

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
MASTER OF LIBRARY & INFORMATION SCIENCE  
MLIS 7422 Programming for Children and Young Teens  
Syllabus—Fall Semester 2009  
Three Credit Hours

**Instructor:**

Anita Ondrusek, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
MLIS Program  
Valdosta State University  
Office Phone: 229-245-3742  
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.

**Learning Outcomes**

Students will:

- 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 BlazeVIEW 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 (BlazeVIEW 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 BlazeVIEW.

### **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 BlazeVIEW 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 BlazeVIEW 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.

## 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 BlazeVIEW 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.

## Creative Program

There are three parts to this project.

**Part 1:** Think of this segment of the project as “You Are the Star” – you create a dramatization of a story (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.).

Select an age group and gear your selection to that age group. For ideas, study the resources recommended on the MLIS 7422 Pathfinder (the bibliography on the BlazeVIEW site).

Perform your story for an audience. The audience must include at least one child in the age group you chose for your program. Students in the past have performed for play groups, after-school programs, children of friends or relatives, and their own child(ren).

Document your performance using photographs.

**Part 2:** Think of this segment of the project as “Every Child Is a Star” – a follow-up to your performance 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).

Your activity must follow the same theme for the same aged children as the story you preformed. Base your activity on the level of dexterity, cognition, maturity, and attention span that a child in this age group can handle.

Document this activity using photographs showing 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.

**Part 3:** Show your classmates highlights of your project. Using Powerpoint, create a slide show. The opening frame must display your presentation's title, target age of audience, and your name. You will present the slideshow on Live Classroom.

The first part of your slide show highlights your performance. Tell the story using the photos as a backdrop.

The second part of your slide show highlights the activity you did with your audience.

### **Self-evaluation and Peer Evaluation**

Evaluate your own project. Evaluate one classmate's project. Evaluation sheets will be provided.

### **Assignment Calendar**

*Week of:*        *Activities:*

Mon. Aug. 17    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. 24    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. 31    Programming for Children  
View the Powerpoint presentation. Post comments and questions.

Sep. 5 - 7        Labor Day Weekend

Tues. Sep. 8    Field Observation Prep  
View examples. Start observing, if possible. Post comments and questions. Read and heed guidelines for observations.

Mon. Sep. 14    Field Observation Project  
Continue observations. Continue posting comments and questions. Field Observation Powerpoint due Monday, Sep. 21.

Mon. Sep. 21    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. 28 Community Analysis Prep  
View background materials.  
Read and heed guidelines for your Community Analysis.
- Oct. 7-9 MLIS faculty will be attending GA COMO.  
If you have questions about your progress in this course, schedule a consultation with your instructor on Oct. 5th or 6th.
- Thur. Oct. 8 **Last day to withdraw from a class without academic penalty.**
- Mon. Oct. 5- Community Analysis Project  
Sun. Oct. 18 Collect your data – online and by first-hand observations.  
Conduct your analysis.
- Community Analysis Report due weekend of Oct 17-18.  
Final deadline: Sunday, Oct. 18, 11:59 pm.
- Oct. 19 & 20 Fall Break
- Wed. Oct. 21 Dear Stakeholder Letter  
Write a hypothetical letter addressed to a community leader or group proposing sponsorship of a children’s program to be implemented by the youth librarian.  
The proposed program should take into account a need that you identified in your Community Analysis.
- Attach to the Dear Stakeholder discussion list by weekend of Oct. 24-25.  
Final deadline: Sunday, Oct. 25, 11:59 pm.
- Mon. Oct.26 Creative Program Prep  
View examples and demo slides.  
Tune into a Live Classroom for an explanation of the project.  
Start planning your program.  
Read and heed guidelines for developing your Creative Program.
- Mon. Nov. 2 Creative Program Development  
Select your story and follow-up activity.  
Organize your supplies and props.  
Recruit youngster(s) to be your audience.  
Arrange for someone to photograph your activities.  
Practice your program.
- Mon. Nov. 9 Creative Program Practice & Presentation  
Present your program to your audience.  
Have it photographed.  
Make your PowerPoint slides.  
Transfer slides to the Live Classrooms available.  
Practice your voiceovers for your live presentation.

Mon. Nov. 16 Creative Program Performances  
Present to your classmates on Live Classroom.  
Dates and times TBA.

Mon. Nov. 30 Self-evaluation due today by noon.  
Peer evaluation of a classmate due today by noon..

### **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; (4) present a creative program to the class using Live Classroom; and (5) submit all projects on time and according to the format designated by the instructor.

Observation Presentation	20 points
Community Analysis Report	20 points
“Dear Stakeholder” Letter	10 points
Creative Program 1	40 points
Self Evaluation	5 points
Peer Evaluation	5 points

100 – 91 points = A      90 – 81 points = B      80 – 71 points = C

Late submissions lose 5 points for each day late.

No grade below a C will be credited toward a VSU graduate degree.

### **Letter 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

### **Technical Requirements**

All class materials will be placed on a password-protected Web site using the BlazeVIEW course management program. If you are a new BlazeVIEW user, go to the BlazeVIEW help pages at <http://www.valdosta.edu/vista/students.shtml>. Then return to the BlazeVIEW page and login using your BlazeNet email ID and password.

To meet all class requirements, you should be prepared to: (1) open and save or print all documents that are required background reading - this requires the Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer; (2) view all PowerPoints placed on the course BlazeVIEW site – these are saved to **Powerpoint 97-2003**; (3) participate in Live Classroom sessions – login links and instructions

will be available through your BlazeVIEW course homepage; (4) check discussion groups as needed; and (5) keep electronic backup copies of each assignment and project you submit.

Unless otherwise stated, assignments must be submitted using a word processing program compatible with Microsoft (MS) Word. BlazeVIEW requires the format for **MS Word 97-2003**. If you are using MS Word 2007, save it down to the 97-2003 format. If you are using WordPerfect or sharing documents with classmates who have a different version of Word, save your documents in Rich Text Format (rtf). Documents that cannot be opened on VSU equipment will be returned to you for re-formatting.

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.

### **Academic Honesty**

"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://www.valdosta.edu/academic/AcademicHonestyPoliciesandProcedures.shtml>.

It is **your responsibility** to make sure you understand how to avoid breeches of academic integrity. The instructor posts rules for citing, quoting, and appropriate use of resources for assignments that require written compositions, reviews, or commentary.

**Noncompliance with rules on appropriate use of resources will result in zero credit for those parts of the assignment affected.** If you are unsure about the parameters of an assignment, ask for clarification.

Asking librarians or staff in a library to provide answers or to conduct research to fulfill any part of a graded course requirement is an infraction of academic integrity. The same policy applies to contacting any free or commercial reference service for assistance with a graded assignment.

**An overall grade of zero can be assigned to an entire paper or project if the instructor determines that its contents, or parts of its contents, were completed by a second party.** This, of course, does not apply to group projects that require collaboration on a final product.

### **Distance Learning Support**

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.

To ask questions about **availability or location of VSU online resources**, use the VSU Library's Live Chat or E-mail at: <http://www.valdosta.edu/library/ask.php>. You may also phone the VSU Library's reference service at (229) 333-7149.

### **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 requesting classroom accommodations or modifications due to a documented disability must contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in room 1115 Nevins Hall. The phone numbers are 245-2498 (V/VP) and 219-1348 (TTY).

### **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.