

# **ESF 200**

Information Literacy

# **Syllabus**



Revised Summer 2009  
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## ESF 200: Information Literacy.

The goal of this course is to develop the student's "information literacy" as defined by the American Library Association: *"Recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information."*

The American Library Association has developed the specific Information Literacy Competency Standards listed below. Students in ESF 200 should meet these standards in the course units as indicated in parenthesis with each standard:

### **1. The information literate student determines the extent of the information needed.**

- Student can define and articulate the need for information (Topic Selection).
- Student can identify a variety of types and formats of potential information (Resource Literature and the Search Strategy).
- Student considers the costs and benefits of acquiring the needed information (Library Basics, Resource Literature and the Search Strategy).
- Student reevaluates the nature and extent of the information needed (all units).

### **2. The information literate student accesses needed information effectively & efficiently.**

- Student selects the most appropriate investigative methods or information retrieval systems for accessing needed information (Library Catalog Searching, Serial Literature, Additional Resources).
- Student constructs and implements effectively-designed search strategies (all units).
- Student retrieves information online or in person using a variety of methods (all units).
- Student extracts, records and manages the information and its sources (all units - particularly Search Strategy, Bibliography).
- Students refines the search strategy if necessary (all units).

### **3. The Information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.**

- Student articulates and applies initial criteria for evaluating both the information and its sources (all units).
- Student compares new knowledge with prior knowledge to determine the value added, contradictions, or other unique characteristics of the information (all units).
- Student determines whether the initial query should be revised (all units).

### **4. The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.**

- Student understands many of the ethical, legal and socio-economic issues surrounding information and information technology (Resource Literature and the Research Strategy, Additional Resources, Bibliography).
- Student acknowledges the use of information sources in communicating the product or performance (Bibliography).

**Outline of course units** (instructors may teach in a different order than listed):

- UNIT 1: Library Basics.**  
Discovering what services are typically available in a library.
- UNIT 2: Resource Literature and the Search Strategy.**  
Defining types of information resources, understanding the structure of literature and understanding that a process is necessary for finding information efficiently.
- UNIT 3: Selecting and Developing a Topic.**  
Choosing, defining and developing a topic to research
- UNIT 4: Library Catalog Searching.**  
Identifying sources through library catalogs.
- UNIT 5: Serial Literature.**  
Using bibliographic databases to locate and retrieve serial literature.
- UNIT 6: Additional Resources.**  
Fitting Internet & traditional reference sources into your research strategy.
- UNIT 7: Creating a bibliography.**  
Evaluating, analyzing, and physically organizing sources for a bibliography through the use of a style manual.

**Course completion and grading:**

- Complete the assignments (and final project listed below), to develop information seeking skills. The assignments make up **45%** of the final grade.

Unit 1 Assignment	Library Basics	<i>Not Graded</i>
Unit 3 Assignment	Selecting and Developing a Topic	5 Points
Unit 4 Assignment	Library Catalog Searching	10 Points
Unit 5A Assignment	Serial Literature Searching	5 Points
Unit 5B Assignment	Database Presentation	10 Points
Unit 6 Assignment	Additional Resources	10 Points
Class Participation		5 Points

- Research a topic and develop a bibliography for the Final Project: 'Your Search'. The final project has five parts and makes up **55%** of the final grade.

Part 1	Selecting and Developing a Topic	5 Points
Part 2	Library Catalog Searching Techniques	10 Points
Part 3	Serial Literature Searching Techniques	15 Points
Part 4	Additional Resources	10 Points
Part 5	Creating a Bibliography	<u>15 Points</u>
		100 Points Total

### **Suggested reading:**

Visit Syracuse University's *Research by Subject* located at <http://library.syr.edu/research/subject/index.php>.

Other readings may be assigned by individual instructors.

### **Prerequisites:**

There are no course prerequisites for ESF 200. It is suggested that this course be taken in conjunction with or in expectation of a course that requires a substantial research project or a term paper. Topics which students select to search in ESF 200 will hopefully be one which may be used in another class during the same semester.

### **Instructors:**

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### **Notes:**

This is a five-week course to be completed at the beginning of the semester. One credit is earned upon successful completion of the course. This course is required by several curricula. Students cannot be exempted from this course by library faculty.

Some extra time may be given following the conclusion of the course to complete the final project. A specific outline of dates and topics to be covered and the final due date for the project is distributed by each instructor.

ESF 200 classes are generally small, informal and offer opportunities for hands on practice. Students are encouraged to participate fully, share searching experiences and ask questions.

The Moon Library web site: <http://www.esf.edu/moonlib> includes this syllabus and class assignments.

Information is increasing at an exponential rate and finding the information needed can be confusing and overwhelming. ESF 200 has been designed to help students better understand information and how to access it. Students who have completed ESF 200 should be less anxious and be more comfortable with information seeking processes.

# Unit 1: Library Basics

**Objective:** Upon completion of this unit you will be able to discover typical resources, services and facilities available in a library and some differences between S.U. and ESF libraries.

## Unit topics include:

Information on the following for ESF and S.U. Libraries:

- Library hours
- Library staff
- Reference services
- Circulation services and policies
- Interlibrary loan services and policies
- Internet access locations

Location of specific physical collections at ESF:

- Reference
- Reserve
- Periodicals
- Archives

**Assignment:** Library Basics (In-Class)

## Unit 2: Resource Literature and the Search Strategy

**Objective:** Upon completion of this unit you will be able to (1) differentiate among various forms of literature, (2) understand the structure of literature and (3) recognize the value of these sources in the search strategy process.

### Unit topics include:

#### Types of literature:

- Monographs
- Serials
  - Periodicals
  - Journals
    - Refereed/peer reviewed, including Open Access
    - Popular (i.e. magazines)
    - Trade journals
    - Review journals
- Conference proceedings
- Patents
- Theses/dissertations
- Government documents
- Bibliographies
- Guides to literature
- Reference sources

#### Structure of literature:

- Primary literature
- Secondary literature
- Tertiary literature

#### Additional sources of information:

- Internet
- People, organizations, etc.

#### Research process:

- Search strategy
- Research log
- Evaluating sources

**Relation to final project:** Parts 2,3,4

## Unit 3: Selecting and Developing a Topic

**Objective:** Upon completion of this unit you will be able to recognize the importance of a well-defined question and be able to choose, define, and begin to develop a topic for a literature search.

**Unit topics include:**

Evaluating potential topics

Starting your research:

- Background reading/review literature
- Search terms
- Introductory paragraph for literature search

**Assignment:** Selecting and Developing a Topic  
**Relation to final project:** Part 1

## Unit 4: Library Catalog Searching

**Objective:** Upon completion of this unit you will be able to search for **books** in library catalogs and locate books in a library's collection.

### Unit topics include:

Library catalogs

Searching strategies

1. Library catalog
2. Catalog access from off-campus
3. Browsing (in-person or electronically)
4. Searching the catalogs of other libraries
5. Searching Union Catalogs such as WorldCat

Interpreting catalog entries

Saving search results

- Print
- E-mail
- Download
- Bibliographic management software (RefWorks)

**Assignment:** Library Catalog Searching  
**Relation to final project:** Part 2



## Unit 5: Serial Literature

**Objective:** Upon completion of this unit you will be able to identify relevant serial literature through the use of appropriate databases and retrieve specific serials.

### Unit topics include:

Types of bibliographic databases:

- General
- Subject specific

What is included:

- References to sources
- Abstracts of sources
- Full Text of sources

Formats of databases:

- Online
- Print

Strategy for searching databases:

- Identify the appropriate databases to search.
- Study and use of the appropriate sources.
- Interpret references and record them accurately and completely.
- Record your search strategy (research log).

Determine the availability of the serial articles identified in a search:

- Moon and/or SU (Print subscription and/or electronic subscription.)
- Full text via Databases
- SULinks
- Journal **title** search through the library catalog
- E-journal Locator
- Other online options (including Google Scholar)
- Elsewhere through interlibrary loan (Illiad)
- Consult a librarian for help

**Assignment:** Serial Literature Searching

**Relation to final project:** Part 3

## Unit 6: Additional Resources

**Objective:** Upon completion of this unit, you will be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and utilize additional sources including the Internet and understand some of the economic, legal and special issues surrounding the use of information and how to access and use information ethically and legally.

### Unit topics include:

Analyzing your question/need

Non-documentary sources

- People
- Organizations
- Directories

Internet

- Directories/Indexes
- Search engines
- Listservs

Reference resources

- Maps
- Biographical Resources
- Dictionaries
- Knovel Database (Full-text science and engineering reference books)
- Directories/Indexes
- Encyclopedias (Access Science)
- Handbooks and manuals

Information ethics

- Copyright
- Plagiarism
- Digital divide
- Cost of information
- Censorship
- Internet crime

**Assignment:** Additional Resources

**Relation to final project:** Part 4

## **Unit 7: Creating a Bibliography**

**Objective:** Upon completion of this unit you will be able to identify types of bibliographies, evaluate material located for inclusion in a bibliography and organize a bibliography in accordance with a specific style manual.

### **Unit topics include:**

Types of bibliographies

Evaluating sources found

Organizing your material

Using Style manuals to compile a bibliography (including citing Internet sources)

Bibliographic Management Software

**Assignment:** Creating a Bibliography (In-Class)

**Relation to final project:** Part 5