libraries Unlimited) can also be considered a resource for this class. All other course material will be provided.
PARTICIPATION:
This course requires that you actively participate in the class discussions, so it is necessary that you sign into the course website at least several times a week, beginning each Monday, when the week’s activities begin. Please note that the instructor has access to your login information for the class website, and checks these statistics on a regular basis. If a student is not logging in to the course website on a reasonably regular basis (at minimum, three days per week), he or she may expect to be contacted by the instructor to discuss whether class attendance is going to be satisfactory for the semester. If for some reason, personal or professional, you know in advance that you will be unable to log in for a given week, please notify the instructor of that fact.

All participants are expected to welcome open expression of opinions, attitudes, and beliefs and to accept the legitimacy and value of dissent, whether the dissenting opinion is considered valid or not. Elements included in evaluation are (1) evidence of critical thinking, (2) clarity of identification of the issues, (3) understanding of the problems, and (4) ability to propose and evaluate solutions. It is expected that discussion will reflect assigned and additional readings related to the topic and give evidence of incremental progress in meeting course objectives through critical comments offered, questions asked, synthesis and understanding of issues demonstrated.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

PREREQUISITE ASSUMPTIONS REGARDING TECHNOLOGICAL LITERACY:
It is assumed that everyone in this class is able to:

* log on to Desire2Learn, the online class website
* access and use email, including sending and receiving email attachments, on a daily basis
* identify, access, and use websites
* access documents in Adobe Acrobat Reader and in Powerpoint
* word process documents in Microsoft Word or Open Office
* access appropriate multimedia players for podcasts and videocasts

Any students who have not yet learned these basic skills should contact the instructor as soon as possible.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:
There are eight required assignments during this semester, which involve a variety of individual and group activities. Because the expectation is that you have either had or are taking KM/LIS 5023, I am assuming that you are already familiar with such activities as drafting a memo, doing environmental scanning, creating a budget, analyzing organizational strategy, and developing a business plan or proposal. (You may wish to refer to the 5023 textbook, Library & Information Center Management, if you don’t recall some of these things!)

1. Weekly discussion posts. Each week, starting the week of August 22 and ending the week of December 5, we will have small group discussions about the week’s topics. In order to give everyone a chance to respond to other people’s ideas, I require that you make your first post by midnight of Wednesday each week in order to receive any discussion credit. (After that first post, you are free to post as little or as late as you like, though I reserve the right to award extra discussion points to people who contribute most to discussions over the course of the semester.) Discussion credit is worth 15% of your final grade for this class.

What Assignment 1 is intended to do: This taps into the group’s background knowledge, which serves as an enormous asset to the class as a whole. Because you have such diverse education and experiences, group discussions can be highly informative for everyone concerned. In the special libraries world, you will very likely be expected to communicate electronically with a similarly diverse group of colleagues, so this provides additional practice in the art of diplomacy!
2. **Environmental scanning assignment:** starting the week of August 29 and ending the week of December 5, you must find and post one current interest item per week relevant to special libraries or information centers in some way in the forum (“Of Special Interest”) that will be available for this purpose. You may use whatever news sources you like for this, but you should note in your post why this item is relevant to our class, and should include a link to the item itself. You must post a total of 15 items over the course of the semester, and each item is worth 1% of your final grade for the class. Please try not to duplicate the items of others in the class: the first person to post a particular link or news item gets the point!

**What Assignment 2 is intended to do:** to get you in the habit of scanning for professional developments on a national and international level, as special libraries and information agencies are particularly subject to those influences today, and sharing your findings and opinions on them with your colleagues. Selective dissemination of information (SDI) is often an important part of special library work.

3. **Initial competencies memo:** Write a short (no more than 1,000 words) memo explaining which of the SLA competencies you would most like to master this semester. If possible, include a job ad or job description that motivates you to take this class! This assignment is due in the “Memo 1” dropbox by **midnight of Friday, September 2nd.** It is worth 10% of your final grade in this class.

**What Assignment 3 is intended to do:** to help you consider the possibilities available to you in the special libraries field as an information professional, and to help me better understand what you may need from this class.

4. **Stakeholders assignment:** Find a specific special library or information agency on the web that you would like to adopt as “yours” for this semester. Write a short (no more than 1,000 words) memo describing the organization, its parent organization (if one exists), and explaining who the stakeholders are. Include a link to the organization (and to its parent organization, if necessary). This assignment is worth 10 points toward your final grade. It is due in the “Stakeholders” dropbox by **midnight of Friday, September 16th.**

**What Assignment 4 is intended to do:** this exercise will help to familiarize you with special libraries of particular interest to you, and to help you understand their structure and purpose.

5. **6. 7.** There will be three case studies assigned for reading and discussion in your small groups during the course of the semester, based on group interests. All materials for these case studies will be supplied for you. Each case study will be worth 10 points toward your final grade. These are most likely to include:

5. A budget case study
6. An environmental scanning case study
7. A strategic planning case study

**What Assignments 5, 6, and 7 are intended to do:** these case study assignments will sharpen your ability to analyze and solve problems on short notice. Specific instructions will be available on the course website for each of these.

8. **Information product proposal.** Instead of a final exam, you will be expected to write a proposal for an information product to be produced by your organization. You will be communicating with the instructor about your concept for this proposal throughout the semester. The final proposal is due in the “Information Product” dropbox by **midnight of Monday, December 12th.**

**What Assignment 8 is intended to do:** This assignment will allow you to demonstrate your entrepreneurial abilities in the context of a particular organization.
A summary list of all assignments, the total points available for each assignment (please see the “Criteria for Evaluation” section below for a general explanation of the caliber of work that would qualify for full credit), and deadlines for each is shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Summary:</th>
<th>Available Points:</th>
<th>Assignment Due Dates:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Discussion forum posts</td>
<td>15 (no more than 1 per week)</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. “Special interest” posts</td>
<td>15 (no more than 1 per week)</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Competencies memo</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>September 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Stakeholder analysis</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>September 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Case study 1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>October 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Case study 2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>October 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Case study 3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>November 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Information product proposal</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>December 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MAXIMUM POINTS:** 100 (representing “A” quality work in all assignments)

**CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION:**

**Discussions:** Both the substantive content and the quantity of your postings over the course of each week will be considered. Substantive content includes adherence to the specific questions(s) asked, plus well-supported statements that demonstrate reasonable conclusions and appropriate critical analysis. You also are encouraged to consider your classmate’s comments and respond to them with the same criteria in mind.

**Writing:** Both the substantive content and the quality of your writing will be considered. Substantive content includes adherence to the assignment plus well supported arguments that arrive at reasonable conclusions or solutions and appropriate critical analysis. Quality of writing covers clarity of expression and organization, appropriate use of references, use of inclusive language, and correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

**Research:** As you are in the process of becoming information professionals, and many of you are or will be helping others with their own research activities, my constant expectation is that you will make a serious effort to find the most relevant and rewarding resources for each assignment, including the “of special interest” postings.

**GRADING:** The grade for the course will be determined on the following basis. (Remember: your transcript only shows A, B, C, etc. Therefore, an A- will appear as an A and a B+ will appear as a B).

Letter grades are assigned to all graded work. The general guidelines for evaluation are as follows: School of Library and Information Studies policy requires that any student receiving a grade of C in a required course retake the course. The Graduate College considers a grade of D to be a failing grade in terms of graduate degree credit. School of Library and Information Studies policy requires that any student receiving a grade of D or F be recommended for dismissal from the master’s program. In the Desire2Learn grade reports, the letter grades will also appear as numbers, using the following equivalencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A = 4</td>
<td>Exceptional performance, exemplary work on all aspects of assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A- = 3.66</td>
<td>High quality work that exceeds expectations/requirements on some aspects of assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+ = 3.33</td>
<td>Work of good quality on all requirements of assignment and high quality on some aspects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B = 3</td>
<td>Work of good quality, clearly meeting requirements of assignment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**B- = 2.66** Work of average quality that meets minimum requirements of the assignment

**C+ = 2.33** Marginal work that does not meet standards in one or more aspects of assignment

**C = 2** Marginal work that does not meet standards for graduate level performance

**C- = 1.66** Unsatisfactory work that does not meet requirements of assignment

**D+ = 1.33** Unsatisfactory work that exhibits multiple problems in meeting requirements of assignments

**D = 1.00**

**D- = .66**

**F = 0** Failure

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**Submission of Assignments to Dropboxes:** All written work for this course will be submitted as a Microsoft Word or Open Office document file in the appropriate folder at the course site dropbox. Dropbox deadlines are given for each assignment, and close at midnight of the designated day. Assignments will also be returned with comments via the dropbox: please use the designated dropbox, and do not e-mail your assignment to the instructor.

The title given to the file in submitting through the dropbox should use the following format:

For example, if your name is Jane Doe and you are submitting the first assignment, the title that you give to the file when placing it in the Dropbox should be: Doe1a.doc or Doe1a.docx

Other requirements for written work in this course:
* Name of student on the first page of the assignment
* Title of assignment
* Page numbers on each page (except title page, if one is used)
* Double-spaced, word-processed using Microsoft Word or Open Office, with one-inch top, bottom, and side margins unless stated otherwise
* Standard 12-point font (Times, Times, New Roman, Helvetica, etc.)

We will not be writing any formal papers in this class, but rather memoranda, budgets, business proposals, and the like. Therefore, it is **not** necessary to use the *Chicago Manual of Style* for any work in this class.

**Deadlines:**
All assignments should be submitted on time. Everyone in the class has a one-time “pass” for one assignment being 24 hours late, as I realize that graduate students do have responsibilities outside the classroom, but a second late assignment will accrue a significant points penalty unless there is an exception made for serious illness or emergency. Notification and arrangements in these circumstances are the responsibility of the student.

**Student Evaluation of Course and Instruction:**
At the end of the semester, each student will be asked to complete a standard evaluation form via OU’s eValuate online system that elicits opinions about the quality and relevance of course content and the quality of instruction. The instructor will not see course evaluations until well after grades have been turned in to the registrar's office. This student input is used by the instructor for improvement of teaching and by the School for annual assessment and tenure and promotion decisions. Please consider participating in this evaluation: normally only the students who either love or hate a particular course bother to share their opinions!
RELATED POLICIES:

Student Responsibility for Learning:
As noted in the OU SLIS Graduate Student Handbook:
Fundamentally, responsibility for education at the graduate level belongs to the individual student. Faculty provide the basic frame in which study is undertaken, offer assistance in setting the parameters of study, and serve as facilitators and mentors. This approach to the learning environment is particularly necessary as a conceptual framework for the development of information professionals who must exercise critical thinking, analyze problems, and design solutions as a daily part of their work life, who must be independent and lifelong learners who also function effectively as team members in a diverse and dynamic information environment.

Incompletes:
The Graduate College has strict conditions under which a student is given an incomplete in a regularly scheduled, letter-graded course. A grade of Incomplete (I) will be given only for a justifiable reason (due to unavoidable circumstances, not lack of planning on the student's part) and only if the student is passing the course. It is the responsibility of the student to request a grade of I and to meet with the instructor as early as possible to determine the requirements for completing the course. Any incomplete granted must be removed by the deadline specified by the instructor. The time limit set for removal of an incomplete will take into account the circumstances of the situation but may not exceed one calendar year.

Absences:
It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays. Students who plan to observe a religious holiday should notify the instructor as soon as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements.

Codes and Policies of Behavior:
To protect its faculty and students, the School fully subscribes to the University's codes, policies, and procedures involving academic integrity and academic misconduct, grievances, sexual and ethnic harassment, and discrimination based on physical disability. You should acquaint yourself with both your responsibilities and your protections. Information is available from the University of Oklahoma’s course catalog policies section (http://catalog.ou.edu/current/policies.htm)

Special Accommodations:
Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent full demonstration of the student's abilities should contact the instructor in person as soon as possible to discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate educational opportunities.

Please advise the instructor of such disability on the first day of class. The instructor will work with you and the Office of Disability Services to provide reasonable accommodations. The Office of Disability Services accepts requests from students for reasonable accommodation after the student has self-identified as an individual with a disability.

Academic Integrity:
“Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities, and those privileged to be members of a university community have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty and a right to expect the same standards of all others. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the university and therefore is unacceptable and rigorously proscribed.” — from the University of Oklahoma Academic Misconduct Code
You should review expectations for the academic integrity of your work by reading and reviewing the information posted at OU’s [Academic Integrity website](http://integrity.ou.edu)

**WRITING CENTERS:**
Assistance in writing and in interpreting the standards for observance of the rules for use of ideas and material of others is available from the [OU Writing Centers](http://www.ou.edu/writingcenter.html) In Norman, the Writing Center is located in Room 280 of Wagner Hall. In Tulsa, the Writing Center is located in Room 3109 at the Schusterman Center.

**DISCLAIMER**
This syllabus represents the plan for this course and will be followed to the extent that it is feasible to do so in meeting the instructional goals of the course and the needs of the class. However, it is not, and should not be interpreted as, a contract between the student and the instructor. If necessary, due either to unforeseen circumstances or to unanticipated variations in class progress, it may be changed or adjusted as needed

### COURSE ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DUE DATES:</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly (make first post no later than Wednesday night)</td>
<td>1. Small Group Discussion Forum Posts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly (due no later than Sunday night)</td>
<td>2. “Of Special Interest” Posts</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2</td>
<td>3. Initial Competencies Memo</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 16</td>
<td>4. Stakeholders Assignment</td>
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<td>October 14</td>
<td>5. Case Study 1 (Budget)</td>
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<td>October 28</td>
<td>6. Case Study 2 (Environmental Scanning)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 14</td>
<td>7. Case Study 3 (Strategic Plan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 12</td>
<td>8. Information Product Proposal</td>
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