

**Reference and Information Services (Elective)**  
**Portfolio Development Suggestions**  
**October, 2012**

These services support library users as they seek access to information in all formats, wherever these resources are located. These competencies require an understanding of basic information resources and of the user's information-seeking behavior and expectations.

**1. Library Support Staff (LSS) know the general scope of the library's print, nonprint, and digital collections, including areas of strength and specialized collections.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

- 1.1 Create a guide to two of a library's collections. This guide may be a printed brochure or online resource which informs library users about the collections' scope and areas of strength, such as subjects, authors, genres, or media.
- 1.2 For a week, keep a record of the directional questions users ask. Develop recommendations for changes in current signage or a new signage plan to answer these questions. Explain why you think your plan will help library users to more easily locate collections and services.
- 1.3 Design a tour of the library's general and special collections. Document the overall scope of the tour and explain what you would highlight and why. Provide a video, audiotape, script, or power point of the tour.

**2. LSS know legal and ethical issues involved in reference services, including user privacy, confidentiality, and copyright.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

- 2.1 Create a bibliography of five articles on copyright law. Indicate the challenges libraries face with respect to one aspect of the copyright law; for example, in electronic reserves or interlibrary loan services.
- 2.2 Create a bibliography of five articles on user privacy and confidentiality. Your articles should be descriptive and evaluative. Indicate the challenges libraries face with respect to one aspect of library privacy and confidentiality; for example, parental rights to access their children's reading.
- 2.3 Collect sample policies on privacy, confidentiality, or copyright from at three different libraries of varying type and size. Compare and contrast these policies. Which ones do you think are best and why? Write a recommendation for adopting specific policies for the last library in which you worked.

**3. LSS know basic reference, information, and community resources in print, nonprint, and digital formats in order to conduct and support basic research/reference inquiries.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

- 3.1 Develop two research guides on two topics, including a variety of basic reference or information resources, including community resources, for library users. Include at least ten resources (print, web, or community) for each topic area and indicate why these sources would be most helpful on the topic.
- 3.2 Make a list of 15 different types of basic reference sources in print, online databases, or on the web, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, directories, and atlases. For each type, explain its purpose and give examples of the types of questions that can be answered by each source. Mention how community resources are typically used to supplement library resources.
- 3.3 Select two general topics that interest you. Research these subjects using library catalogs, databases, and the Web. Document the search terms that you use in each search of each resource. Create a search guide for others using what you learned in your searches.

**4. LSS know classification and organization schemes for collections.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

- 4.1 Compare and contrast three different organizational methods for library collections, including the Dewey Decimal System and Library of Congress. Discuss in detail the strengths and weaknesses of one of these methods and which type of library uses these methods.
- 4.2 Develop an organizational and classification method for a collection that you own (books, DVDs, CDs, comics). Investigate how you might apply a standard library classification to that collection, and discuss the advantages of your personal organization method in contrast to a standard library method such as Dewey.
- 4.3 Document the various organizational and classification schemes for special collections in a specific library. Create a guide for library users to these different collections that explains the various methods.

**5. LSS know basic search methods, display options, and terminology of the library's catalog, website, and other information access tools.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

- 5.1 Compare and contrast the basic and advanced search functions of a library catalog; one general database such as Proquest or EBSCOhost; and one Internet search engine, such as Google.
- 5.2 Identify ten library terms or jargon that library users might find confusing in catalogs and databases. Create a help page to explain these terms. Write a brief accompanying explanation explaining why you chose those particular terms to define.
- 5.3 Create a guide for two of the following activities: conducting a basic and advanced library catalog search; searching a periodical database; or using an Internet search engine.

**6. LSS can conduct effective reference interviews, helping users define their information needs and determine when referrals are necessary.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

- 6.1 Keep a journal of reference questions asked in person over eight hours. Describe the initial questions, conversations between you and the user, and the final question on which you assisted the library user. Based on what you learned, develop a reference interview form that can provide guidance to others on how to conduct interviews.
- 6.2 Create a bibliography of five articles or book chapters on the reference interview. Your bibliography should be both descriptive and evaluative. Describe two reference interviews that you feel would help you elicit information from a user that was difficult to obtain.

**7. LSS can instruct and assist users in basic research procedures including digital literacy skills.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

- 7.1 Create an online tutorial that guides users through basic research procedures. The online tutorial might be a video, power point, or web page. Determine the most critical features that users must learn to achieve a basic level of success.
- 7.2 Suggest the content of a training program that teaches basic research procedures to library support staff. Include the major principles you will include in the program and the best method for delivering the training. Tell why you chose these principles.
- 7.3 Create a video, audiotape or provide a script of a role play in which you train a user how to use a basic online research tool. Discuss how you developed this training program.

**8. LSS can help users select the most appropriate information resource to meet their needs, and evaluate the quality, currency, and authority of information retrieved.**

### Portfolio Development Suggestions

- 8.1 Compile a list of resources on a topic, including print and digital, and explain why you included these resources. Discuss the quality, currency, and authority of the resources as they pertain to the topic.
- 8.2 Research criteria that might be used for selecting trusted websites. Create a guide for a library that might be used with a target audience of your choice. Would the criteria be different if the target audience were youth, teenagers, business people, or immigrants?

## **9 LSS know how to search for and identify materials in all formats, and assist users in accessing those materials from local and nonlocal sources.**

### Portfolio Development Suggestions

- 9.1 Describe at least ten tools you would use to find journal articles, books, videos or audio materials, or digital resources. Discuss how these resources are accessed. What options are there for users if your library does not own these resources?
- 9.2 Create a research guide for users that help them understand and use a library service such interlibrary loan or a database. Include any library policies that relate to this service and the process for using the service.